SUBTITLING AND CULTURAL REPRESENTATION: THE CASE OF
FREEJ

A THESIS IN TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETING

(ENGLISH/ARABIC/ENGLISH)

Presented to the faculty of the American University of Sharjah

College of Arts and Sciences

in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS

by

NOUF ALWAN

B. A. 2008

Advisor:

Said Faiq

Sharjah, UAE

May 2011

SUBTITLING AND CULTURAL REPRESENTATION: THE CASE OF *FREEJ*

Nouf Alwan, Candidate for the Master of Arts Degree

American University of Sharjah, 2011

ABSTRACT

Translating media plays a role in shaping and affecting the representation of cultures. This thesis looks at the representation of the Emirati culture through analyzing the subtitling of the Emirati dialect in the third season of the Emirati cartoon *Freej*. A sample of cultural expressions, metaphors, poetry, code-switching and material culture and their subtitles are analyzed. These samples are randomly taken from the first, sixth and ninth episodes of the third season of *Freej*. This season has better subtitling compared to the previous two seasons. Results show that there are many instances where cultural loss is inevitable leading to cultural misconception, and that context determines what subtitling strategy would be more appropriate.

CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Table

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

grandmother, Moza AlMansoori, Ali Alsaloom, a Cultural Consultant, and Lamiyah Bahrainwala, a Graduate Writing Consultant from Michigan State University. I owe much of the cultural details and verifications of their interpretation to my beloved grandmother and parents whom I interviewed repeatedly to be able to complete the analysis chapter.

My sincere appreciation goes to my MATI friends for their encouragement and support. Finally, I owe my deepest gratitude to my beloved parents who have supported me every step of the way towards finishing this project. I can never thank them enough for their love, guidance, patience and encouragement. My very special gratitude goes to my best friend and mother, Dr. Fatma Hamad Alwan, for editing this thesis.

DEDICATION

To Mum and Dad

TRANSLITERATIONS TABLE

By Dr. Saiq Faiq

Arabic letters	How the letters are written and pronounced in English
ا	*a*
ب	*b*
ت	*t*
ث	*th or* θ
ج	j
ح	*H*
خ	kh
د	*d*
ذ	*dh or* ð

ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	*sh*
ص	*S*
ض	*D*
ط	*T*
ظ	*Z*
ع	' or ʕ
غ	*gh*
ف	f

ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m
ن	n
ه	h
و	w
ي	y

fatHaa	a		Long fatHa	aa
kasra	i		Long kasra	ii
Damma	u		Long Damma	uu

1. INTRODUCTION

In the 1930s, the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) was a huge undeveloped desert. People lived in areas close to the sea, and used camels for transportation. The common food supplies were dry dates and people lived in houses made of palm-tree leaves and lead simple lives. While I was not born at that time, I owe much of my knowledge to my grandparents who told me about life in those days. Nowadays, life is different in the U.A.E. However, there are parts in the world, particularly in the West, where people think that we in the Emirates still lead our lives the way our ancestors have and use camels in transportation instead of cars. The time has come for people, whether from the West or other parts of the world, to know that life in the Emirates is so much more than camels and Bedouins living in tents. We have a rich culture that is embedded, not only in the way we act and dress, but also in our language and dialect. This thesis is concerned with how the Emirati culture is represented through the subtitles of the popular Emirati cartoon Freej. The aim is to find a way that fairly represents the Emirati culture in English through translation.

Unlike some Westerners who have a stereotypical view of Emiratis without seeing their correct preception, there are others who have different conceptions of us. Ali Alsaloom, an Emirati Cultural Consultant whose work involves giving cultural speeches to Westerners visiting the U.A.E., and author of *Ask Ali: A Guide to Abu Dhabi* and *Ask Ali: A Guide to Dubai*, says that there are Westerners who are very interested in the Emirati culture to the point that they have moved to live in the U.A.E. permanently (Alsaloom, 2011). Apparently, there is a desire to learn about the Emirati culture, but there are not many credible resources available in English and other languages to educate non-Arab speakers about the Emirates.

14

I have a firm believe that translation has a role in educating people about culture. The Emirati cartoon Freej which can be seen as one of the rare Emirati media that has been translated into English. It tells the story of the life of typical four Emirati elderly ladies. Even though the cartoon seems to be produced for the Emirati mind (Alsaloom, 2011), Freej is still a good example for non-Emiratis who want to learn more about the culture. Unlike in the past where cartoons were categorized as programs for children, cartoons nowadays, particularly Freej which is rich in culture and comedy, is widely popular among people of all ages in the Emirates. Each season of Freej consists of fifteen episodes that are 15-minutes in length. The show has not only been a representation of the Emirati culture, but also a preservation of culture for educating the young. Many Emiratis have grown accustomed to watching Freej after the meal that breaks the fast in the Holy Month of Ramadan, which is the month of fasting for Muslims. It was aired during the Holy Months of Ramadan for three consecutive years since year 2006. Other locally produced cartoons were also aired along with or after Freej, such as *Sha'abeyat Alkartoon* and *Khoosa Boosa*, but none gained the success and acknowledgment that Freej has received. The success of Freej extended outside the Emirates and the Gulf countries and was acknowledged by foreign TV stations such as Cartoon Network. Freej is now aired on Cartoon Network with English subtitles and is being dubbed into Italian and other languages to reach a wider audience.

This thesis analyses the subtitling of a sample of cultural-bound terms from Freej. The aim is to see how well the Emirati culture is represented in the subtitles, and find solutions in instances where culture is replaced or deleted. The thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter is an introductory chapter that gives a brief

SUBTITLING AND CULTURAL REPRESENTATION: THE CASE OF *FREEJ*

overview of the chapters to come. The second chapter of the thesis defines subtitling as a field of audio-visual translation. Mechanics, constraints and strategies of subtitling are presented in this chapter. The third chapter defines culture in addition to defining many of its elements and presenting strategies to translate them. The chapter introduces the issue of the role that translators have in controlling the representation of cultures, as well as the issue of equivalence in translation. A list of strategies for translating and subtitling cultural-bound terms is explained.

The fourth chapter of the thesis consists of the data analysis. The data is taken from the first, sixth and ninth episodes of the Emirati cartoon Freej. Ten examples of cultural expressions, metaphors, poetry, instances of code-switching and examples of material culture and their subtitling in Freej are analyzed. The cultural-bound terms are first explained and then their subtitles are examined in terms of accuracy and cultural representation. A suggested alternative is proposed when the subtitles seem to fail to reach their purpose. Finally, the fifth chapter of this thesis is the concluding chapter that summarizes all the prior chapters and offers conclusions. Limitations of the current research as well as recommendation for future research are also discussed in the final chapter.

2. SUBTITLING AND PRAGMATICS

Subtitling is a branch of translation that involves many procedures. This chapter defines subtitling, explains its process, constraints and its pragmatic dimension. A brief historical overview of subtitling in the Arab world, specifically Egypt, is included. Although subtitling may belong to the cinematic field, such as script writing, it is looked at here as a branch of translation.

2.1 Audiovisual Translation

In the last century, translation has moved from appearing on paper to appearing on screens. Such forms of translation are known to belong to the audiovisual translation (AVT) category. AVT involves using translation in different audio visual media such as cinema, television, VHS, DVD, etc. It involves a linguistic transfer from one language, referred to as 'source' language, to another language referred to as 'target' language (Cintas, 2008: 7). AVT is also defined as "the written interpretation of a spoken message" on screen (Gamal, 2008). There are many types of AVT, such as voice-over, dubbing and subtitling. Voice-over involves lowering down the original voice and allowing one narrator to interpret what is being said by the speakers in the film or program (Gottlieb, 2001: 244). Voice-over acts as a good alternative for dubbing for countries that cannot afford dubbing. Pedersen, an experienced subtitler and researcher in the field of AVT, defines dubbing as a dominant form of AVT in film translation which involves replacing the original source language soundtrack with a target language soundtrack (Pedersen, 2010: 7). This form of dubbing is known as interlingual dubbing. Another form of dubbing is intralingual where the dialogue is replaced with another dialogue after filming the scene (p.8). Many

European countries prefer to dub imported films and TV programmes (Gottlieb, 2001: 244). In the 1990s, AVT has been considered a form of translation and as well as an academic field of research (Pedersen, 2010).

In addition to voice-over, dubbing and subtitling, there are other types of AVT, albeit less common than the ones mentioned earlier. One rare form of AVT is "audio description (AD)" (Pedersen, 2010: 4) which involves a narrator who explains in as much detail as possible the content on the screen. This form of AVT helps the vision-impaired access what is on the screen. Another rare form of AVT is "versioning" (p.4) where the film of TV program is shot in different languages for two or more times rather than being translated (p.6). Therefore, AVT can be perceived as a new and growing field in translation.

2.1.1 Subtitling: Definition and Background

One of the most common forms of AVT is subtitling. Subtitling is a process where the spoken words on the screen are translated and presented at the lower end of the screen in the film, movie, programme, etc. In some cases, subtitles may appear elsewhere on the screen such as in Japan where "subtitles are sometimes placed vertically on the side of the screen" (Gottlieb, 2001, cited in Pedersen, 2010: 10). Subtitling is sometimes known as "captions" which are "transcriptions of film or TV dialogue presented simultaneously on screen" (Gottlieb, 2001: 244). Subtitling is a multimodal form of translation since there is a "shift in mode from speech to writing" (Hatim & Mason, 430). The process is not necessarily performed by one person. Cinema subtitlers may work on paper by translating the dialogue from the provided

script producing a list of subtitles. These subtitles are then transferred by other people onto films (Gottlieb, 2001: 245). "Television and video subtitlers, on the other hand, usually work from videotape to disk, creating, editing, and time-cueing the subtitles on a PC-based workstation" (p.245). According to Gottlieb, a floppy disk is produced that is ready for broadcast. Advances in technology nowadays means that the subtitler may now have the end product on CD, DVD or a hard disk rather than a floppy disk. Unlike regular translation which usually has no economic limit, subtitles must be short. Delia Chiaro (in Munday, 2009: 148) explains that subtitles have to be shorter than the dialogue itself "because the viewer needs the necessary time to read the captions while at the same time remaining unaware that he or she is actually reading". The subtitler then is constricted to a specific amount of words, unlike the translator who usually has no word number limit.

When subtitling movies or television programmes or the like, translators have to consider dealing with four channels or mediums. There is the visible-auditory channel which includes "dialogue, background voices, and sometimes lyrics" (Gottlieb, 2001: 245). The non-verbal auditory channel includes "music, natural sound and sound effects" (p.245). The verbal visual channel includes "superimposed titles and written signs on the screen. The fourth channel is the non-verbal visual channel which consists of the composition of the picture and the flow (p.245).

2.1.2 Subbing Vs Dubbing

Subtitling is sometimes compared to dubbing and the debate on whether to sub or to dub has not ended till this day. According to Gottlieb, "English-speaking" or

"Source-language" countries prefer subtitling over dubbing imported films (Gottlieb, 1993:244) since the imported movies are "'art' movies aimed at a literate audience" (p.244). European countries such as Germany, Italy, Spain as well as French-speaking countries prefer dubbing. Almost all imported films are dubbed in these countries. While some scholars report that subtitling is much cheaper than dubbing (p. 248), subtitling is not superior to dubbing as some studies reveal (Schroter, 2010: 105). Some scholars in favor of dubbing state that in terms of watching films or programs for pleasure, dubbing is considered more favorable because subtitling is a more demanding exercise since it involves the viewer to pay attention to watching the images and hearing the dialogues on screen while at the same time reading the subtitles (Cintas, 2010). However, subtitling is sometimes favored since it is much more cheaper than dubbing. The cost of dubbing varies from one country to another (Pedersen, 2010: 8). As Pedersen points out, there are studies that conclude that viewers such as language learners and those who watch films and programs for entertainment, prefer the AVT modes they are used to and may criticize other options.

2.2 Types of Subtitling

Subtitling, in the linguistic sense, is of two types: intralingual and interlingual. Intralingual subtitling, also known as "Same Language Subtitling (SLS)" (Pedersen 2010) is a vertical form of subtitling which involves writing down the speech in the same language (Gottlieb, 2001: 247). This is used for subtitling programs for the deaf and hard-of-hearing audience, as well as for foreign language learners. In the United Kingdom, the communications act issued in 2003 requires 60% of the programs in the

UK to be subtitled for the deaf and hard-of-hearing. Pedersen quotes David Padmore from the company that produces subtitles for the BBC claiming that the BBC has "reached 100% interlingual subtitling on all their seven channels" (Pedersen, 2010: 3).

A more common form of subtitling is interlingual subtitling, which involves translating the spoken words from the film or program and presenting them as translated text on the screen. Interlingual subtitling is diagonal since the subtitler moves from translating dialogue in one language into writing in another language. The subtitler changes modes and languages. In technical terms, interlingual subtitling involves open subtitling and closed subtitling. Open subtitling has fixed subtitles appearing on screen as part of the picture appearing on the screen (p.247). Closed subtitling, on the other hand, is where the viewer has an option of viewing the program or film with or without the subtitles. Intralingual subtitling, or same language subtitling, benefits language learners and is suitable for the deaf and hard-of-hearing. Some countries require their programs to be subtitled for the deaf and hard-of-hearing.

Another form of subtitling is live subtitling. This form is only used for live broadcasts and is performed at the time the program is aired (Pedersen, 2010: 4). Voice recognition software is used by two subtitlers as an aid when producing such subtitles. Needless to say, the quality of live subtitling is lower than interlingual subtitling due to time constraints. Each type of subtitling has its own set of procedures. The following section explains the process of subtitling for films or television programs.

2.3 The Mechanics of Subtitling

The subtitling process differs from one company to another due to advances in technology. Diana Sanchez, (2004) an experienced subtitler from Barcelona, notes that there are no standard procedures for subtitling. At Imaginables, the subtitling company she works at, Sanchez tells of the subtitling procedures adopted:

Pre-translation: Translation of dialogue list before creation of subtitles.

Adaptation: Separation and adjustment of pre-translated text into subtitle units.

TC-in / TC-out: The time code at which a subtitle begins and ends.

Coding or Spotting: Capturing of TC-in and TC-out for all subtitles.

LTC: Linear Time Code, carried on an audio channel.

VITC: Vertical Interval Time Code, carried in the image within the interval between frames.

Simulation: Screening of film with complete subtitles.

Import: Transformation of adapted text into subtitle format.

Export: Transformation of subtitles into text format. (Sanchez, 2004: 9-10)

According to Sanchez (2004: 11) the translation of subtitles is done using a word-processing package first or written directly in a subtitling programme. Before any subtitling occurs, some companies prefer to verify the subtitles. The first part of this verification stage is letting a native speaker read and edit the subtitles file without seeing the video. This allows easier spotting of mistakes such as spelling, punctuation and incoherence in the text. To quote Sanchez "it is preferable that the person carrying out this stage has not seen the video previously, to maximize the

identification of incoherent phrases and minimize interference from the original"
(p.10).

The second step in the verification process is "simulation" (Sanchez, 2004: 10).
"Here the film or programme is screened with the complete subtitles to check for any
errors overlooked during the previous stages" (p.10). Some companies prefer that
someone who does not know the source language applies the second verification
process. This prevents interference of the knowledge of the source language while
reading the subtitles and checking for errors. If a translator performs this verification,
he or she will have to concentrate on listening and processing the source language
while reading and processing the target language. This strain on concentration may
result in errors and inability to spot small mistakes in the subtitles.

There are many subtitling methods. Two of the methods listed by Sanchez
involve pre-translation, followed by either adaptation first or spotting. Spotting is an
essential stage where it is ensured that the subtitles appear in the correct frame where
the speaker begins and stops talking (Sanchez, 2004: 13). Some frames are
occasionally adjusted to allow more reading time. This is done so as not to confuse
the audience by making the text appear before the speech is heard on screen or after.
Sometimes, the script is first adjusted then placed into subtitling units before being
spotted. This may occur when the client provides the translated script that will be
used for subtitling, or due to time constrains. Other times, spotting takes place before
adaptation. The subtitler determines the time code at which each subtitle begins and
ends, or in Sanchez's terminology "TC-in and TC-out" (p.11). The advantage of
spotting before adaptation is that it enables the subtitler to spot the units of the
dialogue without being "distracted by the quantity of information conveyed when

making the decision as to where a subtitle will begin and end" (p.11). A disadvantage of spotting before adaptation is the inability to avoid loss of information (p.12). These two methods of subtitling are used "in films and programmes which are to contain closed caption subtitles, such as the case in subtitling for DVD and satellite broadcasting" (p.12). Other constraints of subtitling will be discussed in the next chapter.

2.4 Constraints of Subtitling

Unlike other types of AVT, subtitling has the most constraints. Essentially, there are three major technical limits of subtiling: the length of the subtitle, the time it appears on screen as well as space limits that affect speech features. Subtitles usually consist of two lines and are allowed a maximum of 35 characters in length (Gottlieb, 2001: 245). Subtitles consisting of one-line are called "one-liner" and those consisting of two lines are called "two-liners" (Pedersen, 2010: 10). The basic unit in subtitling is a character and not a word. Characters include "commas, fullstops, dashes, exclamation marks and blank spaces, etc" (p.15). The number of characters that appear on the screen differs depending on factors such as size and the space that italics and capital letters occupy. Some letters such as "m" and "w" occupy a larger space than "I" (p.15). Second, time is another constraint that the subtitler has to consider when subtitling. Since subtitles appear for a limited time on the screen, the viewers do not have the option to go back and read what they missed or did not understand. Subtitles are to appear on the screen when the character on screen starts speaking and stop appearing once the speaker has finished what he or she was uttering (p.11).

The third and final technical constraint involves the degree at which the text on screen complements the visual image (Bogucki, 2004). Subtitling is expected to be more faithful to the source text (ST) compared to dubbing which allows more freedom in translation (Sanchez, 2004:12). The constraints of subtitling result in loss in subtitling more than that which appears in the case of translation (Bogucki, 2004). The shift in mode from speech to writing leads to loss of speech features such as "non-standard dialect, emphatic devices such as intonation, code-switching and style-shifting, turn-taking" (Hatim & Mason, 2000: 430). Part of the text is therefore lost in an effort to comply with the restrictions.

2.5 The Pragmatic Dimension of Subtitling

The subject of pragmatics is essential in analyzing subtitles. George Yule defines pragmatics as "the study or meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader)" (1996: 3). He further observes that pragmatics involves taking four things into account: the meaning of what people utter rather than the words themselves, the contextual meaning, how more is communicated without being said, and how close or distant the listener is and how the speaker determines how much needs to be said (p. 3). Mona Baker defines pragmatics as "the study of meaning, not as generated by the linguistic system but as conveyed and manipulated by participants in a communicative situation" (1992: 217). This definition shows that the listener is as involved in the generation of meaning as the speaker is in the conversation or communicative interaction.

2.5.1 Speech Acts

In the analysis of subtitling, there is always a focus on speech acts (Gottlieb, 2001: 247). Speech acts, as defined by George Yule, are "actions performed via utterances…such as apology, complaint, compliment, invitation, promise, or request" (Yule, 1996: 47). J. Austin, a philosopher from Oxford whose theory on speech acts is widely cited, is one of the first observers that sentences are able to convey more than what is presented at the sentence level. Austin notes that utterances have meaning beyond words, achieved by a "communicative force which is the dynamic element in communication, the element which moves communication forward" (Hatim & Mason, 2000: 59). Speech acts are intended by the speaker and may be direct or indirect (Hatim & Mason, 1990: 243). A direct speech act, as illustrated by Hatim & Mason in *Discourse and the Translator*, is a statement where it is clear from its utterance that it is directed to the person being spoken to, such as saying "Get out!" (p.243). An indirect speech act is one where the speaker utters a statement which does not directly state the response they want from their listeners. Such a statement can be "It's hot in here" which is an indirect way of telling the listener or receiver of this message to open the window (p. 243).

2.5.2 Locutionary, Illocutionary and Prelocutionary Forces

Communication, whether spoken or written, has three established acts: locutionary, illocutionary and prelocutionary. Austin (Horn & Ward, 2004: 54) defines locutionary acts as "acts of speaking" which help in constructing the speech such as sounds, remarks or "particular words and using them in conformity with the

grammatical rules of a particular language and with certain senses and certain references". This means the speech sounds are constructed according to the rules of language from which they are taken. In simpler terms, a locutionary act is simply an "act of utterance" (Yule, 1996: 48) which means the act of speaking. When a sentence is uttered for a function, the act of uttering this sentence is an illocutionary act. Yule explains that a single sentence, such as a person stating that he or she has "just made coffee" may function as an offer, an explanation or simply a statement (p.48). The speaker who uttered that sentence had a particular intention in mind.

Speakers in general have a function in mind when uttering a sentence. This is Austin's third category for acts which are known as prelocutionary acts (Horn & Ward, 2004: 54). A prelocutionary act is the effect of an utterance in a communication on the receiver of the message such as the listener or reader. It means "the extent to which the receiver's state of mind is altered by the utterance in question" (Hatim & Mason, 1990: 60). The prelocutionary effect may be different from what the producer has intended for the receiver of the communicative message (p. 60). Speech acts, as explained earlier, are part of the locutionary, illocutionary and prelocutionary acts since speech acts perform specific functions such as requesting, asking, leading the receiver of the communicative message into performing a certain action.

2.5.3 The Function of Pragmatics and the Theory of Relevance in Subtitling

In subtitling, considering speech acts, intentions and effects are more important than words by themselves. The pragmatic dimension gives the subtitler the freedom to "take certain liberties, bearing in mind that each subtitle must be paraphrased and

cued as part of a larger polysemiotic whole aimed at unimpeded" (Gottlieb, 2001: 247). Translating and producing subtitles without taking speech acts into consideration may produce subtitles that are not relevant to what the speaker on the screen is saying. Needless to say, relevance is an important issue in producing good subtitling. This thesis goes with the widely agreed upon belief that good subtitles are short. The theory of relevance is based on Grice's idea that "utterances automatically create expectations which guide the hearer toward the speaker's meaning" (cited by Wilson & Sperber in Horn and Ward, 2004: 607). These expectations are explained by Grice as being in accordance with "a Cooperative Principle and maxims of Quality" (p.607) that the speaker is expected to observe. The speaker is also expected to tell the truth in an informative way with the content of what he or she is saying to be relevant and clear. The central belief of the relevance theory is that any utterance by a speaker gives the listener signs or clues to what the speaker means. Gutt (2000) clarifies the relevance of the concept of relevance to translation. He explains that verbal expressions have semantic representations. The audiences of a text, whether on paper or screen, understand "semantic representations to propositional forms" by taking context into consideration (p.26). Keeping this in mind when subtitling helps produce good subtitles. These subtitles are good in the sense that they are brief and relevant (Gottlieb, 1993: 273).

2.6 Hatim and Mason: The Link Between Pragmatics and Semiotics

It is evident that meaning of words is an important aspect in analyzing subtitles. Another important aspect is semiotics, the signs or words themselves. Basil Hatim and Ian Mason illustrate the interrelation of pragmatics and semiotics, and explain how

these two dimensions are dependent on each other. The semiotic dimension is defined as "a dimension of context which regulates the relationship of texts to each other" (Hatim & Mason, 1990: 243). Semiotics are therefore signs, and signs are used to represent material or non-material objects. For example, the word 'jihad' in Arabic has several meanings. It can mean fighting for religion, while it can also mean being disciplined, following rules in any thing, could be as simple as sticking to a certain diet. When translated to English, the word 'jihad' loses all those semiotic meanings and boil down to fighting for religion, or even terrorism. The semiotic dimension is important to consider in translation because each sign refers to a specific thing in a given context. Hatim and Mason explain that the semiotics of context is "the prime mover that pushes communication together" and "is the motivating force behind pragmatic and other contextual features" (p.104).

When dealing with the semiotic dimension in translation, Hatim and Mason provide four stages for the translator to follow. The first stage involves identifying the ST's semiotic entity. This entity is understood within a certain context or "informational core" (Hatim & Mason, 1990: 106). This is the second stage provided by the theorists that tells the translator to understand the semiotic entity. The third stage of translating a semiotic entity involves "explication" (p.106). If the equivalent semiotic entity in the TT is not enough to explain the one in the ST, the translator will need to include more information than what is provided in the ST to help the TT audience understand the semiotic entity in the ST. This is related to the fourth stage that Hatim and Mason provide, which is the "transformational" stage where the translator modifies the text and "considers what is missing in terms of intentionality and status as a sign" (p.106). These stages illustrate how pragmatics and semiotics are

29

related and how important it is to keep both in mind while translating, and even subtitling. Understanding signs involves understanding and defining them through a given context and their intended or pragmatic meaning.

2.7 Subtitling in the Arab World

In the Arab world, unlike the West, there have not been many studies done in the field of AVT. One of the few researches available regarding AVT in the Arab world is by Muhammed Y. Gamal, an applied linguist. In his paper *Egypt's audiovisual translation scene* Gamal offers an overview of AVT in Egypt. Arabic channels resorted to subtitling and dubbing when Arab satellite began broadcasting in the early 1990s when the channels started broadcasting imported media (Gamal, 2008).

The first cinema in the Arab world was in 1907 in Egypt and showed experimental films. In 1927, Egypt produced its first silent film. Egypt had its own theatre movement and several acting schools by that time. The first company involved in AVT in the Arab world was the famous Anis Ebaid company in Egypt. Its name has appeared on almost every foreign film that was shown in Egypt and Arab countries between 1944 and 1989 (Gamal, 2008). The first form of AVT that was used is for translating imported film was subtitling. The idea was that American films were not dubbed because "Dubbing was deemed too dangerous to the fledging cinema industry in Egypt" (2008). In addition, subbing was cheaper and faster. Speed had to be taken into account because American films were subtitled in Egypt and distributed to other Arab countries.

The growth of the cinema industry in Egypt formed a standard for AVT in Egypt. In subtitling films into Arabic, the European standard of placing two lines at the bottom of the screen was followed. The Arabic that appeared on screen had certain characteristics such as censoring "explicit sexual language…swear words" and offensive reference to God, the prophets and Holy books (Gamal, 2008). The language appearing on-screen became a genre on its own and was labeled as "*Televese*" (Gamal, 2008). Consequently, movies of different genres had their own terminology. Overall, when subtitling into Arabic, the language that appeared on the screen was "formal" and "refined" (Gamal, 2008).

Like subtitling in the West which cannot escape from errors, Arabic subtitles had errors of their own. Some mistakes included unsupervised dotting of Arabic letters which could make the subtitles unclear since a change in dotting Arabic letters can change the meaning of the word. Other errors involved subtitles not appearing in the center of the screen or disappearing with white backgrounds. Sometimes subtitles were too fast or too small to be read. Those are some of the many reasons why subtitles were criticized when they appeared on Arabic screens.

Apart from technical difficulties of producing subtitles, there were linguistic difficulties due to diglossia when translating into Arabic. This phenomenon refers to the case where a language has two varieties. Arabic is a diglossic language since it consists of the colloquial or informal Arabic known as "*Ammeyia*" and the formal Classical Arabic "*Fus-ha*" (Gamal, 2008). Colloquial Arabic is the common everyday spoken dialect. Almost every Arab country has at least one form of colloquial dialect specific to it. Classical Arabic is the formal Arabic used "for formal purposes such as announcements, speeches, conferences, literature, exams, the press, etc" (Gamal,

2008). It is the language learned and used in classes. Ammeyia is never studied on its own and is not used in formal documents. Translators mostly deal with Classical Arabic when subtitling into Arabic. Even though advertisements on Egyptian television and some of the children's cartoons are produced in Ammeyia, "foreign audiovisual materials are almost universally rendered into Fusha" (Gamal, 2008). Unlike Ammeyia which is constantly changing, Classical Arabic has its own rules and does not change, which makes a better choice for AVT.

This section has defined subtitling and presented its procedures and constraints. Subtitling belongs to the audio-visual branch of translation. To sum up, subtitling has its own mechanics which can differ from one subtitling house to another. Advances in technology mean changes in the way subtitles are produced. Unlike other branches of translation, subtitling has not been given much attention in the academic field until much later in the West. In the Arab world, screen translation was not taught in the academia until 1995 when the first course on screen translation was offered in the American University of Cairo (Gamal, 2008). There are many issues to consider in subtitling. Some aspects are translatable while others pose great difficulties when subtitling. The next chapter explains what could be considered as the most challenging aspect to translate: culture.

3. Culture in Translation

Translation deals with culture and its many aspects. In this chapter, culture is defined and its relation to translation is explained. There are many ways for translating and subtitling culture. Some relevant translation and subtitling theories are summarized. Aspects of culture such as: dialect, metaphor, poetry and material cultures are defined and ways of translating them are discussed.

3.1 Definition of Culture

The word "culture" brings many meanings and definitions to mind. Ask anyone with a cultural background about their culture and they will tell you what their parents and grandparents have done in the past. Although culture may be mostly associated with the past, it is an indicator of the present as well since it influences day to day life. Many researchers have attempted to define culture, yet the definitions focus mainly on origin, effect or character of the phenomenon. From one point of view, culture "is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Bernard and Spencer, 1996: 137). In this regard, culture "is a product of relations between things" (p.133). Thus, the focus here is on perceiving culture as a product of various things that interact together. People may be seen as being products of their cultures due to the way they "react in particular ways and interpret their experience in distinctive ways" (Faiq, 2007: 9). Culture in this definition is seen as an embedded entity in people's actions and language.

However, although languages may change over time "(phonologically, morphologically, syntactically & semantically) cultures do not change the same way" (p.10). According to this view point, cultures maintain their past and even pasts.

Consequently, people usually act, or are expected to act, according to the norms of their culture. In other words, they act according to modes of behaviors where conformity is expected (Bernard and Spencer, 1996: 615). Therefore, belonging to a certain culture implies conforming one's actions with the norms of that culture.

Aside from behavior, culture is connected to and is inseparable from language. Samvor et al explain:

> The link between language and culture is evident because language is the primary means of instructing members of a society in culturally acceptable practices and behaviors for social interaction, in the appropriate relationships to the physical environment, and to the sensed but unseen supernatural. (Samvor et al, 2007: 168)

Languages are rich in cultural content such as idioms, poetry and songs. Such cultural elements may be specific to a certain culture and may not be understood by other cultures. Therefore, the language of a culture defines its people. A country protective of its culture would naturally be protective of its language too. People of certain cultures, such as the French people, go as far as producing all mass media in French only in order to maintain or protect their language (Samvor et al, 2007: 169). Thus, language and all its cultural elements pose challenges in translation, since they are part of the definition of culture.

. The previous definitions of culture are based on its entity, origin, effect or characteristics and language. In various cases, however, religion plays a major role in shaping a culture, because culture governs behavior and values which are inherently governed by religion. Values "are social agreements about what is considered good and bad, right and wrong, desirable and undesirable" (Mooney et al, 2000). People in turn define values on the basis of many things, including religion. Therefore, a

comprehensive definition of culture would include the previously mentioned elements in addition to religion.

In most cultures in the Arab region, Islam plays a major role in defining these cultures. In the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.), which is the Arab culture this thesis deals with, Islam influences many behaviors by influencing the categorizing of some behaviors as acceptable or not. The Islamic dress code for women, for instance, has influenced the Emirati costume for women. All Muslim women, according to the teachings of Islam, are to wear conservative clothes that do not reveal anything other than their palms and faces. The Emirati woman's dress, therefore, involves wearing a hijab (i.e. scarf) and a black cloak known as *abaya*. This has lead to women covering their heads when they leave the house if in front of men, other than their fathers, sons, uncles and sons-in-law. The color of the hijab and *abaya*, however, is due to the culture's influence and not because of Islam. The head cover and *abaya* are black due to the availability of the type of cloth in the past. Many Emirati women nowadays still wear black head covers and *abayas* due to their culture's influence, hence culture can be defined as an influence of the past. Clothes, in addition to other culturally-specific objects used, are considered to be material parts of culture. In translation, the translator has to carefully deal with culture-specific elements, whether material or non-material.

Apart from language, religion and other non-tangible aspects, culture is defined by material aspects as well. What is known as "material culture" involves "artefacts, clothing, houses (and) technology" (Bernard and Spencer, 1996: 612). In the U.A.E., "food, water, shelter and clothing (are) provided through the appropriate production and utilization of material culture" (Hurreiz, 2002: 147). To quote Schlereth:

Material culture study is, therefore, the study through artifacts and other pertinent historical evidence) of belief systems--the values, ideas, attitudes, and assumptions--of a particular community or society, usually across time. As a study, it is based upon the obvious premise that the existence of a man-made object is concrete evidence of the presence of a human mind operating at the time of fabrication. The common assumption underlying material culture research is that objects made or modified by humans, consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly, reflect the belief patters of individuals who made, commissioned, purchased, or used them, and, by extension, the belief patterns of the larger society of which they are a part. (Schlereth, 1999: 3).

Unlike Emirati folklore, poetry and values, material culture in the U.A.E. has not been given much attention by the academics and researchers (Hurreiz, 2002: 146). Therefore, this thesis is significant as it analyses the translation of both material and non-material aspects of the Emirati culture in the Emirati cartoon *Freej*.

3.2 Translating Culture: Translators as Cultural Mediators.

Apart from being a tool for communication, translation is also a tool that affects how cultures are represented. That is because as Faiq (2007) recognizes, every source text is "a unique union between form and content (manner and matter)…that is embedded in a specific cultural context" (Faiq, 2007: 1). In essence, translation deals with language which is an inseparable part from culture. Everything in language "is culturally produced, beginning with language itself" (Ramiere, 2006). The act of translation involves moving a language and its related culture based on reading rules which are imposed by the target language and its culture's norms (Faiq, 2007: 1).

Unfortunately, in translation, there is always a loss of meaning at some level. Specifically, in translating culture, there is an inevitable degree of cultural loss of the source culture. Every decision to translate is a decision based on many factors. One reason that may immediately come to mind is the desire to know more about a certain

culture and thus translating its literature. Another more political reason is to emphasize an exoticized image of the other culture by choosing texts and translating them in a way that emphasizes the already formed image of its people. Cultural identities are usually formed based on a few stereotypes (Carbonell, 2004: 30). The person translating culture translates a source text that fits its understanding of the source culture's people, objects and events. Other culture's identity and difference are marked in the translation, which leads to the formation of a master discourse (Faiq, 2007: 2). The master discourse of a certain culture governs the translation of other cultures. For example, Arabic translation has shied away from translating Greek mythology because it deals with several gods and other ideas that do not agree with or are against the teachings of Islam and Islamic ideology. It is evident that ideology has a role in shaping a culture. Ideology is defined by Andre Lefevere as "the conceptual grid that consists of opinions and attitudes deemed acceptable in a certain society at a certain time and through which readers and translators approach texts" (in Fawcett & Munday, 2009 : 137). Therefore, it is a serious part of cultures and their master discourses affect what is translated and how it is being translated. In addition, ideology causes translation of some texts to be completely unacceptable in a certain culture. For instance, the assassination of the Japanese translator who translated Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* (Fawcett & Munday, 2009: 138) illustrates the power of ideology in choosing what to translate. Such evidence asserts that ideology, which is a huge part of the master discourse, governs the choice and way that certain texts are translated.

Translation, in essence, involves the translator's interference and a degree of cultural mediation to be accepted by the target text's readers. Researchers like Lukasz Bogucki (2004) believe that translation is a mediated form of communication.

Lawrence Venuti also asserts that translation "yields enormous power in constructing representations of foreign cultures" (Venuti, 1998: 67). When the translation of a text is mediated, the source culture may not be represented as it is in the source text. That is because the strategies used in translation depend on the patrons issuing the translation such as publishers (Munday, 2004:126). The subsequent section shows how in the quest for achieving equivalence, a translator is led to interfere by manipulating the text.

3.3.1 Equivalence in Translation

A concept that cannot be overlooked when talking about translation in general is the concept of 'equivalence'. Equivalence can be defined "as a relationship between two texts: a source text (ST) and a target text (TT)" (Kenny, 2009: 96). A question that affects the translation product is: should one translate literally or freely? Basically, there are two extremes in translation, the decision to translate word for word or to translate freely and change whatever the translator feels needs to be changed for a certain reason. The concept of equivalence in translation has been debated early in history. Early advocates of free translation in western translation theory were Cicero from first century BC and ST Jerome from the late fourth century BC (Munday, 2008: 19). Cicero employed word-for-word translation when dealing with speeches of the Attic orators. ST Jerome's strategy for translation is summed up in his own words, "I render not word-for-word, but sense-for-sense" (Munday, 2008: 20). It is immediately clear that free translation was his strategy for translating the Christian Bible.

Equivalence occurs at many levels. Early theorists who wrote about equivalence have defined it by "focusing on the rank (word, sentence or text level) at which equivalence is said to obtain…or on the type of meaning (denotative, connotative, pragmatic, etc.) that are prioritized in particular instances of translation" (Kenny, 2009: 96). As cited earlier, equivalence can be sought at various levels. The translator's choice of what equivalence strategy to seek depends on many factors that govern the translation such as the purpose of the translation and its audience. In addition, taking the ST's and TT's cultures into account when choosing the form of equivalence to apply is very important in order to produce a TT that is as effective as the ST. Strategies for translating culture are explained later in this chapter.

3.3.2 Relevant Theories on Equivalence in Translation

Instead of defining free and literal translation, Nida, the Bible translator from the 1960s, came up with his own labels for equivalence and explained them. According to Nida, there are two types of equivalence: "formal equivalence" and "dynamic equivalence" (Munday, 2008: 42). Formal equivalence takes the form and content of the message into account. In order to achieve formal equivalence, Nida explains that "one is concerned that the message in the receptor language should match as closely as possible the different elements in the source language" (Nida, 2004:156). In other words, literal translation is applied. Nida suggests that a form of translation that produces a formally equivalent text is "gloss translation"(p.156) in which the translator aims to produce a target text that meets the source text's form and content.

Dynamic equivalence, on the other hand, involves producing a target text that reads as if it has been written in the target language. An example of such a translation offered by Nida is J. B. Phillip's translation of the New Testament. He translated "greet one another with a holy kiss' as 'give one another a hearty handshake all around" (Nida, 2004:157). Dynamic equivalence is attained in this example because the TT renders that which is culturally unfamiliar in the ST into something more familiar and related to the target reader's culture. Dynamic equivalence therefore comes in handy when dealing with cultural specific terms and references. Both of Nida's formal and dynamic equivalence lie at the opposite ends of the poles of translation. "Between the two poles of translation…there are a number of intervening grades, representing various acceptable standards of literary translating." (Nida, 2004:157), these involve factors such as taking time, context and culture into account when translating.

Another theorist on translation equivalence whose views are similar to Nida's is Peter Newmark. In his book *Approaches to Translation*, Newmark offers his own terminology of literal and free translation with his own definitions of: communicative and semantic translation. The former is similar to Nida's dynamic equivalence which aims to produce an effect on the TT readers similar to that on the ST readers. Semantic translation "attempts to render, as closely as the semantic and syntactic structures of the second language allow, the exact contextual meaning of the original" (Newmark, cited in Munday, 2008:44). This is different from literal translation as semantic translation takes the context into account and may resort to explaining some alien terms to the TT readers such as explaining metaphors. It is therefore less extreme than the literal, word-for-word translation. The best approach for both

semantic and communicative translation according to Newmark is literal translation (45). Newmark also believes that if semantic translation does not work, the translator must resort to communicative translation, which is similar to what Nida proposed earlier.

Even though there is an abundance of theories and terminology on equivalence in translation, the translation model offered by Juliane House is worth mentioning. Unlike Nida and Newmark whose translation is oriented towards the target text receivers, House's model and focus in translation relies on "comparative ST-TT analysis leading to the assessment of the quality of translation, highlighting 'mismatches' or 'errors'" (Munday, 2008:91-2). Like the previous theorists, House has her own terminology and definition on translation strategies: overt and covert. House's overt translation produces a TT that does not directly address the receivers of the TT. The result is a TT that reads as a product and does not claim to be an original. This form of translation works for texts that are bound to their source cultures and time. Equivalence, in this case, "has to be sought at the level of language/text, register and genre" (Munday, 2008:93).

Covert translation reads as if it has been written in the ST's culture. In her own words, House states that a covert translation" is a translation which enjoys the status of an original text in the target culture" (cited in Munday, 2008:93). Such ST is not bound to a specific time and culture, and like the ST, addresses its receivers directly. An example presented by House of such a translation is that of a tourist brochure. Equivalence in this form of translation is important at the genre and text's function levels. House suggests applying a "culture filter" by "modifying cultural elements and thus giving the impression that the TT is an original" (93). House's covert translation

41

is similar to Nida's dynamic equivalence and Newmark's communicative translation. This form of translation may be preferred in some occasions such as in audio-visual translation where the aim of AVT is to provide or transfer entertainment to the target audience. Another instance where this form of free translation is relevant is when translating cultural-bound elements since translating otherwise may produce alien elements in the TT.

3.4 Strategies for Translating Culture

Translating culture in general, including its material and non-material aspects, involves acknowledging the goal of translation first. Usually there is a purpose that determines why a certain text is chosen for translation and others are not. Arabic texts that are selected for translation into English, for instance, are chosen because they conform "to the master discourse of writing about and representing Arabs, Arab culture and Islam" (Faiq, 2007: 17). These texts are not chosen merely for their "innovative approaches or for their socio-political perspective" (p.17). The strategy of foreignizing, meaning keeping the foreign elements foreign and explaining them through footnotes (Carbonell, 2004: 31) for example, is a successful way for maintaining an element of foreignness. Through footnotes, or what Carbonell calls "Orientalist footnotes" (2004: 31), the translator acts as a guide and attempts to clarify, balance or even soften situations and terms that may be understood as alien by the target text receivers (p.31).

Pure linguistic knowledge of the source text is therefore not enough to translate. According to Nida, a translator is required to have enough "cultural information" about the culture he or she is translating into (Venuti, 2004: 113) in order to translate

the target text in a way that TT readers can understand the ST. Venuti explains that Nida's strategy reduces the linguistic and cultural differences to a shared referent understood by the TT readers (p.113). The positive result of this strategy is making the TT understandable by replacing foreign source culture elements with familiar target culture elements. The resulting text is a localized version that has been reshaped to fit the TT context. The TT audience who have no access to the ST consider the TT to be a translation of the original.

Venuti, who happens to be an advocate of foreignizing, views translation with suspicious eyes because it domesticates foreign texts. In his book, *The Scandals of Translation*, Venuti explains that in translation, there is always a choice on what to translate and not translate. This choice in translation extends to which values are included or omitted in the translation of any text, thereby "producing cultural and political effects that vary with different institutional contexts and social positions" (Venuti, 1998: 67). Translation, Venuti further explains, is capable of forming "cultural identities" due to its constructed representation of foreign cultures (p.67).

In some forms of translation, such as AVT, the interference of the translator is required to produce an acceptable product (film, program, advertisement, etc.) by the viewers. This involves applying the process of adaptation which rewrites "a text for a new readership while maintaining some form of equivalence between source and target texts" (Bastin, 2009 : 3). One reason for adapting is "the need for foreign texts to be adapted to the tastes and habits of the target culture" (p.3). This could be the main reason why the strategy and product of adaptation are favored in AVT. In movies for instance, swearing may be cut out or softened to fit the target culture's norms and master discourse. Adaptation could go as far as deleting some parts of the source (whether the source is a written text or a movie) in order to make it acceptable

to the target audience. This may be the reason why some theorists see adaptation as

"distortion, falsification" and "censorship" (p.3). Nevertheless, it is a required

translation strategy in many cases.

Therefore, in translating culture and cultural-bound terms, there is no correct or

incorrect form. Different texts and purposes for their translation call for the use of

different strategies. There are several ways in which cultural references can be

translated, and the degree of acceptability or correctness of the target text depends on

the aim of translating in the first place. Taking into consideration the above discussion

on strategies for translating culture, this thesis is concerned with the translation

strategies that fit AVT, specifically subtitling. It focuses on the representation of

culture, as it illustrates the many ways in which translators deal with culture in

subtitling, which is the focus of the next section.

3.4.1 Strategies for Subtitling Culture.

The Emirati cartoon *Freej*, analyzed in this dissertation, is rich with cultural

references that include material as well as non material culture. There are many

strategies for subtitling cultural references, or what Nathalie Ramiere calls "culture-

specific item(s)" or "CSI" in short (2006). Like any form of translation, the translator

can either translate literally (i.e. translating word for word) or freely, meaning shaping

the text to however the translator deems appropriate. The former produces foreignized

subtitles, meaning that the cultural references are kept foreign to the target reader. An

example of foreignizing strategy is transliterating cultural term into the target

language. Jan Pedersen categorizes cultural references into two: "monocultural ECRs

(extra-linguistic cultural references)" and "transcultural ECRs"(2007). Monocultural

ECRs are cultural references known to the ST audience but hardly known to the TT audience. Transcultural ECRs refer to cultural references which are known to both the ST and TT audiences. Pedersen suggests that the subtitler intervenes when translating monocultural references in order to help the audience to access the ECR.

> This could be done by specification, generalisation or direct translation when possible. Another way of dealing with these troublesome ECRs is to replace an unknown reference with a known one, either from the source culture (SC) or from the target culture (TC), and this is where the subtitler has to presume a degree of cultural interchangeability (Pedersen, 2007).

Changing unknown cultural references to the target audience into cultural references they know creates a "breach of reference" (2007) as Pedersen observes. According to Pedersen, this may make the audience question the subtitler's honesty. However, the "degree of excellence" of the subtitles "has to be measured against what the subtitlers decide to translate as well as what they decide not to translate" (Bogucki, 2004). In the case of *Freej*, subtitles are meant to be understood by the target text's audience while at the same time have a role of educating the target audience about the Emirati culture. Reaching this objective is nearly impossible since there is almost always a "loss" in translation (Bassnett, 2002: 56). This loss, however, does not mean a complete loss in audio-visual translation since the image on the screen remains the same and therefore preserves part of the meaning.

3.4.2 Translating Dialect

Almost every language has a dialect or a way of speaking that is different from its written form. Spoken Arabic and written Arabic, for instance, are not the same. Formal Arabic, which is also known as "written Arabic" or Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), is used for writing (Palmer,2007). Formal Arabic is related to Classic Arabic known as *Fus-ha,* as explained earlier, that follows the grammar, syntax and linguistic

rules of the form of the Holy Quraan, the Muslim's Holy book which is considered to be the source of standard Arabic rules. Spoken Arabic, however, is not the same. Arab speakers speak in the dialect of where they come from or have lived in. There are about four major groups of Arabic dialects:

> a) Maghrebi (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and western Libya), b)
> Egyptian… c) Laventine (Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine) and d)
> the Arabic of the Arabian Peninsula and Persian Gulf (Iraq, Saudi
> Arabia, Yemen, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, the UAE and Kuwait) (Freeman,
> 1996)

There are many varieties within each dialect, the way that people speak shows whether they come from the city or from the rural areas of the country, including their educational level. In many Arab countries, including the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.), differences in dialect also reveal whether the speaker is Bedouin or not. In general, regardless of the dialect used, the highest standard of Arabic is the MSA. Dialects are considered to be of a lower status in spoken language compared to the standard form of language. This difference in status between two ways of speaking in one language is known as diglossia (Bernard and Spencer, 1996: 602). Other languages, such as English and Greek, have dialects too.

Understandably, diglossia is not the only issue a translator has to deal with when translating a ST in dialect form. Dialect sometimes involves code-switching where speakers may use words from formal language or a foreign language while speaking. Speakers may switch codes consciously or unconsciously (Dickins et al, 2002: 169) for many reasons. Arabic speakers, for instance, may use words from the formal Arabic "for social camouflage" (p. 169) or while giving a formal presentation

where using words from the formal Arabic is more appropriate for the situation.
Speakers may also switch codes and use words from a second language because they
find those words easier than words of the same meaning in their own language. There
are many reasons related to register that leads a speaker to switch codes. The words
and dialect that a person uses in his or her speech are governed by situation (Lefevere,
2000: 60). Lefevere explains that code-switching can elevate the illocutionary force
of speech. He further explains that a speaker may switch codes depending on
situation, time and other aspects. A woman speaking to her child would use different
language when speaking to her own mother for instance. This same woman who
could be a surgeon will use different specialized language known as "jargon" (p.63)
when explaining the procedures of an operation to a nurse. Therefore, choice of
words, whether they are from a different dialect or language, affects and is affected
by situation.

Without exception, dialect and the features that it involves such as diglossia and
code-switching, being an only-spoken version of language, pose challenges in
interpreting and audio-visual translation such as subtitling and dubbing. Virtually,
each dialect relates to a specific culture and has its own set of metaphors and other
cultural sayings. Switching codes while speaking tells something about the speaker or
the situation, but translating this switch may be very difficult or perhaps impossible.
The authors of *Thinking Arabic Translation* suggest a list of strategies for translating
dialect. Before translating, the authors suggest that the translator determines the
overall importance, effect or function that these spoken features have in the source
text. One of their suggestions is to "use TL (target language) dialect features"
(Dickins et al, 2002: 168) in some cases. In most cases however, especially when

translating from Arabic into English, the target language does not have the tools that allow the application for this strategy. Obviously, the English language is not as diglossic as Arabic, and translating a colloquial Arabic saying into a colloquial English saying could change the overall meaning. Perhaps the best translation of Arabic into English is using standard English because dialect, diglossia and code-switching do not pose much of a challenge in translation as much as other culture-related features in language such as metaphors. To elaborate on this point further, the proceeding section focuses on translating metaphors and other cultural discourse features.

3.4.3 Translating Metaphors

Metaphors may be seen as the fingerprint of culture in spoken and written language. Miriam-Webster's *New Collegiate Dictionary* defines metaphor as "a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them" (Mish, 1984 :746). A metaphor is "a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is used in a non-basic sense, this non-basic sense suggesting a likeness or analogy with another more basic sense of the same word or phrase" (Dickins et al, 2002: 147). In simpler terms, a metaphor may be a word or a phrase that means something linguistically but is used to imply another meaning in a given setting or context. There are lexicalized and non-lexicalized metaphors. The former term refers to metaphors whose meaning is known and can be found in dictionaries (p. 147). Lexicalized metaphors include "dead metaphors" which have become part of the language and may not even be recognized as being metaphors at all. Stock metaphors or idioms, as well as new or recent

metaphors, belong to the lexicalized metaphors category because their meanings are known. A non-lexicalized metaphor is a metaphor whose meaning varies depending on the context. Its meaning is not fixed and the author has to make it out (p. 147).

Unlike dialect and other spoken features of language, a metaphor must be dealt with rather than discarded when translating. The first step in translating metaphors is understanding them. Most metaphors are made of three components: "topic, vehicle and grounds" (Dickins et al, 2002: 148). The topic is the concept referred to, the vehicle is the object or what the topic is being compared to, and grounds refers to the base on which the comparison is made. Since idioms may be the most common forms of metaphors, there are many ways in which they can be handled in translation. The first way that comes to mind is to translate the idiom literally, which is not a good technique since the result produced may be awkward and may sound foreign in the target language. Another way is to explain the ST idiom in the TT language. A more effective strategy is to replace the ST idiom with a TT idiom that has a similar meaning from the target language. This strategy erases the awkwardness of what may be seen as foreign to the target readers and results in a translated text that is free from exoticism and that reads easily.

Some critics do not count including equivalent idioms from the TT in the text as a translation (Berman, 2004: 287). This is true if the only definition of translation was translating a text word-for-word. However, translation has many definitions and strategies. Localization, which means replacing the foreign ST element with a familiar TT element, is after all a translation strategy that results in a text that is seen as a translation. The effectiveness of the translation depends on whether the cultural

element is intended to be maintained in the TT or not, and whether localization or foreignization is preferred or expected of the translator.

3.4.4 Translating Poetry

Like dialect, metaphor and other culture-specific (linguistic) aspects, poetry has not escaped the translatable and non-translatable debate. Unlike the other linguistic aspects, however, the translation of poetry is more challenging because of its form and style. Phonetic features present in poetry such as alliteration, rhyme and assonance pose challenges in the translation process. Alliteration is "the recurrence of the same sound or sound-cluster at the beginning of words" as in *"two tired toads"* (Dickins et al, 2002; 81) where the three words begin with the letter 't'. Assonance refers to "the recurrence, within words, of the same sound or sound-cluster" such as in "a great day's painting" (p.81) where the sound of the letter 'a' is repeated in all the words. Another important phonetic and stylistic aspect that distinguishes poetry from prose is the frequent use of rhyme. Words or sentences, especially in poetry, rhyme when they end with the same sound (Merriam-Webster.com).

Apart from considering phonetic features of poetry in translation, a translator is faced with the challenge of dealing with other stylistic features of poetry such as metaphors, repetition and ambiguity (Boase-Beier, 2009: 195). Although these stylistic features are used in non-poetic language, they are used much more frequently in poetry. As Verdonk observes. ambiguity, which is a feature that allows several interpretations of the same thing, gives poetry flexibility in translation that allows it to fit different contexts (p.195). This could be the reason why many poems have been

translated from one language into many languages. However, the concept of cultural difference remains an important issue to be considered in translating poetry. There are many ways of dealing with the translation of cultural aspects discussed earlier in this chapter. Translation of ambiguity proves that poetry can be translated.

Another proof that poetry can be translated is the fact that many poems have been translated into different languages. Some poets have been translated many times (Boase-Beier, 2009: 194) such as Shakespeare. A translator of poetry must possess special critical and writing abilities (p.194). Some believe that it takes a poet to translate another poet. Ezra Pound, one of the American early modern poets for instance, has translated many Chinese poems into English. If form is difficult to translate in poetry, some critics suggest translating poetry into prose (Boase-Beier, 2009: 195). This strategy has been used to translate some of Shakespeare's work into other languages. Another solution for dealing with the difficulty in translating poetry is to produce a new poem or move from the original and produce an "Imitation" in Lowell's terminology, or "versions" in Paterson's terminology (p.194).

However, the question of the translatability of Arabic poetry is a whole different issue. Al Jahiz, a distinguished Arab author and philosopher of the ninth century has stated in his book *Kitab-Alhayawan* (Book of Life) that poetry is not translatable (Jahiz, 1996). He acknowledges that although literature from other cultures such as Greek Philosophy and Persian literature have been translated, Arabic "wisdom", which also refers to poetry, cannot be translated. Attempting to do so destroys its meter, rhyme and beauty. Accoding to Al Jahiz, meter is very important and distinguishes the Arabic language. Therefore, the current texts that are seen as "translations" of Arabic poetry are texts which have lost their linguistic stylistic and

aesthetic beauty, and perhaps meaning as well. Many Western theorists and translators who came later agree with Al Jahiz that poetry is not translatable. Roman Jakobson, for instance, explains:

> poetry by definition is untranslatable. Only creative transposition is possible: either intralingual transposition – from one poetic shape into another, or interlingual transposition – from one language into another, or finally intersemiotic transposition – from one system of signs to another, e.g. , from verbal art into music, dance, cinema, or painting (Jakobson, 2004: 143).

Jakobson's observations have been proved right by current available 'translations' of poetry. An example of intralingual transposition would be the translation of an epic poem such as Homer's *Odyssey* into a novel (Vermeer, 2004: 238) thus changing its form. An example of interlingual transposition would be Ezra Pound's translations of some Chinese poems. An example of intersemiotic translation is the adaptation of some of Shakespeare's poems and plays into movies. These are all products of attempts to translate poetry. Whether these products are seen as translations of original texts or as completely new texts is a matter of perspective.

3.4.5 Translating Names

Proper names, in any text, can tell about the source culture. Proper names are names of people, places and things. They may also "refer to setting, social status and nationality of characters" (Ordurari, 2010). In literature, a certain name "usually contains an allusion to a certain word in the language, and that allusion allows readers to characterize characters" (Lefevere1992: 39). Names are difficult to translate, particularly when they acquire a given semiotic status and enter the realm of

Intertextuality. Many theorists agree that there are two ways of translating names, either keeping them in the TT which may cause exoticism, or replacing them which means applying the strategy of localization. Other theorists, however, see more options. In her book, *Culture bumps: an empirical approach to the translation of allusions,* Ritva Leppihalme (1997) presents three main strategies for translating names. Her first strategy involves retaining the name and either adding a brief or long explanation, or adding no explanation at all (Leppihalme, 1997: 79). Although this strategy involves more work on the translator's part, it could be useful in retaining intended meaning in the TT. Leppihalme's second strategy involves replacing the name by either another source language or target language name. In this case, the effect that the original meaning added is lost. Her final strategy involves omitting the name either completely or transferring the sense through other means such as a noun. The affect of applying this strategy is almost similar to the effect of the second strategy. Even though all of these strategies are options, the choice to opt for in translating depends on many factors such as the purpose of the translation and the importance this name occupies in the ST.

As clarified in this chapter, culture can be defined through many aspects/elements. Language is indeed an inseparable element of culture and dealing with the cultural aspects of language is one of the major challenges in translation. Linguistic elements such as dialect, metaphors, poetry and names that are culture-bound require certain strategies. The next chapter examines which translation strategy works best at given circumstances and context to each of these cultural elements.

4. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This chapter analyses the subtitling of data that consist of cultural elements such as cultural expressions, metaphors, poetry, code-switching and names. The data sample is taken from three episodes of the third season of the Emirati cartoon *Freej* (episodes 1, 3 and 9). The analysis of data takes into account the theories and strategies of translating and subtitling culture presented in the previous two chapters. The aim of the analysis is to see how much of the Emirati culture is transferred through the subtitles, and to find out which strategies are the most effective in translating culture.

4.1 Why *Freej*?

This chapter analyses the subtitling of culture-bound terms and expressions from the Emirati 3D cartoon *Freej*. *Freej* is specifically chosen as a subject of study because it is currently part of the Emirati pop culture. It has been a hit TV show, despite being a cartoon, ever since it first aired in 2006 during the holy month of Ramadan on Sama Dubai channel. The other seasons of *Freej* were also aired during Ramadan of the following years. What makes the cartoon special is that it is the first 3D animated series produced by an Emirati. The idea came to its creator and director, Mohammed Saeed Hareb, in 1998 and remained in a six-page study book until it materialized as an animation show in 2006 (Saffarini, 2006). The project was adopted by Dubai Media City in 2003 and funded by Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid's Establishment for Young Business Leaders (Nihad, 2008). After going to universities and seeing if there is a market need or welcoming for a locally produced cartoon,

Hareb established Lammtara Pictures and a team of around 500 people helped in producing the first season of *Freej*.

Freej means neighborhood in the Emirati dialect. Each episode is 15-minutes long. The cartoon shows the day to day life of four elderly Emirati women living in a secluded area in modern Dubai. The main characters are : Um Saeed, Um Saloom, Um Allawi and Um Khammas. The word "Um" means 'the mother of'. Each one of the main characters is called 'the mother of' the nickname of her eldest son except Um Saeed and Um Khammas, where Saeed and Khammas are not nicknames but proper names. Perhaps the difference in naming is because Um Saeed is modeled after Hareb's own grandmother. Most episodes start by showing the main characters gathered at Um Saeed's house, sipping Arabic coffee referred to as 'gahwa' in the Emirati dialect, while sitting on the floor the traditional Emirati way. In each episode, the characters are faced with a new social issue that they have to solve in their own way. The show is full of social and cultural issues mixed with satire and comedy. Although *Freej* was originally aimed at a female audience between the ages of 18 and 35 (Baldwin, 2010), the show ended up attracting a huge audience of both sexes ranging from toddlers to grandparents.

The creation of *Freej* required a lot of research. Saffarini (2006) reveals that over thirty students from Zayed University "worked for a year behind the scenes to help the cartoon's creator Mohammed Saeed Harib bring this project to life" (Saffarini, 2006). The student volunteers took pictures of modern buildings and traditional houses in Dubai, and collected Emirati metaphors and cultural sayings as well as popular old Emirati songs (Saffarini, 2006). The collected pictures were used for reference for drawing the cartoon's setting, whereas the metaphors and songs were

incorporated in the dialogue. In addition to the collective effort that made the show possible, the cost was another matter. Each episode of the 15min episodes of every season costs upto Dhs500,000 to produce (Baldwin, 2010). The fruit of the energy and money put in the production of *Freej* is clearly visible in the resulting success of the show.

After the success of the first season, Mohammed Saeed Hareb went on to produce a second and third season in the consecutive two years, and a fourth season which is set to air in August 2011. Apart from the fifteen minute episodes, a twenty-eight episode quiz show titled "Book of Riddles" was aired during the Ramadan of 2009 (*Freej*: The Book of Riddles, 2009). Lammtara Pictures and its founder Hareb have also produced a theatrical production titled "*Freej* Folklore" (Salem, 2010). A theme park worth about three billion Emirati Dirhams is also being built at the moment and is set to open in 2013. After its success with *Freej*, Lammtara Productions has signed a contract with Cartoon Network and are now working on producing a "completely new line of animated shows under different names with different characters that could follow *Freej* into international air space" (Baldwin, 2010).

Freej has been subtitled in English and Italian, and was aired on Cartoon Network in January 2011. Hareb expressed his happiness about *Freej* going global in many press releases and interviews. In one press release, he said that *Freej*'s going outside the Gulf "will expose people to Arabic culture around the world" (Baldwin, 2010). Indeed, even Ali Alsaloom, the author of *Ask Ali, A guide to: Abu Dhabi* and cultural consultant in the UAE advises people who want to learn about the UAE to watch *Freej*. Western viewers may not understand every cultural reference (Alsaloom,

2010: 56) but it is a good place to start learning about the culture and the Emirati dialect, according to Alsaloom. The issue of how much of the culture is transferred in the subtitles of *Freej* is the focus of this thesis. In the following analysis, examples of specific cultural elements and their subtitles are analyzed. The aim is to see how the Emirati culture is represented and how much of the culture is translatable.

4.2 Methodology

The previous two chapters have discussed subtitling, culture and presented strategies for subtitling culture. As touched upon in chapter 2, subtitling is a form of audio-visual translation (AVT) that has more constraints than regular translation. In addition to the technical constraints, cultural elements and cultural-bound terms pose a challenge in subtitling. Chapter 3 presented strategies for translating and subtitling many cultural elements. For the purpose of this thesis, the subtitling of ten examples of cultural expressions, metaphors, poetry, code-switching and material culture which includes names of people, objects and religious rituals will be analyzed.

The analysis will take into account in the examination of the source samples in the Arabic context and the effect of the English subtitles on meaning. The aim is to see how well culture is transported into the target language and whether there are alternatives that could be suggested when the subtitles fail or keep a possibility for a better alternative translation. Samples from episodes 1, 3 and 9 titled "Jameela", "Maid for You" and "The Meeting" respectively from the third season of *Freej* are analyzed. The third season is specifically chosen because it has the highest quality subtitles compared to the DVDs of the previous two seasons in terms of pragmatics and understandability. The subtitling is done by Prose Solutions Content

Development and Consultancy in the UAE. The subtitling team consisted of four members, two native Arabic speakers: an Emirati and another Arab, in addition to two native English speakers (Grunfeld, 2010). The episode scripts have been acquired from Lammtara Pictures, the company that created *Freej*. The spelling of the subtitles in the following tables is according to the spelling of the text in the original episode scripts. The analysis in this chapter takes into account the translation strategies presented in the second and third chapters of this thesis. The data consists of samples of:

- Cultural expressions

- Metaphors

- Poetry

- Code-switching

- Names

For the purpose of the analysis reported in this chapter, the term localization is used in its wider and general meaning, akin to the meanings associated with domestication and naturalization.

4.3 Analysis

4.3.1 Cultural Expressions

People express their feelings and react to certain situations according to the 'normal' way that almost everyone else reacts in their culture. Different cultures have different cultural expressions. Cultural expressions include expressing: surprise,

happiness, horror, love, etc. While feelings may be universal, cultural expressions are not. Consequently, each culture expresses a certain feeling in a completely different way when compared to another culture. The following table consists of a sample of ten Emirati cultural expressions, their subtitles and the subtitling strategy applied by the subtitlers of *Freej*.

Table 4.3.1 Cultural Expressions

	Source Text	**Target Text**	**Strategy Used**
1	أن شاء الله	God willing	pragmatic
2	بالبركة	congratulations	localization
3	فامان الله	goodbye	pragmatic
4	شربي قهوتج فوقه <u>فديتج</u>	Drown it in your coffee, <u>my dear</u>	localization
5	ماشاءالله	---------	deletion
6	ويه بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم	Oh my God! You startled me	Deletion and localization
7	<u>حسبي الله عليج</u> يا أم خماس و على شورج العاثر	Damn you and your bright ideas, Um Khammas	Localization
8	مياو	meow	Localization
9	يا اميه	dear	Localization
10	استهدي بالله	Calm down	Localization

Table 4.3.1 shows the translation of a sample of ten cultural expressions from the three episodes of *Freej* for analysis. The strategy applied by the subtitlers for the first example is the strategy that maintains the pragmatics of the words. As mentioned

in the second chapter of this thesis, the pragmatic dimension of words, and specifically speech acts, are very important in analyzing subtitles (Gottlieb, 2001: 247). Speech acts are words or utterances spoken to convey more than what is presented at the sentence level. Speech acts are direct and indirect. A direct speech act is straightforward and directed towards the person being addressed such as ordering someone to do something.

Indirect speech acts come in three sub categories. The first category of speech acts termed as 'locutionary' is a speech act that imitates or tries to imitate sounds such as 'click' and 'meow'. The second type of indirect speech acts is 'illocutionary force', when the words uttered in a sentence are intended to imply a meaning different from what they linguistically mean. The third and final subcategory of indirect speech acts is the 'prelocutionary' force. A sentence that induces prelocutionary force is one that influences the receiver to perform a certain action. A prelocutionary force may be different from what the producer has intended for the receiver of the communicative message (Hatim & Mason, 1990: 60). The pragmatic dimension of subtitling is important to keep in mind when analyzing subtitles. In the remainder of this chapter, the subject of pragmatics is referred to in the analysis regardless of the translation strategy the subtitlers use, because pragmatics is embedded in culture and is an important category in analyzing speech.

With reference to the table containing ten cultural expressions provided above, in most cases (6), the subtitlers applied the strategy of localization. As explained in the previous chapter, localization involves replacing foreign source culture elements with familiar target culture elements in order to make the TT understandable to the TT audience. This may also be seen as pragmatic translation, since the strategy of

SUBTITLING AND CULTURAL REPRESENTATION: THE CASE OF *FREEJ*

localization focuses on making the ST understandable by the TT readers. In examples 2, 4, 6-10, the localized subtitles are understandable to the TT audience since they are not literal translations of the ST. Rather, the subtitlers provided expressions that would be used by a person from the target culture if he or she was in a similar situation as the person in the source culture. However, a lot of losses have occurred. In example 2, the ST expression is used to congratulate someone on something positive and means to bless someone, so the speaker is saying "may you be blessed", which has religious connotation. The word "congratulations" has no religious connotation and therefore, religious connotation is lost again for the sake of localization, which resulted in losing part of the religious pragmatic part of the expression.

The ST in example 4 means "I sacrifice myself for you", and is said or used in a similar way that the words 'darling', 'honey', 'sweetheart' , 'my dear' in addition to other terms that express affection or endearment. These words are not always used to express affection. Their meaning depends on the context. In this context for instance, the speaker is Um Jameel, an annoying neighbor who understands that Um Khammas, the person whom she is speaking to, wants her to leave. Um Jameel uses the word here to soften the situation and make herself seem more acceptable to Um Khammas so that she will let her stay at Um Saeed's house where the women are gathering. Even though the pragmatics of the word فديتج 'fediitech' are partly maintained by saying 'my dear', the cultural meaning is lost in the process of localization. The word 'my dear' may show that the person being spoken to is dear to the speaker, but does not show that the speaker values the person she is addressing to the point of being willing to sacrifice herself for the person she's speaking to. This emphasizes how deep the ST

word is compared to the subtitle. No suggested alternative is required because there is no term of endearment in English equivalent to the ST word.

Another example where the strategy of localization is applied is in example 7. Unlike the previous examples, however, localization here does more harm than good. In the ST, the speaker who is Um Saeed, says حسبي الله عليج يا أم خماس where 'Hasbiyallah' has a long meaning which can be summarized by saying that the speaker lets go and lets God take care of the issue that has troubled the speaker.. The focus here is religious and is based on having faith in Allah's solution for a certain problem rather than going to fight for one's right. The subtitle "damn you Um Khammas" is a huge mistake in terms of meaning or pragmatics. The Arabic culture, and likewise the language, have a lot of religion embedded in them. Damning in Islam means you are praying that the person you are addressing to be deprived of Allah's blessings. Damning is considered a taboo because, according to the Islamic beliefs, it backfires on the person using the term. The TT does not serve as a good subtitle for the ST. A better or softer replacement would be: "May God help with dealing with your problematic ideas Um Khammas". Although this produces long subtitles, it preserves the religious connotation in the ST.

The next examples 8 and 9 are much softer cases of localization. Example 8 is a speech act that has a locutionary force which imitates the sound made by cats. The pragmatics of the ST in example 9 means my dear but is expressed by saying "yammiih" meaning 'mama' or 'mum', a way Emirati grandmothers and mothers answer when their children call them that expresses intimacy. In this case, Um Saeed is talking to Um Jameel's teenage daughter, Jameela, by calling her 'ummiih' which is a way Emirati grandmothers answer their grandchildren when they call them 'ummii'

or 'yaddooh', which has the pragmatics of 'my dear'. The strategy of localization in these two examples maintained the pragmatics and did not lose any religious context since there wasn't any.

In the final example of cultural expressions, example 10, however, localization loses the religious connotation again. The speaker in the ST calms her angry friend by telling her to leave things in the hands of God, or to seek Allah's guidance in doing what is best rather than getting angry and acting recklessly. This expression استهدي بالله 'istahdai bellaah' means surrendering and trusting in God, which is not expressed in the TT that says 'calm down' that has no religious associations at all. A suggested alternative that works would be "Let it go", which partly keeps the pragmatics of 'istahdai bellaah' by letting things go, but does not imply leaving the in the hands of God. Any religious alternative would make the subtitles seem too religious and put the TT audience in a context heavier than the one presented in the cartoon. The issue of acceptability is important and one must note that the Arabic language, particularly the Emirati dialect here, is more religious than English. The issue of 'religiousness' itself is problematic because in English, referring to a person as religious implies this person is not an atheist, whereas in Arabic a religious person is someone who is very religious and perhaps an extremist. So the values of actions of this religious person are mainly governed by religion. Therefore, making a character seem too religious in the cartoon would make the character seem to be in a heavier context to the TT audience rather than the light and comic context in the ST.

Another also common strategy applied by the subtitlers includes pragmatic translation. Pragmatic translation is like localization and focuses on transporting the intended meaning of the words. The translation strategy used in examples 1 and 3 is

labeled as pragmatic and not localization because these are the TT terms equivalent to the ST terms. The term إن شاء الله 'inshallah' translates to God Willing. The Arabic term is said when a person says or plans for something to happen but uses this phrase to show that the case is in the hands of God. If God wants for something to happen, it will happen. The speaker is suggesting that the case is not in his or her hands since he or she cannot predict the future. The English term 'God willing' has the same pragmatics, except that the Arabic term specifies that Allah is God. The 'God' in the English term could be whoever the speaker worships. Therefore, the pragmatics are maintained, but the Islamic pragmatics are lost. The same case happens in example 3, where the ST means 'may Allah protect you' and the TT means 'may God be with you' which implies 'may God protect you'. God in the TT example is not specified as in the previous example, whereas in the ST 'Allah' is the only God the speaker refers to. In both cases, no suggested alternatives are necessary since the subtitles maintain the pragmatics in terms of general and religious meanings, thus performing their purpose in the context of the episode.

The third strategy applied by the subtitlers in subtitling cultural expressions is deletion. In examples 5 and 6, the Arabic terms are deleted. In Example 5, 'maashallah' means "whatever Allah wills" and is used where there is surprise in someone's good deeds or achievements (Islamic-dictionary.com, 2011). It is also believed to remove the evil eye or sending away harm that could be caused by the evil eye. An evil eye is caused by excessive admiration or jealousy, and usually results in harming what the speaker is looking at whether it is a person or an object. The pragmatics of 'maashallah' is like saying "I admire (the object or person) and may Allah protect it from envy or harm". The term is challenging to translate considering

that it has such religious connotations that are difficult to transfer to the TT. However, since the term is used to express amazement or admiration for something, a suggested translation could be 'wow' which transports the meaning while still losing the religious connotation. In the sixth example, the speaker says بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم 'bismellaherraHmaanerraHiim' after being startled by something invoking this expression. A speaker using this term means that he or she seeks Allah's protection against whatever startled him or her. The subtitles reads: Oh my God! You startled me. The pragmatics of being surprised and mentioning God are present, except as is the case in the previous examples, God here does not specify that the God referred to is Allah. In terms of pragmatics, the subtitles work, in terms of culture, the subtitles lose important details.

From the analysis above, subtitling cultural expressions proves to be a challenge. These expressions are bound to and specific for a certain culture. Localizing these expressions by finding their equivalent in the target culture seems to be the most effective solution. On the one hand, this results in providing understandable subtitles to the TT audience. On the other hand, the source culture's connotations and implications are lost. Attempting to keep the source culture's expression by translating literally, for instance, would produce awkward subtitles. Therefore, cultural loss in translating cultural expressions is inevitable since the best subtitling solution seems to be localization.

4.3.2 Metaphors

People from different cultures are affected by their surroundings. When expressing their ideas, people may use metaphors for better or more artistic

articulation of their thoughts. Metaphors, as explained in the previous chapter, are figures of speech where a certain object is used to represent something else. Rain, for instance, which is seen as something negative in the West, is perceived as a blessing in the UAE where it is rare due to its dry desert climate. Presented below are ten Emirati metaphors, their subtitles and the strategy used to translate each.

Table 4.3.2

	Source Text	**Target Text**	**Strategy Used**
1	ليتني طريت المليون	I wish I'd prayed for a million Dirhams!	Attempted explanation
2	هم البنات لين الممات	As they say, 'you'll always worry about your daughter'	Attempted explanation
3	ما حيدني دستلها على طرف	I've never done anything to upset her	Attempted explanation
4	أكسب من وراكن أجر	My good deed for the day!	Attempted explanation
5	مدرسين ما يعرفون ساسهم من راسهم	Teachers who can't tell their toes from their elbows	Attempted explanation
6	كدي يا غزالة كلي يا سبالة	'let the gazelle cook and the monkeys eat'	Attempted explanation
7	ويديه ترى البقرة ما تشوف ذيلها	The cow doesn't see her own tail!	Attempted explanation
8	لو لا العشرة و العيش و الملح	If it weren't for our lifelong friendship	Attempted explanation and localization
9	يارتنا القاطعة	My dear neighbour	deleted
10	لا تحطين ملح عالجرح	Stop rubbing salt in her wounds.	Equivalent metaphors

Presented above are ten examples of metaphors from *Freej* and their subtitles.

Metaphors are cultural sayings where something that is spoken about is used to refer

to something else. There are many strategies for translating metaphors and some have been addressed in the previous chapter. With reference to the table, the dominant strategy used by the subtitlers of *Freej* is attempting explanation of the metaphor. The metaphor in example 1 literally means what the subtitles say. The pragmatics of this metaphor, however, says more than the written words. The speaker who said the metaphor meant to say 'if things I talk about appear, then I wish I talked about a million Dirhams and got them rather than getting what I did not want'. This metaphor shows the speaker's disappointment at seeing the person he or she has spoken about. The speaker here is Um Saeed. She says this metaphor in the first episode of the third season of *Freej* when Um Jameel shows up right after Um Saeed talks about her. Even though the subtitles keep the words, part of the pragmatics are lost since the TT viewer may not see the connection between the person who came and the million Dirhams. This is the beauty of metaphors but is also perhaps the main challenge in translating them. The result of attempting to explain the metaphor here does not help neither in transferring pragmatics nor culture. The strategy is labeled here as 'attempted explanation' because even though it tries to explain the metaphor, the explanation remains incomplete. A possible alternative that could fit the context better is "speak of the devil", which would be used by native English speakers had the speakers been in Um Saeed's position at that time. Localization is favored here for the sake of maintaining the element of comedy in the show.

In the example 2, the subtitlers' attempt to explain the metaphor is more successful. The ST means that parents will always worry about their daughter even in the parents' deathbeds. The word 'always' in the TT conveys the pragmatics of the ST. Even though the ST seems more extreme because it mentions death, 'always' may

include 'death' too since death signifies ending. The attempt to explain the ST

metaphor proves successful here since it transfers the meaning and the culture

showing that in the source culture, people always worry about their daughters. In the

next example (example 3), nonetheless, the cultural connotation is lost. Before

explaining the metaphor, it is noteworthy to mention that Emirati women traditionally

wear long clothing. The Emirati traditional dress known as 'kanduuramkhawwerah'

that has embroidery near the wrist and neck areas is traditionally long and reaches

upto the feet of the person wearing it. Usually women wear a black cloak when they

go outside the house known as *abaya*. The function of the abaya is to hide any body

part that the clothes worn fail to conceal, except for the face and hands. The metaphor

in the ST means 'I don't remember stepping on the side of her dress' where stepping

on the side of someone's dress can cause a person to fall, therefore harming the person

physically and even emotionally by making her fall in front of the public which would

be very embarrassing. The pragmatics of this metaphor is that the speaker is saying

she does not remember upsetting the person she is speaking about or causing her

trouble. The subtitles succeed in delivering part of the meaning but fail in conveying

things that the ST metaphor conveys regarding Emirati women's clothing. No

replacement is required here because the subtitles convey almost the same message or

context as the ST.

In examples 4 till 8, the subtitlers continue attempting to explain the ST

metaphor. The metaphor in example 4 says 'I am doing something good for you or

tolerating you because I know that God will reward me for what I am doing', and is

usually said when the person being spoken to feels guilty for making the speaker do

or tolerate something on his or her behalf. In this context, however, the case is

different. Um Jameel sees Um Saeed, Um Allawi, Um Saloom and Um Khammas at their grandsons' school, and comes to greet Um Saeed and her friends. Um Saeed and her friends are surprised that Um Jameel, who usually avoids them, has come to greet them. When they tell her that, she answers with this metaphor. In this context, the metaphor means that Um Jameel is not greeting Um Saeed and the other ladies because she wants to or for their sake, but is forcing herself to greet them so that Allah rewards her for her good deed. In Islam, it is considered a good deed to greet each other by saying 'essalaameliikom' meaning "peace be upon you" because the person saying it gets credit or positive points known as 'Hasanaat', and this action of greeting each other enhances Islamic connections between people. The metaphor therefore emphasizes Um Jameel's self-centered character. Like the examples of cultural expressions that have partly maintained their religious connotations, this metaphor partly maintains the religious connotation but the Islamic part is lost.

Unlike the previous examples where the subtitlers attempt explanation, the subtitlers in example 5 explain another metaphor and lose the meaning of the ST altogether. The ST metaphor says 'teachers who cannot differentiate between their heads and their toes' which implies that they are extremely stupid. Um Saeed says this about the teachers in her grandson's school. Therefore in this context, the metaphor implies that these teachers do not know what they teach or how to teach. The subtitles, on the other hand, explain another Emirati metaphor which says " ما يعرف كوعه من بوعه" which refers to a person who does not know his or her elbows from his or her toes. Even though the metaphor explained in the subtitles implies the ST's message that the teachers are stupid, the translation is still considered wrong because the subtitlers translate a metaphor different from the one mentioned.

In example 6, the subtitlers attempt explaining or transferring the ST metaphor to the TT, but due to the cultural connotations specific to the Emirati culture that are attached to it, the explanation does not suffice. The ST metaphor means 'let the deer work hard in obtaining the food and let the monkey eat what the deer worked hard to obtain'. This metaphor also shows status and refers to social structure. Male deers have a great value in the Emirati culture because deer in general are beautiful creatures and male deer are the source of musk, which is used for making Arabic perfumes popular among Emirati women. Monkeys on the other hand are related to mischief and recklessness in the Emirati culture. Therefore, a person compared to a deer is someone who is considered to have a high social status, as opposed to someone who is compared to a monkey.

In the context of *Freej*, Um Khammas mentions this metaphor in the sixth episode when she is angry at her friend Um Saeed who decides to hire a maid rather than get Um Khammas's help and pay her in return. So Um Khammas is comparing herself to a hard working gazelle and the maid to a monkey. The metaphor reveals how low she perceives the maid to be and how highly she thinks of herself. All this is not conveyed in the subtitles because Western viewers do not perceive gazelles and monkeys like Emiratis to. The subtitlers could have replaced the gazelle and monkey by an ant and a grasshopper. This will remind the Western viewers of Aesop's famous fable about an ant who worked hard to obtain food when the weather was pleasant while the grasshopper lazed around. The grasshopper then ended up hungry in winter and had nothing to eat. This could transfer the pragmatics of the ST metaphor. As with the previous cases, the culture connotations are lost. An interesting idea here is that the reverse metaphor about gazelle and monkeys is used in India. In India,

monkeys perform so that their owners get money to feed gazelles. So in India, it is the monkeys who are hard working. This information illustrates how different cultures give different associations to certain animals.

The metaphor in example 7 is simple and straightforward. The ST metaphor says exactly what the subtitles say. This means that people can see other people's faults but not their own. Um Saeed says this statement when Um Khammas makes fun of Um Saeed for wanting someone to braid her hair. Um Khammas says. "What? You've got two strands of hair left…and you want them braided?" (Episode 6). Um Saeed replies with the metaphor in example 7, and the pragmatics of her statement imply that Um Khammas sees how little hair Um Saeed has but cannot see how little hair she herself has. The TT is understandable and transfers a part of the Emirati culture to the TT viewers.

In example 8, the subtitles transfer the pragmatics of the metaphor. The ST literal approximation of this metaphor's meaning is saying "if it wasn't for our lifelong friendship and the salt and rice that we shared" which could be equivalent to the way the metaphor of 'bread and butter' is used in the West to imply strong ties that have been between two people for a long time. A suggested alternative to the subtitles would be adding the metaphor of "bread and butter" to the present subtitles to fully convey the meaning of the ST. Translating an ST idiom using a TT idiom is a good strategy, which is one that the subtitlers applied in example 10. The ST in example 10 says exactly what the subtitles say, as the metaphor is present originally in both the source and target cultures. This is a common translation strategy that works when the ground or what is used to represent something has almost the same meaning in both cultures. The foods mentioned are relevant to their cultures. In the U.A.E., rice is the

basic food and bread is the basic food in the English culture. Therefore, this connotation is lost in the current subtitles.

The final example analyzed here is example 9, where the subtitlers have not only deleted the metaphor, but have replaced it with a phrase that reverses the pragmatics of the ST. The ST metaphor says 'our neighbor who has cut us out' meaning she had not been visiting them for a long time. The symbol of ties here has religious origins since Islam teaches its followers to maintain ties with their families, relatives and neighbors. So a person who had cut ties with neighbors has done something against the teachings of Islam. Um Saeed uses this metaphor when greeting Um Jameel, her neighbor who has not visited them for a long time. The intention of this metaphor is also to blame the person who has cut ties or who has not visited the speaker for a long time. Translating this as 'dear neighbor' loses the pragmatics of blame and Islamic connotations. Unlike the other cases, however, any suggested alternative would require much more space than the actual subtitles require. Keeping the subtitle constraints such as time and space, an alternative which will probably be longer than the current subtitle, would require more time and space.

In conclusion, metaphors are perhaps the toughest linguistic and cultural aspects to deal with in translation. Not only do they have cultural connotations, but religious ones as well. In the analysis of the previous examples, an alternative was suggested whenever possible. At other instances, no alternative can convey or even help in conveying what the ST metaphor means whether in terms of culture, religion or pragmatics. The strategy of attempting to translate the source culture's metaphors which is used by the subtitlers of *Freej* seems to be the best in terms of preserving the source culture. The strategy also proves that sometimes, meaning has to be lost in

order to preserve culture or vice versa. Therefore, the context of the episode once again proves to be the best determiner of which subtitling strategy to opt for.

4.3.3 Poetry

Poetry is another aesthetic tool of language that is used in a way similar to metaphors so as to express emotions. Unlike metaphors, poetry has its own format consisting of lines and stanzas, which are equivalent to paragraphs in prose. Some poems end with rhyming words while others come in free verse format. Either form of poetry may consist of several metaphors and repetition of certain words throughout the poem, which makes poetry difficult to translate. The table below consists of two examples of poetry and their subtitles. These are the only instances of poetry is uttered in the episodes chosen for analysis.

Table 4.3.3

	Source Text	**Target Text**	**Strategy Used**
1	يا طير بيت للي يبونك**يهلا و هلا يا حي ما ييت	'O bird, you've come to those who want you Welcome, bird, welcome'	Attempted translation
2	قم للمعلم وفه التبجيلا**كاد المعلم أن يكون رسولا	'stand up in respect for your teacher For a teacher is a blessing from God'	Attempted translation

Translating poetry makes translating cultural expressions and metaphors seem much less of a challenge. Indeed, two prominent theorists such as Al Jahiz and Jakobson believe that poetry is not translatable. Al Jahiz (1996) believes that Arabic

poetry cannot be rendered. When Arabic Ode (daSiida, canonical Arabic poem) is translated, it loses its generic form and most importantly its meter. On the other hand, Jakobson (2004: 143) asserts that poetry can be translated but into different formats (such as prose, for instance). Either way, a poem translated does not appear in the same way and does not have the same meaning as it does in the source text. This links back to the same reason why cultural expressions and metaphors cannot be fully translated. These cultural-bound terms and elements have connotations specific to a certain culture that the TT audience would not appreciate or understand as much as the ST audience do.

In the two examples provided above, the subtitlers try to translate the poetry recited by some characters of *Freej*. The aim was to include ten examples but these are the only instances that poetry is recited in the three episodes chosen for analysis. The strategy used by the subtitlers to translate the recited poetry is labeled as 'attempted translation' because as Al Jahiz, Jakobson and other prominent theorists in the field of translation assert: poetry is not translatable. An attempted translation can take the ST and produce a TT in a different format. However, in these two examples, the subtitlers translate the poetry as poetry. In example 1, the poet is welcoming a bird. In the Emirati and Arabian Gulf cultures, a bird is used as a metaphor for a loved one, specifically a female. Therefore, the poet is more likely to be speaking about a loved one and not a bird. In the context of the episode, which is the first episode of the third season of *Freej*, Um Saeed recites this stanza to Jameela in an attempt to educate her in local poetry. The subtitles translate the one being spoken to as a bird. Even if the subtitlers find a metaphor equivalent in meaning with the one in Arabic, cultural loss will still occur because the TT audience will not know that birds are used in

U.A.E. as metaphors for loved ones. A possible adjustment to the subtitles would be replacing the word 'bird' with 'dear' or 'my love' to clarify who is being spoken about. Cultural loss here will occur for the sake of preserving the element of romance and accuracy in meaning.

The second example is easier to understand and therefore translate. The ST in example 2 is telling its audience to stand up as a means of showing respect to the teacher, because the status of a teacher in his or her class is almost equivalent to the status of a prophet in Islam. This shows how greatly teachers in the Arab cultures are appreciated. The subtitles do convey that teachers are blessings, but the comparison with prophets in Islam is not included. Either way, the subtitles seem to convey that teachers are appreciated in the Emirati culture. No suggested alternative is required.

To sum up, poetry is high in the levels of standard and difficulty. It is a good strategy to simplify it and even not translate it in poetry form if possible. Suffice it to say that a person watching a cartoon does not expect heavy language. Similarly, a TT viewer does not expect subtitles that are difficult to read. For this reason, the strategies used by the subtitlers of *Freej* are therefore very suitable and acceptable because they are simple and easy to read and understand.

4.3.4 Code-switching

While speaking, people may not only change the tone of their voice to convey a meaning, but can also switch codes. Code-switching refers to instances where a speaker speaks in a different dialect or language. Code-switching is applied by people who know more than one language or dialect. The language or dialect that people

switch codes to in their dialogue says a lot about their culture. For instance, in the UAE, Emiratis may switch codes and talk in English because this is the second language in the country. One reason for code switching into English in the U.A.E. is that the UAE was colonized by Britain in the past. Even after the colonizers have left, their language stayed behind. Nowadays, in addition to a result of intensive exposure to other Arab dialects, Emiratis may also switch codes and use words from other Arabic dialects in their speech, as the table below illustrates. The table consists of ten instances of code-switching by the speakers in *Freej*.

Table 4.3.4

	Source Text	Target Text	Strategy Used
1	كاموستكا	Camostaka	Maintained code-switching
2	أم سأيد هازا ولد أربي وايد زئيف	Um Saeed, your son's Arabic is very weak	Standard language, no code-switching
3	نهو؟	Glammar?	Maintained code-switching
4	الواد ده ما بيتكلمش الإنجليزي خالص	The boy can't speak a word of English!	Standard language, no code-switching
5	Excuse me I personally think you can't speak English, let alone teach English.	_____	Deletion
6	لما أسألو روسيا وين محلها بيقول لي ميدان جمال عبدالناصر	And when I ask him where Russia is, he says it's in Jamal Abdul Nasser Square	Standard language, no code-switching
7	هاي أمون You will not believe	Hi Amoon! You won't believe where I am… really old and vintage!	Standard language, no code-switching

	أنا وين It's amazing وايد جديم ترااثي حلووو		
8	بس ماما أنا عادي عندي اتم في البيت بروحي انتي خليج كول	But mum! I'm old enough to stay home alone…be cool!	Standard language, no code-switching
9	عونج خالتيه	At your service, Auntie	Standard language, no code-switching
10	امباركن عيدج امااااايه	Happy Eid, mum!	Standard language, no code-switching

Aside from cultural expressions, metaphors and poetry, the way people talk also tells about their culture. In the United Arab Emirates, the standard language, as it is in all Arab countries, is standard Arabic. However, all Arab countries have their own dialect that has a set of words similar to or derived from standard Arabic and other Arabic dialects, as well as some words from another language depending on the region. For instance, the dialects of the Mediterranian Arab countries such as Syria, Palestine, Jordan and Lebanon are related to each other and a Palestinian person would easily understand most of the Syrian dialect since it is close to the Palestinian dialect. Likewise, the dialects of Arabian Gulf countries (United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman and Kuwait) are similar to each other in general. In a country itself, however, dialect changes from region to region. For instance, people living in the city of Dubai speak in a dialect that is a little bit different from bedoins who live in Al Ain.

In addition to dialect being derived from the standard form of language, dialect may also have words from another language leading to code-switching, and a speaker may use words from standard Arabic, dialect and a second language. This phenomenon is known as diglossia, and is explained in Chapter 3 of this thesis. All these issues and ways of speaking give the translator many options in dealing with them. The translator may translate in a dialect used in the target language, but this will not convey what the ST is conveying. This is why many translators resort to translating dialect, code-switching and diglossia into the standard form of the TT language. The amount of switching codes while speaking says many things about a certain culture. The analysis of a sample of code-switching cases aims to see how well code-switching has been translated and whether or not it shows something about the Emirati culture in the TT.

In seven out of the ten examples of code-switching from *Freej* provided above, the subtitlers have translated code-switching in Arabic into standard English. In example 2, the ST shows broken Emirati Arabic, spoken the way a Persian speaker would speak. Indeed, this sentence is spoken by Abood's Arabic teacher in the ninth episode. The teacher's pronunciation of some letters shows that he is Persian. Viewers of the ST immediately understand that he is not an Arab. The viewers of the TT do not see or hear the difference because the TT is in standard English. This is the resulting effect of all the examples provided where code-switching is translated into standard English. The effect of code-switching on the TT audience is lost. In example 4, the speaker speaks in Egyptian dialect. The only thing that is lost in the subtitles is the effect of code-switching, particularly the illocutionary effect of the code switch.

In some cases where code-switching is translated to standard form of English, the effect of code-switching is not the only thing that is lost in translation. In example 6, the speaker is speaking in Palestinian dialect, which is not conveyed in the subtitles, as with the previous cases. However, the speaker who is Abood's geography teacher, tells Um Saeed that when Abood is asked where Russia is, he says it is in Jamal Abdul Nasser Square. Western viewers may not know why. This is a joke that only Emiratis who are familiar with Jamal Abdul Nasser Square and people who have been to it several times will know why Abood, the child in first grade, associates Russia with Jamal Abdul Nasser Square. Many Russians in Dubai live there. It is likely that a six year old like Abood would think that Jamal Abdul Nasser Square is Russia when he only sees Russians there. This implication is not transferred in the subtitles, and no suggested alternative would be short enough to fit in the space provided for the subtitles on screen.

Another code-switching example where culture is lost in the subtitles is in example 7. Jameela, Um Jameel's nineteen-year-old daughter, talks to her friend on the phone in English and in Arabic. This shows how youth these days talk, since it has become a fashion to insert English words in conversations. The same is conveyed in example 8 when Jameela says 'cool' in English in the ST and not in Arabic when speaking to her mother. Youth's behavior is not conveyed in the subtitles that are in standard English. An alternative could have been inserting French words at the instances when the speakers switch codes, but the effect would probably not be the same on the TT readers because they might assume that French is the second language in the Emirates, whereas English is but not French.

Besides switching codes to another dialect or language, a speaker may switch codes within the same language. Examples 9 and 10 are spoken by Jameela after she has gone through a make-over as a result of staying in contact with Um Saeed and her friends for some time. At the beginning of the first episode, Jameela appears, acts and speaks the way teenage girls nowadays do. At the end of the episode, she is shown wearing an Emirati traditional dress and talks like a Bedouin Emirati girl. Examples 9 and 10 are in the Bedouin dialect, the way many old ladies and Bedouins speak nowadays. The literal meaning of example 9 is as expressed in the subtitles. In example 10, Jameela calls her mother 'ommaya' and not 'mama' as she did in the beginning of the episode. 'Ommaya' is how Bedouins call their mothers. She tells her mother "Eid Mubarak Ommaya", meaning 'may your Eid be blessed, mother'. The pragmatics of this phrase is to wish her mother a happy and blessed Eid (an Islamic occasion), which is partly conveyed in the subtitles. A suggested alternative would be 'Eid Mubarak mother'. The phrase "Eid Mubarak" is present in English and is used by many non-Arab Muslims to greet each other in Eid. The suggested subtitles say 'mother' and not 'mum' to show respect to her mother as does the word 'ommaya'. Still, with and without the suggested subtitles, conveying a switch of codes within the same dialect is difficult, specially since each dialect is tied to its own culture.

However, there are instances where it is possible to maintain code-switching in the subtitles. In example 1, Um Khammas greets Um Saeed's maid by saying "Camostaka" which is the Tagalog (Standard Philippino) for "how are you?". The subtitles say "Camostaka" too which maintains the code-switching. This shows that code-switching could be retained when the switch in codes is into a language that is different from the source and target languages. Another example where code-

switching is retainable is in example 3 where the speaker mispronounces the word "grammar" in Arabic. The subtitles show a mispronunciation in the word thus conveying code switching. What is still not conveyed is the nationality of the speaker. This is the same Persian teacher who wrongly pronounces certain Arabic letters in example 2. This example proves that even if code-switching can sometimes be conveyed in subtitles sometimes, it still does not convey as much as the code-switching in the original ST does.

A third strategy applied by the subtitlers of *Freej* when dealing with code-switching is deleting the text altogether. This deletion occurs in example 5, where Um Allawi speaks to the English teacher in English. The deletion here is understandable and works because there is no point in including subtitles when the speaker speaks the language used for the subtitles. This deletion forces the viewers to stop looking at the lower part of the screen and focus on listening to what the speaker is saying. Viewers then understand that the speaker has switched codes and started talking in the target language.

This section can simply be concluded by stating that code-switching is difficult to convey in subtitling. The main reason is that each dialect is tied to its own culture. Subtitling an instance of code-switching in Arabic into Scottish English for instance to convey a switch in codes will seem pointless and awkward. The reason for this is that the character in on screen is not actually speaking Scottish but a dialect in Arabic. Another reason why subtitling is difficult is that deliberate misspelling of words in the subtitles in an attempt to convey mispronunciation of the source dialogue makes the character speaking on screen appear dumb. Deletion is sometimes helpful when the character speaks the language used for subtitling. However, the strategy that

seems to be the safest to use for subtitling instances of code-switching is using the standard form of the target language. This makes reading the subtitles an easier task for the TT viewer than having to read misspelled subtitles or dialect that does not seem to fit the characters on screen.

4.3.5 Material Culture

Culture can be defined through its non-material as well as material aspects. Material culture includes names or people, places, objects and religious rituals. Names of such aspects reveal a lot about a certain culture, as the following analysis will demonstrate. The following table consists of ten examples of material culture from *Freej*.

Table 4.3.5

	Source Text	Target Text	Strategy Used
1	أم سعيد	Um Saeed	Retention/Transliteration
2	أم علاوي	Um Allawi	Retention/Transliteration
3	أم سلوم	Um Saloom	Retention/Transliteration
4	أم خماس	Um Khammas	Retention/Transliteration
5	بو عبدالله	Bu Abdullah	Retention/Transliteration
6	جميلة	Jameela (beautiful)	Transliteration and gloss translation

7	الحج	Hajj (pilgrimage)	Transliteration and gloss translation
8	صلاة الفير	Morning prayer	Explanation/pragmatic
9	جلابية مخورة	A traditional dress	Explanation
10	خالتي قماشة	Sherlock Holmes	Pragmatic

The non-tangible elements of culture are known as 'material culture'. As defined by Bernard, Spencer (1996 : 612), and Hurreiz (2002: 147) in the previous chapter, material culture includes all the tangible cultural aspects such as clothing, food, houses and technology. Since technology may be considered as a subcategory of knowledge, religious rituals, which are subcategories of knowledge, can also be included in the definition of material culture. Even though material objects are part of culture, not much has been said on translating them unlike the case with metaphors, poetry and other cultural elements. This, however, does not mean that there are no strategies at the disposal of any translator dealing with translating material culture. There are the age-old strategies of translating literally or freely, and many degrees between these two extremes. The strategy used may depend on the TT's viewers' expectations, the purpose of translating a certain text which is in AVT form in this case, besides many other reasons. Through the analysis of the ten examples of material culture, we will get to know which strategies work and which don't.

The first five examples are names of some characters that appear in *Freej*. Leppihalme presents three strategies for dealing with names. The first involves retaining the name, the second calls for replacing the name, and the third and final strategy proposes deleting the name altogether and explaining its meaning

(Leppihalme, 1997: 79).   Keeping the name does not usually transfer its meaning and effect to the TT. Replacing the name can be seen as a localizing strategy but also wipes the cultural effect of the original name. The effect of deleting the name or explaining its meaning through nouns for instance could be seen as a localizing strategy because it exposes the TT audience to what is familiar to them and not with an unfamiliar name that may seem alien or exotic.

Examples 1 to 4 consist of the names of the four main characters in *Freej*. The names used to refer to these characters are not their real names. Each name is made of two components, "Um" followed by a name. The word "Um" in Arabic means mother, and when placed in front of another name means 'mother of'. In the Emirati culture and Arab cultures in general, calling a woman "mother of" and proceeding this with her eldest son's name shows the speaker's respect for this woman. To illustrate, a woman calling her sister Um Ahmed, where Ahmed is her sister's eldest son, shows more respect than calling her sister by her name.

Concealing names of females is embedded in many Arab cultures. Culture is defined in the previous chapter as a relation between things (Bernard and Spencer, 1996: 133), where many of these 'things' that form culture come from the past and have been passed down through the ages. Therefore, in the Emirati culture, concealing a woman's name is an influence partly from the past and partly an influence from other cultures. An Emirati Bedouin woman, for instance, would call her sister "Hamda" or "ekhetyeh" (i.e. my sister) instead of "Um Ali" where Ali for instance, is her eldest son. Since cultures do change over time and influence each other, nowadays, the latter form is used which seems to be an influence from other cultures (Almansoori, 2011).   Similarly, nowadays, an Emirati man speaking to his brother or

friends will say "el ahal" الأهل meaning 'the relatives' when referring to his wife and children. When he speaks about his wife, he would refer to her as 'Um al eyal' أم العيال meaning 'mother of the children' or 'Um' and adds his eldest son's name. The same goes to a man (regardless of age) talking about his daughter or sisters. A daughter would be referred to as 'the children' اصغارية pronounced as 'esgharey-yeh' or 'my daughter' بنتي pronounced as 'benti'. This is the case most of the times, but a minority of Emirati men may refer to their female relatives and wives using the women's names in front of other men.

A noteworthy point here is that this act or habit of concealing women's names is not an influence of Islam, which is the dominant religion in the Arab region. This is known because Prophet Mohammed –peace be upon him- mentioned/referred to his wives and daughters when speaking to them or to others about them by their names. An example is when the Prophet- peace be upon him- was asked who the dearest person to him was. He answered "Aisha" (2011, ar.wikipedia.org) and did not say 'my youngest wife' nor did he refer to her by a nickname. Yet, Arabs nowadays, particularly in the U.A.E. continue concealing their wives', daughters and female relatives' names since it is still considered to be more culturally appropriate. In essence, women's names are not mentioned in front of men in the Emirates because of the Emirati culture's influence on its people, and not because of Islam.

This applies to *Freej* as the main characters are called mothers of their sons. Saeed and Khammas are standard forms of males' names. The characters in examples 2 and 3, however, are called as 'mother of' and their son's nicknames. Allawi is a nickname for Ali, and Saloom is a nickname for Salem. Khammas too can be a standard name by itself or also a nickname for Khamees. Referring to these characters

by such nicknames adds a comic effect to the episodes of *Freej*. The subtitles of the four names, however, do not transport this comic effect. The strategy used for subtitling these names is retention or transliteration. The application of such strategy does not only wipe out the comic effect, but also makes the TT audience think that Um Saeed, for instance, is the character's real name rather than a nickname or label. A suggested alternative, although does not change the name used in the subtitles, would be to say "Um Saeed" followed by "mother of Saeed" between brackets placed after the name only the first time the name is mentioned in each episode. This way TT viewers will understand what the name means. I suggest adding this when the name is first mentioned in every episode for two reasons. The first is that we do not guarantee which episode the TT viewer will watch first. The second reason is that there is no guarantee that the TT viewer will follow the subtitled show when it is aired on TV from the first episode. The issue of space as a subtitling constraint will still remain when using the alternative strategy. However, this strategy does more good than harm because it tells the non-Arabic speaking viewers that the ladies are called as 'mothers of their sons' and does not make them think that Um Allawi and the other Ums are the characters' real names.

The name in example 5 also consists of two components: 'Bu' and 'Abdullah'. "Bu Abdullah" means father of Abdullah, where Abdulla is this man's eldest son. Unlike the reason behind hiding a woman's name partly being shame, hiding the man's name here by calling him "Bu Abdullah" shows formality and respect. This name is mentioned in the ninth episode of the third season of *Freej*. Um Saeed is shown talking to her son Saeed and calls him "Bu Abdullah". In this context, the way Um Saeed calls her son shows her respect for him. This way of calling her son also

shows his high status or place and her acknowledgment of him as a responsible man with a family to look after, which makes him a more important individual compared to a single man. If she addresses him as Saeed, which is his real name, then this will lead to many interpretations. Calling her son by his first name and not a nickname would reveal endearment and a hint of informality. Even when Um Saeed gets angry at him later in the same episode, she continues calling him Bu Abdullah, which shows that her respect of him is maintained even when she is angry at him. The subtitles here have the same effect that the subtitles of the four names in the previous examples had. The suggested alternative subtitling strategy is adding "father of Abdullah" between brackets the first time Bu Abdullah is mentioned in the episode, for the same reason explained earlier.

Example 6 consists of a girl's name. Jameela is Um Jameel's daughter who appears in the first episode of the third season of *Freej*. Jameela in Arabic means beautiful, and is the feminine form of the word 'beautiful'. The name in the episode has a comic effect because the character called Jameela is a somehow typical example of young Emirati women. This character talks in a feminine tone, wears a lot of makeup, and ties back her hair in a big funny-looking bun. In modern beauty terms, she could be considered beautiful. The subtitles mention between brackets that Jameela means "beautiful" the first time Jameela is mentioned, which is when her mother talks about her to the other ladies at the beginning of the episode. This is the strategy that has been suggested for subtitling the five names in the previous examples. This proves that the strategy is applicable. When Jameela is mentioned later during the episode, no gloss translation is provided, which is fine, considering

that the viewers have been informed what Jameela means when the name was first mentioned.

Another name provided among the examples of material culture earlier is 'Khalti Gumasha" خالتي قماشة in example 10, which has been translated as "Sherlock Holmes". Khalti Gumasha is the main character of a very well-known show that was aired in the early 1980s. Reruns of the show are still shown in some TV channels today. The word "khalti" means "my aunt" and "Gumasha" is a woman's name which means 'cloth'. Khalti Gumasha is a mother whose sons are married and live with her in the same house with their wives. This character had placed candid surveillance cameras in her sons' rooms and used to spy on them. This is why Khalti Gumasha is used as a metaphor for a spy, nosey person and also for a mother-in-law who interferes with her married sons' and their wives lives. In the context of the ninth episode of *Freej*, Um Khammas refers to Um Allawi as "Khalti Gumasha" for having placed hidden cameras in Um Saeed's house to monitor Um Saeed's maid. The name "Khalti Gumasha" is translated into "Sherlock Holmes" by the subtitlers. Sherlock Holmes is a fictional character known for being a famous detective. Although it does not have all the connotations Khalti Gumasha has, Sherlock Holmes still conveys the element of spying. The localizing strategy works here since no possible alternative could be suggested to convey everything that the name Khalti Gumasha conveys in the ST.

Aside from names of people, material culture includes names of religious rituals. Examples 7 and 8 are names of Islamic religious rituals. Example 7 is Hajj which is the Islamic pilgrimage. Transliteration and explanation between brackets as provided in the subtitles seem to be a good strategy because it tells the TT viewers

what Hajj is in one word. Example 8 is 'fajer prayer' which is morning prayer, the first of the five prayers that Muslims perform every day. The subtitlers preferred to directly say "Morning prayer" without providing transliteration first. This is an acceptable strategy and maintains an element of localization and preserves culture by telling the TT viewer what is mentioned is "morning prayer".

The final example of material culture provided is example 9. 'Jallabeyyemkhawwerah' جلابية مخورة is the traditional embroidered dress that Emirati women wear. The subtitlers translated it as "a traditional dress" which is vague and does not help the TT viewer picture how a traditional Emirati dress looks like. A suggested alternative would be to add after the provided subtitles "embroidered women's dress" between brackets. This may still makes "a traditional dress" seem not very clear, but at least it will tell the readers that the traditional dress for Emirati women has embroidery on it.

In terms of translating material culture, the most successful strategy in subtitling seems to be localizing the term and adding a brief explanation between brackets. Although it may add to subtitling constraints in terms of space, this strategy gives the TT viewers a better idea about the Emirati culture. When the material cultural term is difficult to explain, a localizing strategy such as the one used in example 10 seems to do have a good effect by transferring part of the pragmatics to the TT viewers. Therefore, the solution that works the most depends on the situation or contect and importance of the material cultural term that is subtitled.

In conclusion, for non-material culture, context proves to be the determiner of what strategy to use in order to translate a culture-bound term, be it a material or non-material term. There is always a matter of loss and compensation in translation and subtitling. In the subtitling of the previously analyzed examples from *Freej*, when the meaning of a cultural-bound term is essential to the context, a pragmatic translation and localization seemed to be the best options. These strategies, however, do not transfer the source culture to the target culture. When transliteration and other subtitling strategies close to the literal translation are applied, exoticism appears at times unless a gloss translation is provided. Gloss translations proved to be helpful in the previous examples specially in subtitling material culture. In the end, there is no perfect subtitling strategy that works all the time.

Overall, there clearly seems to be a lot of thought and effort behind the subtitles of the third season of *Freej*. These subtitles seem to work well in terms of pragmatics and meaning most of the time. As for cultural transfer, the analysis proved that there are instances where culture cannot be transferred through translation. At other instances, the context called for applying the strategy of localization appeared to be the best option at times in order to produce subtitles understandable to the target audience and meet the main goal of the show which was to entertain its viewers.

5. CONCLUSION

This thesis set out to examine the subtitles and their representation of the Emirati culture in the highly popular Emirati cartoon *Freej* in an attempt to investigate to what extent the Emirati culture has been conveyed in translation. In order to reach its purpose, the thesis looked at different categories of cultural-bound terms and analyzed their subtitles. The first chapter briefly went over the subjects of each chapter. The second chapter introduced the phenomenon of subtitling, its mechanics, constraints and strategies. The third chapter went deeper into the subject of this thesis by defining culture and its components such as religion, language and artifacts. Possible strategies and means for translating and subtitling cultural elements were presented in the same chapter. This fifth and final chapter briefly summarizes the findings and shortcomings of the research and includes suggestions for better cultural representations and future research.

The main finding of the research is that there are instances when culture cannot be transported through language. Many cultural-bound terms are as the name suggests, bound to their original culture and there is no way to transfer them into another language, which is English in this case. Localization proved to be the most effective solution for subtitling cultural-bound expressions. Attempting to explain metaphors and poetry in subtitling did aid in transferring culture, but lost part of the intended meaning of the original metaphor and poetry. Using standard translation was the ideal subtitling strategy for code-switching, since different dialects have their specific cultures attached to them. Finally, the most effective strategy for subtitling names of people and religious rituals was to add gloss translation between brackets

when the name had a significant effect. When the name was of a celebrity or used as a metaphor for something, then localization proved to be more effective.

All in all, cultural loss in subtitling is bound to occur in order to produce understandable subtitles. In most cases, the aim of TV shows and audio-visual media is entertainment. Unlike in translation where long footnotes can be added, subtitling is constrained in terms of time and space. Therefore, a suggestion for *Freej* would be to include explanations of some cultural sayings and cultural-bound terms in English. A small explanatory booklet can be added with the DVDs that explains the meaning of the names for instance, in addition to other cultural terms. This way, non-Arabic speaking viewers can get a flavor of the Emirati culture and enjoy the subtitled episodes at the same time.

This thesis did not attempt an exhaustive analysis of cultural representation. Only a sample of up to ten cultural-bound expressions were analyzed. So much more remains to be said and studied about cultural representation and *Freej*. The effect of the images on screen in transferring culture, for instance, was not taken into account. The reason is that this thesis is mainly concerned about the translation and linguistics side of cultural representation through media. Going back to the subject of the introduction of the thesis and non-Emiratis interested in learning the culture and its dialect, *Freej* can be a good place to start. The creators of *Freej* can go into a further and more modern step by subtitling the dialogue into Arabic-English, a modern way of writing Arabic words using numbers and English letters (Bahrainwala, 2011). This could be a great way for non-Emiratis to learn to speak in the Emirati dialect. Many possibilities and creative ideas remain to be discovered since subtitling is still at its

infancy in the Arab world, and can still go further towards better cultural

representation.

REFERENCES

Aisha bint Abi Baker. (2011). *Ar.wikipedia.org.* Retrieved March 8, 2011 from http://ar.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%B4%D8%A9_%D8%A8%D9%86%D8%AA_%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%8A_%D8%A8%D9%83%D8%B1

Almansoori, M. (2011, March 9). Emirati Bedouin Grandmother. Interview.

Alsaloom, A. (2010). *Ask Ali: A guide to Abu Dhabi.* Ali Alsaloom: Abu Dhabi

Alsaloom, A. (2011, February 16). Cultural Consultant, EmbraceArabia.com. Phone interview.

Augustin, B. (2002). *United Arab Emirates: Enchantment of the World*. New York: Children's Press.

Bahrainwala, L. (2011, January 18). Professor of English and graduate student writing a thesis on Arabicized English writing system. University of Michigan

Baldwin, D. (2010, July 22). Freej creator partners with Cartoon Network. [Electronic version]. *Gulf News.* Retrieved July 22, 2010, from http://gulfnews.com/business/features/freej-creator-partners-with-cartoon-network-1.657482

Bastin, L.G. (2009). Adaptation. In Baker, M. & Saldanha, G.'s (Eds.) *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies.* (pp. 3-6). USA: Routledge

Bernard, A. & Spencer, J. (1996). *Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology.* London: Routledge

Bachman-Medick, D. (2006). Meaning of Translation in Cultural Anthropology. In T. Hermans (Ed.) *Translating Others: Volume 1* (pp.33-42).

Baker, M. (1992) *In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation*. London & N Y: Routledge

Bassnett, S. (2002). *Translation Studies* (2nd ed). London & New York: Routledge.

Bell, R.T. (1991). *Translation and Translating: Theory and Practice.* New York: Addison Wesley Longman Limited.

Berman, A. (2004). Translation and the Trials of the Foreign. . In Venuti (Ed.) ,*The Translation Studies Reader* (pp. 276-289, 2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

Boase-Beier, J. (2009). Poetry . In Baker, M. & Saldanha, G.'s (Eds.) *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies.* (pp. 194-196). USA: Routledge

Bogucki, L. (2004, January). The Constraint of Relevance in Subtitling. *The Journal of Specialised Translation.* Retrieved June 21, 2010 from **http://www.jostrans.org/issue01/art_bogucki_en.php**

Brisset, A. (2004). The Search for a Native Language: Translation and Cultural Identity. In L. Venuti (Ed.), *The Translation Studies Reader* (pp. 337-68, 2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

Bruni, L. (1992). Longer Statements. In A. Lefevere (Ed.), *Translation/History/Culture: A Sourcebook* (pp. 81-86). London: Routledge

Carbonell, O. (2004). Exoticism, Identity and Representation in Western Translation from Arabic. In S. Faiq (Ed.), *Cultural Encounters in translation from Arabic* (pp. 26-39). Britain: Cromwell.

Cintas, J.D. (2010). Dubbing or subtitling: The eternal dilemma. *Perspectives: Studies in Translatology,7*(1), 31-40.

Crocetti, G. L. (1996). *Culture Shock!: United Arab Emirates.*Portland: Graphic Arts Center Publishing Company.

Dickins, J., Harvey, S., Higgins, I. (2002). *Thinking Arabic Translation*. London: Routledge.

Dryden. J. (2004). From the Preface of Ovid's Epistles. In Venuti (Ed.) ,*The Translation Studies Reader* (pp. 38-42, 2nd ed.). London: Routledge

Faiq, S. (2007). *Trans-lated: Translation and Cultural Manipulation*. Lanham & Oxford: Rowan & Littlefield.

Fawcett, P. & Munday, J. (2009). Ideology. In Baker, M. & Saldanha, G.'s (Eds.) *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies.* (pp. 137-141). USA: Routledge

Freej: The Book of Riddles. (2009). *Freej.ae*. Retrieved February 18, 2011 from http://www.freej.ae/bookofriddles/en/index.aspx

Freeman, A. (1996, December 9). Andrew Freeman's Perspectives on Arabic Diglossia. *Innerbrat.org.* Retrieved from http://innerbrat.org/Andyf/Articles/Diglossia/digl_96.htm

Gamal, M.Y. (2008). Egypt's audiovisual translation scene. *Arab Media & Society.* Retrieved October 27, 2010 from http://www.arabmediasociety.com/articles/downloads/20080510203556_A MS5_Muhammad_Gamal.pdf

Glassie, H. (1999). *Material Culture.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Gottlieb, H. (2001). Subtitling. In Baker, M. (Ed.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (pp. 244-248). London: Routledge.

Gottlieb, H. (1993) Subtitling: People Translating People, in Dollerup, Cay and Annette Lindegaard [Eds] *Teaching Translation and Interpretation 2: Insights, Aims, Visions*, Amsterdam, Philadelphia, John Benjamin: 261-274.

Grunfeld, D. (2010, April 15). Prose Solutions Content Development and Consultancy Managing Director. Email communication.

Gutt, E.A. (2000). Translation and Relevance: Cognition and Context. Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing.

Hatim, B. & Mason, I. (1990) *Discourse and the Translator*. London & NY: Longman

Hatim, B & Mason, I. (2000). Politeness in Screen Translating. In L. Venuti & M. Baker (Eds.) .*The Translation Studies Reader* (pp. 430-445). London: Routledge.

Horn, L.R. & Ward, G. (2004). *The Handbook of Pragmatics*. USA: Blackwell Publishing

Hurreiz, S.H. (2002). *Folklore and Folklife in the United Arab Emirates*. London: RoutledgeCurzon.

Jaafar, A. (2009, March23-29). Ahead of the Curve.*Variety.* Retrieved June 21, 2010, from http://ezproxy.aus.edu/login?url=http://proquest.umi.com.ezproxy.aus.edu/ pqdweb?did=1669503751&sid=1&Fmt=3&clientId=19323&RQT=309&VNam e=PQD

Jakobson, R. (2004). On Linguistic Aspects of Translation. . In Venuti (Ed.) ,*The Translation Studies Reader* (pp. 137-143, 2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

Jahiz, A. U. (1996). Kitab Al Hayawan: Ta'alif Abi Uthman Amr ibn-Bahr Al Jahiz; bi tahqiq wa sharh Abd-Al Salam Muhammad Harun. Beirut: Dar Al Jeel

Kenny, D. (2009). Equivalence . In Baker, M. & Saldanha, G.'s (Eds.) *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies.* (pp. 96-99). USA: Routledge

Klaudy, K. (2009). Explication. In Baker & Saldanha (Eds.). *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies.* (pp. 103-108, 2nd ed.). Abingdon: Routledge.

Lefevere, A. (1992). *Translating Literature: Practice and theory in comparative literature context.* New York: The Modern Language Association of America.

Leppihalme, R. (1997). *Culture bumps: an empirical approach to the translation of allusions*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Limon, D. (2010). Translators as cultural mediators: Wish or reality? A Question for Translation Studies. In D. Gile, G. Hansen and N. K. Pokorn (Eds.), *Why Translation Studies Matter* (pp. 29-39).

Meaning of mashallah. (2011). *Islamic-dictionary.com* . Retrieved March 3, 2011 from http://www.islamic-dictionary.com/index.php?word=mashallah

Metaphor. (1984). In Mish, F. C. (Ed.) *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary.* (746, 1, 1). U.S.A.: Merriam-Webster

Mooney, L. A., Knox, D., & Schacht, C. (2000). Understanding social problems (2nd ed.). Cincinnati, OH: Wadsworth.

Munday, J. (2008). *Introducing Translation Studies: Theory and Applications* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

Munday, J. (2009). *The Routledge Companion to Translation Studies.* London: Routledge.

Nabokov, V. (2004). Problems of Translation: *Onegin* in English. . In Venuti (Ed.), *The Translation Studies Reader* (pp. 115-127, 2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

Nida, E. (2004). Principles of Correspondence In L. Venuti (Ed.) ,*The Translation Studies Reader* (pp. 153-167, 2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

Nihad, A., (2008, April 30). Tatweer to Transform Award Winning Cartoon Series – 'FREEJ' – into Major Theme Park in Dubailand. *LammtaraPictures.com.*

Retreived February 18, 2011,
from *http://www.lammtarapictures.com/english.pdf*

Ordurari, M. (2010). Translation procedures, strategies and methods. *Translationjournal.net.* Retrieved 23 January, 2011 from http://translationjournal.net/journal//41culture.htm

Palmer, J. (2007). Arabic Diglossia: Teaching only the standard variety is a disservice to students. *Arizona.edu.* Retrieved from http://w3.coh.arizona.edu/awp/AWP14/AWP14%5BPalmer%5D.pdf

Pedersen, J. (2007). Cultural Interchangeability: The Effects of Substituting Cultural References in Subtitling. *Perspectives: Studies in Translatolog,15*(1), 30-48.

Pedersen, J. (2010). Audiovisual Translation – in general and in Scandinavia. *Perspectives: Studies in Translatology,15*(1), 1-22.

Ramiere, N. (2006, July). Reaching a Foreign Audience: Cultural Transfers in Audiovisual Translation. . *The Journal of Specialised Translation.* Retrieved June 21, 2010 from http://www.jostrans.org/issue06/art_ramiere.php

Rhyme. 2011. In *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*. Retrieved May 9, 2008 from http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/rhyme

Saffarini, R. (2006, October 14). Students help bring cartoon to life. *gulfnews.com.* Retrieved February 18, 2011, from http://gulfnews.com/about-gulf-news/al-nisr-portfolio/notes/articles/students-help-bring-cartoon-to-life-1.260499

Salem, B. (2010, May 30). Freej reveals the fun side of UAE culture. *Newzglobe.com.* Retrieved February 18, 2011, from http://www.newzglobe.com/article/20100530/freej-reveals-fun-side-uae-cultureT

Samvor, L. A., Porter R. E., McDaniel, E. R. (2007). *Communication between cultures* (6th Ed). U.S.A.: Thomson Wadsworth.

Sanchez, D. (2004). Subtitling methods and team-translation. In Orero, P. (Ed.), *Topics in Audiovisual Translation* (pp. 9-17). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Schlereth, T. J. (1999). *Material Culture Studies in America.* U.S.A.: AltaMira Press.

Schroter, T. (2010). Quantity and quality in screen translation. *Perspectives: Studies in Translatology,11*(2), 105-124.

Venuti, L. (1998) *The scandals of translation: Towards an ethics of difference*. London: Routledge

Venuti, L. (2004). *The Translation Studies Reader.* London: Routledge

Vermeer, H.J. (2004). Skopos and Commission in Translation Action. In Venuti (Ed.) ,*The Translation Studies Reader* (pp. 227-238, 2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

Yule, G. (1996). Pragmatics. Oxford: Oxford University Press

الدنيا جميلة

المشهد الأول :-

خارجي نهار/بيت ام سعيد

داخلي/ غرفة المعيشه بيت ام سعيد

المجموعة جالسة في غرفة المعيشة يشربن القهوة وأم جميل معهن

ام سعيد

حيالله أم جميل حيالله يارتنا القاطعه

أم جميل

الله يحييج يا ام سعيد ، والله بس انتي اللي فيهن

ام خماس

عاد يا ام سعيد ما ادري شو ماكلته انا اليوم وغااث على جبدي مغثه

شي ثجيل ثجيييل ما ينهضم

أم جميل

شربي فوقه قهوه فديتج ، تراني راكه مب سايرة مكان

يايه عند حبيبتي أم سعيد فديتها هاي اللي يوزتني بوجميل الله يرحمه

ام سعيد

حششا عليه ما يوزتج بوجميل ولا شياته

انتي اللي سرقتيه من حرمته الأوليه ،، الله يرحمج يا ام جمال ،، من عرفت ان ريلها خذج عليها تخبلت

وماتت قهر

100

أم جميل

معلووم لأني كنت أحلى عنها فديتج ، من شافني على السيف أيمع برغام *(نوع من المحار)* فز قلبه

ام سعيد

يا اميه لبده شافج وتراواله دغس لايث والا حوت

ام علاوي

ام سعيد ؟ شنو يعني دغس ؟

ام سلوم

يا اميه هذا السح يوم يعصرونه يستوي دغس

ام سعيد

ويديه ويديه ،، هاك دبس مب دغس

أم خماس

أيواااه الدبس ،، الشي الأسود الثجييل اللي يغفي على الجبد

أم جميل

أقول لج شربي قهوتج احسن لج

ام سعيد

الدغس يا اميه هاللي يسمونه دلفين

انزين ما علينا ،، آمري يا ام جميل انتي ما تشبرين عندنا إلا عندج حايه

أم جميل

لا حشا يا ام سعيد ، أنا يايه أسلم عليكن واستسمح منكن لأني سايرة الحج باكر

أم خماس

بيزات ما عندنا

أم جميل

لا فديتج ، البيزات فوقي وتحتي وكان انتي ناقصنج شي قولي بزيدج

ام سعيد

أم جميل تراها شراة مكينه البنك ، مكنزه بيزات بس الرقم ضايع

أم جميل

براية يا ام سعيد ،، الرمسه منج شرات الدبس

ام سعيد

لا عيل جان جيه ، أنا اشهد وراج شي

أم جميل

لا ما شي بس أه بس

جميله

ام خماس

هاا حد زجرني ؟؟

أم سعيد

ويديه منو جميله؟

ام علاوي

انتي تقصدين جميله بنتج ؟

أم سعيد

أييهااأ جميله ؟

بلاها مسودة الويه آخر مره يبتيها عندنا كانت بقماطها

ام جميل

لازم بخشها يا اميه عن الحسد والحساد

أم سعيد

انزين وبلاها عاد جميله

ام جميل

عاد قلت بخليها عندج اتونسينها واتونسج لين ما ارد انشاء الله من الحج

أم سعيد

حششا يا اميه ما اروم عصدعه الصغاريه

يسدني عبود وخباله

ام جميل

لا لا هيه يعريه ،، أه أ أ قصدي غزال الحين ما شاء الله عليها

بتكمل عشرين سنه

صوت سيارة تقف في الخارج وباب السيارة يغلق بقوه

ام جميل

أكيها يت فديتها

يفتح الباب بقوة وتدخل فتاه تضع مساحيق مبالغ فيها وتسريحه شعر (نفخ) وتحمل حقيبه يد كبيرة وموبايل تتدلى منه تعليقات كريستال

جميله

هاااااااااااااااي

<div dir="rtl">

ام سعيد

ويه بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

تدخل جميله وتتلفت تنظر لزوايا منزل ام سعيد

جميله

وااو واو وووااوو واو

أم سلوم

ويديه بلاها تنابح هاي؟

ام جميل

مرحبا حيالله جميلة حيا الله بنت امها الغاليه تعالي فديتج تعالي

جميله

وااو لحظه شوي ماماه

وااااو واو واو وووااااووو

تفتح جميلة كاميرا الهاتف وتبدأ بالتصوير .. ثم يرن هاتفها

صوت الهاتف

أغنية اجنبيه

جميله

هااي أمون

</div>

You will not believe

<div dir="rtl">

أنا وين

</div>

It's amazing

<div dir="rtl">

وايد جديم تراثي حلووو

</div>

اه أ TV جديم

AC جديم

And.. what do you call it a fan

بنكه yes بنكه

And there is

مكينه خياطة

AND

(تصرخ)OH MY GOD!

تفتح جميلة عيونها بعد انت تنتبه للنسوة ،،

تغلق الهاتف

النسوة ينظرن لبعضهن البعض

جميله تنظر للنسوة بدهشه

وااو واو واو وووااوو واو

أم سعيد

هب هباج الله

جميله

واو واو واو وووااوو واو

أم سلوم

سي سي يالله

جميله

Oh my GOD this is so vintage

وايد تراث وااايد كووول

ام خماس

انتي منو ؟؟

Who shoo you?

جميله

اوكي اوكي انا جميله ويسموني

جااام مثل المربى يعني

ام خماس

ههههي عيل انا ام خماس ويسموني خاام مثل البترول يعني

أم سلوم

أم علاوي هاي البنت شكلها توها يايه من السفر يايبه شنطتها وياها

ام علاوي

لا هبيبتي ام سلوم ، هاي شنطة اليد الماركة مالها

هاي الموضة الحين

ام سعيد

أم جميل؟ وهاي هي الغزال اللي بيدش علينا ؟ صدق لي قالوا الحب يطلع على بذره

صوت ام سعيد يتكرر في الموبايل وجميله تضغط على ازراره

صوت ام سعيد

صدق لي قالوا الحب يطلع على بذره

صدق لي قالوا الحب يطلع على بذره

جميله

وااو لحظه بحطيها رنة مسج

ام خماس

آآه هاي يااااهل ، أخس عن عبوود

يلسي عدال امج وصخي

ام سعيد

أم جميل؟ بلاها بنتج غادية غير علبة ألوان ، وشوو مسوية بشعرها جيه؟

ام جميل

شو عرفج انتي هاي الموضه ، ياميه خليها تعيش زمانها عنبووه بتاخذون زمنكم وزمن غيركم ؟

ام سعيد

لا يا اميه لا أبا زمنهم ولا أباها هيه بعد،، هاي بنتج مينونه كلمتين عربي على بعض ما تعرف ترمس ، وتبين تسيرين تغسلين ذنوبج وتحمليني أنا ذنبها . حششا عليه

ام جميل

لا لا ما عليج ، جميلة رزينه وفنانه وأنا ما أأمن فالعيايز الباقيات كثر من أأمن فيج

ام علاوي

ام سعيد ، شكلها أم جميل تبغي تنتقم منج، انتي مسويتلها شي ؟

ام سعيد

لا يااميه ما حيدني دستلها على طرف

أم خماس تفكر ثم ترفع اصبعها كأنها اكتشفت شي مهم

ام خماس

تنتقم ؟ همم تنتقم ، الإنتقام ،، آه أ أ حياله أم جميل وحياالله جميلة اللي بتنور علينا بيت أم سعيد ، ما عليج يا ام جميل سيري وأنتي متطمنه ، جميلة في عيوننا إهييبي

107

ام سعيد

ويديه أم خماس؟ بتعزمين الناس في بيتي وانا يالسه ؟

جميله

بس مامااه أنا عادي اتم فالبيت بروحي انتي خليج كوول

ام جميل

يالله يالله ما عندنا بنات ييلسن في البيت ارواحهن

ام سعيد

وايد شديتي حيلج يا اميه ،، تو الناس

ام جميل (تأشر على جميلة كي تسرع)

يالله عيل قومي بسرعه نيب اغراضج قبل ما يغيرن رايهن واطيحين في كبدي

أنا ما صدقت حد يباج يالله lets go

أم جميل وجميلة يغادرن المنزل بسرعه

ام سعيد

حسبي الله ونعم الوكيل عليج يا ام خماس،، اش لج تعزمين الناس في بيتي هاي خيل خيل وبترافس في بيتي

ام خماس

لا يا ام سعيد ، هاي فرصه ويتنا لين عندنا وأخييييراً

بنتقم من أم جميل وبنلعوز بنتها تلعوييز هي هي ههههه

ام سعيد

أنا اشهد انه امكر منج ما ريت

أم سلوم

وااااو واو ووووااااوو

المشهد الثاني :-

خارجي ليل/بيت ام سعيد

داخلي/ليل ـغرفة المعيشه بيت ام سعيد

أم سعيد جالسه بمفردها وامامها دلتهاوتبدو حزينه

ام سعيد

حسبي الله عليج يا ام خماس وعلى شورج العاثر

أخخخ انا ام سعيد أيلّس هاللوث عندي فبيتي؟ إفف الله يرحمك يا بوسعيد ،سرت وخليتني بين أربع يدران وميلسيني ويا وحده تنابح

أحدهم يمسك بكتف ام سعيد

تستدير لترى من هناك وفجأة تصرخ

ام سعيد

آاااااااااااااااااه

ويه بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم ، أعوذ بكلمات الله التامات

جميلة؟ شو مسويه بعمرج جيه؟

جميله

أووه تقصدين هذا اللي على ويهي؟ هذا Mask يا ام سعيد

يريح الويه ويحافظ على الشباب

ام سعيد

يا اميه الويه ما يريحه الا الايمان وطاعة الرحمن

أي شباب بتحافظين عليه وانتي بنت ام جميل؟ يعني لا ماسك ولا برقع

آخرتج بتطلعين على ست الحسن امج ، لا حول ولا قوه الا بالله يسي يا اميه يلسي

تتحرك الكاميرا من اليمين إلى اليسار وتظهر ام سعيد مره اخرى جالسه وتكلم نفسها

ام سعيد تفرك يدها من الغيظ

أخخخ خس الله بنات هالزمن ، أيهااااً الله يرحم بنات لوّل ما يرمسن ولا يقولن إق اخخخ

الكاميرا تقطع على جميلة جالسه وهي متجمده في وضع اليوغا

ام سعيد

امفف امفف صدقه بن سوقات يوم قال

-----------------**----------------

-----------------**----------------

الكاميرا تقطع على جميلة لا تزال جالسه وهي متجمده في وضع اليوغا

تقف ام سعيد وتسير باتجاه جميله

ام سعيد

أيه اميه وووااو وااااو وووااو

أنا سايره أحط راسي وأرقد ، هذربان في التليفون ما با تسمعيني؟

ويديه بلاها ما ترد عليه هاي ، هب هباج الله

صدق ما فيج مذهب أنا شو له حارقه اعصابي!

حسبي الله عيلج يا ام خماس حسبي الله ونعم الوكيل

صوت ام تغلق باب غرفتها

المشهد الثالث :-

خارجي نهار/بيت ام سعيد

داخلي/نهار -غرفة المعيشه بيت ام سعيد

النسوه جالسات يشربن القهوة

ام خماس

انزين يا ام سعيد، وشوو أخبار جميلة وياج

ام سعيد

خس الله هاذاك الطاري ،، يا اميه هالبنيه مينونه

البارحه نص ساعه وانا ارمسها وهي لابستني، حاطه يميع الخيّاس على ويهها ورافعه ايديها ومتيبسه (ام سعيد تقلد جميلة في جلسه اليوغا) واخر شي تقول لي يالسه اسوي يوجا

ام سلوم

اه اا يووجه ؟ يوجه سمج والا يوجه دياي

ام خماس

ام سلوم يوووغاا مب فوقه

ام علاوي

انزين ام سعيد الحين جميله وين ؟

ام سعيد

منخمدة داخل ، حتى صلاة الفير ما طاعت تنش تصلي

ام سلوم

أكيد اللي ياكل فوقه نصايف الليل ما بينش يا ام سعيد

ام سعيد

أم خماس فديتج ودي ام سلوم داخل ورقديها عند جميله تراها طفرتبي

ام خماس

لا تحاتين يا ام سعيد دقيييقه بس وبتيج البنت تربع لين عندج

أم خماس تدخل الغرفه لتوقظ جميلة ويعلو صوت صراخ جميله

جميله صوت

اآاآآه او أو هههه اه ووو

أم خماس تخرج وهيه تضحك

تخرج جميله وهي شبه نائمه وترتدي بيجامه وفوقها روب نوم وعلى رأسها رولات لف الشعر

ام سعيد

يمين يمين الحمام يمين

المجموعه

ههههههه

المشهد الرابع :-

خارجي نهار/بيت ام سعيد

داخلي/نهار -غرفة المعيشه بيت ام سعيد

النسوه جالسات يشربن القهوة وجميلة جالسه تتحكك

ام خماس

حيالله جميله ، حيالله الغالية بنت الغاليه هههههههي

ام علاوي

أم سعيد انتي في بيتج بعوض؟ جميله وايد تحك

ام سعيد

لا يا اميه هاي مذهبها وسيع ، صروال ما تلبس ، جان اعطيها من خلقاني

جميله (تحكك)

أم سعيد الزمن تغير ، جيلنا وجيلكم مب لازم يكونون نفس الشي

ومب لازم نلبس مثلكم

ام سعيد

أص يالله ، ما عندنا بنات يتمن بليا صروال حلاة البنت بجلابيه مخورة وصروال بادله وقذله مسرحه ، زاده بنات هالزمن ما يعرسن

ام خماس

أنا اعلنت انه من اليوم بندخلج يا جميله كورس ، وبنزغرتج بطريقتنا الخاصه ههههههههي

ام سعيد

شورج وهداية الله يا ام خماس

ام علاوي

والله فكرة

جميله

لا لا نووو ما ابا makeover

ام خماس

Makeover والا come over

يا اميه مب بكيفج ههههههي

المشهد الخامس :-

خارجي نهار/بيت ام سعيد

داخلي/نهار -غرفة المعيشه بيت ام سعيد

أم سعيد واقفه على رأس جميلة وتفتح يدها يمينا ويساراً للنسوة وهن يضعون فيها معدات التزيين

ام سعيد

دهن بوناريل ،، مشط ،، فلييت ،، كبريت ،،

أم سعيد تصب المعدات على راس جميله ثم تشعل النار في رأسها

قطع

الكاميرا تتحرك ونسمع صوت دق ملاس وصوت ام خماس

ام خماس صوت فقط

دقي دقي عدل

ما ابا اشوف لوا حبه دقي اقول لج افف تعبتي

الكاميرا تتحرك وتظهر ام خماس متكئه وتنظر لأظافرها بينما جميله تضرب الهريس

قطع

أم سعيد تحفظ جميلة شعر بن سوقات

ام سعيد

قولي ، يقول بن سوقات

ياطير ييت للي ييونك ** يهلا وهلا ياحي ما ييت

جميله

يا تير اه امم come baaaaaaaack

ام سعيد (تضربها بخيزرانه)

كم باك؟ كمكموج فجهنم قولي آمين

قطع

مشاهد متتاليه لجميله تستعرض ملابسها الحديثه

النسوة ينظرن لبعضهن ويهززن رؤوسهن بالرفض

قطع

جميلة ترتدي ملابس تراثيه

النسوة ينظرن لبعضهن ويهززن رؤوسهن بالموافقه والرضا

قطع

مشهد خارجي لبيت ام سعيد والشمس تبدأ تغيب حتى تختفي ويبدأ الليل

المشهد السادس :-

خارجي نهار/بيت ام سعيد

داخلي/نهار -غرفة المعيشه بيت ام سعيد

النسوة يشربن القهوة

ام سعيد

أنا طول عمري أدعي انه انه الله يرزقني بنيّه والحمد لله

الله بفضله استجاب دعاي

ام خماس

ههههههي لا يكون تقصدين جميله

اللي ما تمت دعوة ما دعيتيها عليها اول ما يت

عيل الحينه لازم تدعيلي

ام علاوي

سبحان مغير الأحوال

ام سعيد

يا اميه البنت جنه ، البنت ونيس

بس تربيتها شقا وعلى راي المثل هم البنات لين الممات

اتخافين عليهن من هالزمان لا يطلعن كلهن شرات جميله

ام علاوي

لا تخافين يا ام سعيد

الدنيا بخير بس لازم الأهل ينتبهون لعيالهم ويربونهم على الخير والطاعه

ام خماس

على طاري الأهل ، أم جميل شكلها ما تبا بنتها ، ما شوفها يت

كل الحجاج ردوا وهي ما بيّنت

ام سعيد ترفع يدها للدعاء

يا الله تكون كتبت لأم جميل الشهادة في بيتك يا رب

تدفع ام جميل الباب فجأة وتدخل

أم جميل

السلام عليكن

ام سعيد

ليتني طريت مليون ، ام جميل؟ حج مبرور وسعي مشكور وعودة حميدة

أم جميل

فرصة سعيدة ، فكيني انتي وهيه أنا مب يايه اتمنظر في هالويوه الــ والا ما يحتاي توني حاجه ، انا يايه اشل بنتي وأروّح

وين بنتيه ؟ بنييه ؟

ام علاوي

صدق يوم قالوا ذيل اللي ما عرف شوو عوي ما يتعدل

ام سلوم (تنابح)

وووااو ووااوو واو

ام خماس

بنتج؟ انشاااء الله يا ام جميل دقيقه بس ههههههههي

ام علاوي زجريها هاي بنت امها

ام علاوي

جميلااااه جميلااااه

ام سعيد

خسّج الله ، جي يزقرون لبنيّه

يمييبله ؟ يوو يمييبله

جميله (صوت فقط)

عووونج امااايه

تخل جميلة وهي ترتدي البرقع والثوب العربي وتحمل الدلة والفنجان

جميله

امباركن عيدج امااايه

أم جميل تفتح عينها ومن هول الصدمه يغشي عليها وتسقط

انتهت

Jameela

Duration: 19'49"

<u>**Scene One:**</u>

Um Saeed

Welcome Um Jameel, my dear neighbour

Um Jameel

Thank you, Um Saeed

You're the only one who cares

Um Khammas

Huh? Um Saeed, I don't know what I ate this morning

It must have been something heavy, very heavy...it's really not sitting well

Um Jameel

Drown it in your coffee, my dear...I'm not going anywhere!

I came to see my dear Um Saeed, who set me up with my husband, Bu Jameel, may he rest in peace

Um Saeed

God forbid. Don't put that on me!

You stole him from his first wife

May your soul rest in peace, Um Jamaal

As soon as she found out that her husband was getting married to Um Jameel, she went nuts and dropped dead on the spot

Um Jameel

Naturally, I was much prettier than she was...

When he first laid eyes on me, I was collecting seashells at the beach...his heart skipped a beat

Um Saeed

My dear, maybe he thought he saw a beached whale or a dead deghs (dolphin)

Um Allawi

Um Saeed? What does 'deghs' means?

Um Saloom

Don't you know, dear?

Deghs (dolphin) is what you get when you squeeze dates

Um Saeed

Oh my, no! That's debs (date syrup) not deghs (dolphin)!!

Um Khammas

Yeah, debs...the heavy black thing that's weighing down my heart

Um Jameel

Just drink your coffee!

Um Saeed

Deghs, my dear, is a type of dolphin...

Anyway, Um Jameel, what brings you here today?

Um Jameel,

I came to say goodbye to you and to ask you all for forgiveness, as I'm leaving for Hajj (pilgrimage) tomorrow

Um Khammas

Well, we have no money for you

Um Jameel

Don't worry, dear, I'm loaded!

If you need some cash, just let me know

Um Saeed

Um Jameel's like a broken ATM machine...packed with cash but nobody knows the code!

Um Jameel

My dear Um Saeed, your words are always as sweet as syrup

Um Saeed

Oh, I see...then you must need a favour from us

Um Jameel

No, nothing, except…well, Jameela (beautiful)!

Um Khammas

Yes? Did somebody just call me?

Um Saeed

What? Who's Jameela?

Um Allawi

You mean Jameela, your daughter

Um Saeed

Oh...Jameela? What's wrong with her?

The last time we saw her, she was drooling on your arm

Um Jameel

Well, I had to hide her from envious eyes

Um Saeed

If you say so...but what does that have to do with us?

Um Jameel

I thought it would be a good idea if Jameela stays with you until I return from Hajj

Um Saeed

What? I can't deal with kids and their juvenile problems...wacky Abood is enough for me!

Um Jameel

No, no, she's almost 20 now!

A beautiful rose in full bloom...attracting all the bees!

Um Jameel

I think my baby's just arrived!

Jameela

Hiiiiiiii!!!!!

Um Saeed

Oh my God! You startled me

Um Saloom

Why's she barking?

Um Jameel

Welcome Jameela, welcome my precious daughter

Come here, darling

Jameela

Oh! Just a sec, mum!

Jameela

Hi Amoon! You won't believe where I am...

really old and vintage!

An ancient TV...an old A/C!

Bankah (fan)...yes, bankah

And there's a sewing machine, and…

Um Saeed

Go away!

Um Saloom

Get away, get away!

Jameela

This is so vintage!

Very traditional...it's so cool!

Um Khammas

Who are you?

Jameela

My name is Jameela but they call me Jam, as in bread and jam!

Um Khammas

My name is Um Khammas, and they call me Crude, as in oil!

Um Saloom

Um Allawi, has she just come back from abroad?

She's carrying a bag!

Um Allawi

No, Um Saloom, that's her branded handbag, dear

They're really trendy these days

Um Saeed

Um Jameel? Is this the blooming rose?

It's true what they say, 'The apple doesn't fall far from the tree'

Jameela

Wow, wait...let me set that as my message tone

Um Khammas

She's still a kid...even worse than Abood!

Sit beside your mother and keep your trap shut!

Um Saeed

Um Jameel? What's with your daughter's makeup? She looks like a crayon box!

And what about her Burj Al Arab hair do?

Um Jameel

How would you know anything about style?! Let her live her life!

You want to live your life and control the lives of others as well?!

Um Saeed

No dear, I don't want to have anything to do with her

Your daughter's a nutcase...and she can barely speak Arabic!

And you want to dump her on me while you go to Hajj to cleanse your sins? No way!

Um Jameel

No, no, don't worry!

Jameela is responsible, fun loving and entertaining...

Besides, I don't trust her with anyone but you

Um Allawi

Um Saeed, it seems that Um Jameel is seeking revenge!

What have you done to her?

Um Saeed

No, my dear, I've never done anything to upset her

Um Khammas

Revenge? Yes…revenge!

Welcome Um Jameel, welcome Jameela...your presence will surely brighten Um Saeed's house

Don't worry, Um Jameel...

Go to Hajj, Jameela will be well taken care of

Um Saeed

What?! Um Khammas, now you're inviting people to stay at my house?

Jameela

But mum! I'm old enough to stay home alone...be cool!

Um Jameel

We don't allow girls to stay at home all by themselves!

Um Saeed

It's about time you acted like a real mum...almost 20 years late!

Um Jameel

Quickly, let's go pack your stuff...before they change their minds!

Finally, someone's agreed to take you in...come on, let's go!

Um Saeed

God help me! Um Khammas, how could you do that to me?

I'm telling you, she's a horse...a bucking wild horse!!

Um Khammas

No, Um Saeed, this is truly our lucky day!

Revenge is at hand...we'll get back at Um Jameel by making her daughter's life miserable

Um Saeed

Oh my! There truly has never been one more devious than you!

Scene Two:

Um Saeed

Damn you and your bright ideas, Um Khammas

How'd you get me to agree to let this girl stay at my house?!

May your soul rest in peace, Bu Saeed...you left me all alone with this barking-mad girl!

Um Saeed

Oh my God!

Jameela, what have you done to yourself?

Jameela

Oh, you mean this stuff on my face? It's just a cleansing mask...

It relaxes your skin and maintains your youthful appearance

Um Saeed

My dear, nothing keeps the face relaxed and soul young except faith in God

With Um Jameel as your mother, what beauty is there to maintain?

Masks of mud won't make a difference...you'll end up looking just like your beautiful mum anyway!

God help me, sit dear...sit!

Um Saeed

Girls today! In the past, girls were seen and not heard!

Um Saeed

As Bin Sougat says,

'A new style has just reached us

It spoiled all our women's faces

Gave them all pump lips and chiselled noses

God's creation is beautiful, yet we choose the work of man'

Um Saeed

Enough is enough...I'm going to bed!

And no chatting on the phone, do you hear me?

What? What's wrong with her?

She really has no manners! I give up!

It's all you fault, Um Khammas...all your fault!

Scene Three:

Um Khammas

So, Um Saeed, how's Jameela doing?

Um Saeed

Don't even go there! That girl is driving me up the wall!

Yesterday, she was totally ignoring me!

She was sitting completely frozen, with her hands in the air and a weird look on her face...
Only later did I find out that she was doing yoga!

Um Saloom

Yoga? Fish yoga or chicken yoga?

Um Khammas

Yoga, Um Saloom...not foga (rice-based dish)!

SUBTITLING AND CULTURAL REPRESENTATION: THE CASE OF *FREEJ*

Um Allawi

So, Um Saeed, where's Jameela now?

Um Saeed

She's sleeping it off...

She didn't even wake up for morning prayer!

Um Saloom

Yeah, foga can be pretty heavy...

How do you expect her to wake up so early, Um Saeed?!

Um Saeed

Um Khammas, take Um Saloom to Jameela's room and throw her on top of the girl!

They're both driving me nuts!

Um Khammas

Don't worry, Um Saeed, I'll wake her up...

The girl will be scurrying towards you in a minute!

Um Saeed

The toilet's on your right!

Scene Four:

Um Khammas

Welcome, Jameela

Welcome, my dear friend's daughter!

Um Allawi

Um Saeed, are there mosquitoes in your house? Jameela's itching badly

Um Saeed

No, my dear, Jameela's outfit was too casual and she wasn't wearing any long underpants...so I lent her a pair of mine

Jameela

Um Saeed, times have changed

My generation isn't like yours...and we don't have to dress like you!

Um Saeed

Hush up, dear! Long underpants are non-negotiable in this house!

Anyway, a girl is more beautiful when wearing a traditional dress, embroidered long underpants, and well-styled hair

No wonder you girls aren't finding husbands these days!

Um Khammas

I propose that starting today Jameela will be on my special beauty program...

We'll fix you up in no time!

Um Saeed

Whatever you say, Um Khammas

Um Allawi

What an idea!

Jameela

No, no, I don't want a makeover

Um Khammas

Makeover? You mean game over!

Scene Five:

Um Saeed

Coconut oil…

Um Khammas

Here you go

Um Saeed

Hair comb…

Um Allawi

Check

Um Saeed

Scissors …

Um Khammas

Done

Um Saeed

Insect repellent…

Um Allawi

Here

Um Saeed

Matches

Um Khammas

Ok

Um Khammas

Crush them! Crush them well!

I don't want to see a single grain...crush them all well!

Um Saeed

Come on, repeat after me...the poet says,

'O bird, you've come to those who want you

Welcome, bird, welcome'

Jameela

O bird...come back?

Um Saeed

Come back!? May they put YOU back in the dark!

Um Saeed

Repeat after me, Ruba'yaa says:

'They taught the girl to dance and sing

To prance like a gymnast with a hula ring

And so…she became an artist!'

<u>Scene Six:</u>

Um Saeed

I've prayed my entire life for a girl, and now God Almighty has answered

Um Khammas

Don't tell me you mean Jameela!

You did nothing but swear at her at first...you should be singing my praises!

It's ok...I accept cheques!

Um Allawi

Amazing how God Almighty changes everything

Um Saeed

My dear, girls are a blessing and true companions for life...but bringing them up them up is challenging nowadays

As they say, 'you'll always worry about your daughter'...worry and fear that they'll end up like Jameela

Um Allawi

Don't worry, Um Saeed, life is good

But parents need to take better care of their children...they must raise them well and teach them respect and duty!

Um Khammas

Speaking of absent parents, where's Um Jameel?

Strange...everyone who went to Hajj already came back, except for her

Oh God, I pray that Um Jameel died and became a martyr during Hajj

Um Jameel

Salaam 'Alaykum (Peace be upon you)

Um Saeed

Um Jameel? I wish I'd prayed for a million Dirhams!

Welcome back! I hope you had a good Hajj

Um Jameel

Oh spare it, sister...I didn't come here to look at your old faces

Whatever! I just came back from Hajj and want to pick up my daughter...where is she?

Um Allawi

Some things never change!

Um Khammas

Your daughter?

Ok, Um Jameel...just a minute!

Um Allawi, call Jameela, the apple of her mother's eye!

Um Allawi

Jameelaaahh! Jameelaaaaahh!!

Um Saeed

Oh, shush!

Is that how you call her?

Yameela...hey Yameela!

Jameela

At your service, Auntie

Jameela

Happy Eid, mum!

THE END

أم علاوي

أم شو رايك في هاي .

العمر : 20 سنة - الجنسية : الفلبين – خريجة أدب انجليزي – الخبرة : يرجى مراجعة مركز بر دبي

أم سعيد

أشوف .. لا يميه هاي ما بتكمل عندي شهر ... بيخطبها مواطن وبيسكنها فالبيت إللي عدالي بعد .

أم علاوي

ام م انزين .. شو رايك في هاي

العمر : 70 سنة – الجنسية : الفلبين – أرملة وعندها 4 أولاد و 10 أحفاد .

أم سعيد

ويديه هاي أم سعيد الفلبينية .. يميه أنا أبا وحده تخدمني وتهمزني مب أنا اللي أحاظيها وأهمزها .. دوري حد ثاني

أم علاوي

أم م انزين هاي اكيد بتعيبك - العمر 45 سنة – الجنسية : الفلبين – الحالة الاجتماعية : متزوجة ولها ولدان -
الخبرة السابقة : مشرفة منزل لمدة خمس سنوات في السعودية وتتكلم العربية .

أم سعيد

إش عليها يا حافظ .. اتصدقين إنشرح قلبي من سمعت إسمها .

137

أم علاوي

بس أنا ماقلت اسمها .

أم سعيد

من غير ماتقولين .. من باجر اتسوين حق المكتب وتخلينهم ايبونها وقوليلهم المعاش مب مشكلة دامنه البشكارة زينة .

أم خماس

هل البيت افتحوا الباب .

أم سعيد

هه أم خماس ! ويديه بسرعة دسي الأوراق مافيني على لسانها مافيني اطيح في لسانها .

أم خماس

الباب ..

أم علاوي

أم سعيد أنا ميخصني انتي اتصرفي فيهم .. أنا أخاف من أم خماس .

أم سعيد

آه آه أم سلوم خلي ها الورقتين عندك وأياني وياج تراوينهن حد .. ما با أشوفهن طيريهن طيريهن ..

أم سلوم

إنشاء الله إنشاء الله .

أم خماس

نياه .. أنا قلت ها المرة بتأدب وبدق الباب وبستأذن بس الظاهر انتوا مب ويه أدب ولا حشمه .. كيفك استوى عندك حوض سباحة برع ..

أم سلوم

زين بنتودن طشونه عن الحر .

أم سعيد

مرحبا مرحبا حيا الله الغالية بنت الغالية .

أم خماس

هم هم أروح ريحة غريبة .

أم سعيد

تونا امدخنين البيت ما يستوي بعد تينا والبيت ريحته خايسه .

أم خماس

عشتوا من متى ..

أم علاوي

من زمان هبيبتي .. اتفضلي ليش واقفة .. اتفضلي ..

أم خماس

اتفضل ! ههههه .. والله زين يوم أخيرا عرفتي قدري وقيمتي ومكانتي الفنية والاجتماعية والصحيحة في المجتمع ..

أم سعيد

ويديه خسا الله البقر .

أم خماس

أم سعيد شو قلتي .

أم علاوي

قالت حيا الله القمر .

بينما أم خماس تتكلم ثم طائرة ورق فوقها وتتفاجأ السيدات الأخريات ونتابع الطائرة حتى تضرب أم خماس في وجهها

أم خماس

هه هه هه هو صح أنا جايسني خسوف كامل ها الأيام .. بس على قولة المؤرخين والأدباء " وهل يخفى القمر " هي هي هي .. لا لا أنا ها المعاملة اليديدة وايد اتناسبني .. أحس إني انسانه يديده يقدرها المجتمع ويحتفي بها .. الحين بقدر أبدع في مجالي الفني والعملي والأدبي والاجتماعي .. وأنا أشكركم على حسن استقبالكم ومعاملتكم لما فيه خدمة هذا الوطن المعطاء والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته .. آي آي ي

أم خماس تفتح الورقة وتتفاجأ بما تراه .

أم خماس

هه بشكااااره .. وأنا أقول كنت أروح ريحة شي غريب هاي كانت ريحة مؤامرة وانتن الثلاث طابخينها .

أم سعيد

حشى مب آدمي كلبه .

أم خماس

وأعض بعد اعترفوا هاي البشكارة حق منوه ؟

أم علاوي

أنا ما أحب أدخل خدم عندي في البيت وبعدين أنا كل يوم هني ليش أبا بشكارة .

أم سلوم

أم سعيد قالتلي اطير الأوراق وسويتهن طيارة ..

أم سعيد

وافضيحتيه .. وافضيحتيه .

أم خماس

أم سعيد !!

أم سعيد

لبيه ياختيه لبيه .. عونك .

أم خماس

لبيه ها ! لبيه ! انتي ما تيوزين ما توبين ما تتعلمين .. بشكارة مرة ثانية ها بشكارة من ورايه ..

أم علاوي

استهدي بالله يام خماس والحرمة كانت اتفكر بس يعني تشاور .

أم خماس

تشاور هاه ! واكيد إني ايديتها الراي .. كدي ياغزاله كلي ياسباله وانتي .. أنا كم مرة قايلتلك عماله وافدة ما نبا .. ليش البشاكير .. آنا موجودة .. بدال ما تعقيلك 2000 على البشكارة عقيها عليه أنا شجعي التوطين ..

أم سعيد

ادري يام خماس بس أنا أبا وحدة اتحاظيني وتقومبي وتهمزلي ضلوعي .

أم خماس

انا بهمزك .

أم سعيد

حشى يميه بتجسحيني تجسيح .. يديك تغرف حق عشر .. مافيه يميه أنا أبا وحدة تعقصني تلايا الليل ..

أم خماس

عشتوا انتي راس مالك ها الشعرتين اللي با قيات وتبين اتعقصينهن

أم سعيد

ويديه ترى البقرة ما تشوف ذيلها .. وبعدين انا أبا وحدة توعيني حق الصلاة وتزهبلي الدلة وتغسل خلقاني .

أم خماس

أنا بأذن في إذنك كان تبين وبفورلك الدلة وبغسلك خلقانك وبكويهن بعد ..

أم سعيد

لا أميه عزات انصمخت وتميت امفصخة .. إنتي نسيتي من يطيح فيدك ما يرد .. وبعدين انتي ليش حارقة اعصابك البشكارة يميه يايه بتخدمنا كلنا .. طشونه عندي وطشونه عندك ..

أم خماس

... هه أ أ صدق ! كان قلتو جيه من الأول عيل يامرحبابها .. يامرحبابها

أم سعيد

ويديه وين سار التوطين عيل .

أم خماس

فكينا منو نشاد أصلن .أم علاوي : خلاص عيل باجر بكلم مكتب الخدم عشان يطلبون البشكارة ..

أم سعيد تدخن المنزل ..

أم علاوي

أم سعيد انتي شو تسوين ؟

أم سعيد

شو أسوي يعني يالسه أدخن البيت ما نبا البشكارة تي وتقول شو ها البيت الخايس .

أم خماس

مادري منو يا ينا اميلدا ماركوس وبعدين تعالي يوم ييتك أنا دخنتي البيت وحق هاي اتدخنين البيت بعد !

أم سعيد

لا يميه .. هذا الدخون من الغالي .. أمسات حقك انتي حطينا من الرخيص ..

أم خماس

أم سعيد ..

" صوت دق على الباب "

أم سعيد

ويديه هكيه يت .. أم خماس قومي فتحي الباب..

أم خماس

ألحين ها .. عرضت عليك خدماتي ابيزات قلتي ما با .. وأحين تبين اتآمرين عليه ابلاش اففف ..

أم خماس تفتح الباب وترى الخادمة عند الباب .

الخادمة

سلام عليكم ما ما.

أم خماس

أوو كاموستكا ..

أم سعيد

حياك الله يميه اقربي ياي .. انتو شو اسمك ؟

الخادمة

ماري لو ما ما .

أم سعيد

ماري منو ! لا لا يميه انسي بنسميك فاطماه ..

الخادمة

أوكي ما ما .

أم سعيد

وشو تعرفين تسوين

الخادمة

اي نو / كبيصه مصقع وسليق + والدماميه

أم سلوم

وتعرفين تسوين خنيتي ونقازي .

أم سعيد

ويديه بترقصنا هاي .

أم خماس

المهم يا الله يا فاطماه يا الله تعالي ورى ماما أم خماس ..

أم علاوي

على وين ؟

أم خماس

أوووه ورانا غسال وطبيخ وخم .. وايد شغل وايد شغل ..

أم سعيد

يا الله يا الله ما شي عنبوه توها واصله الحرمة خليها بتستريح هاي ما يوبه حقي مب حقك .

أم خماس

هيه !! هاذي خيانة خيانة ما عليه يام سعيد أنا مابرد عليك ما قول غير درب الكلب علقصاب وها ويهي إن بيتك مرة ثانية مع السلامة ..

مشهد ليلي داخل بيت أم سعيد الخادمة تهمز أم سعيد

أم سعيد

وقولك عاد يافاطمة .. أم سيف تستوي بنت عمي من اميه وتستوي خالة بنات وديمه اللي تستوي بنات عم أم خلفان .. وأم خلفان أبوها ما خذ عمتيه طماعه وياب منها صفيه خذيه ومديه .. صفية خذها راعي العين وخذيه خذها راعي ليوا ومديه خذها بوراشد اللي يستوي خو بوسعيد الله يرحمه اللي يستوي ريلي .

الخدامة

ماما في بنادول ؟

مشهد خارجي بيت أم سعيد

مشهد داخلي بيت أم سعيد

أم علاوي

ها أم سعيد شو رايك في البشكارة اليديدة

أم سعيد

لا تتخبرين يام علاوي كملت عندي شهر ألحين وما عليها قصيرة شاله عني شغل البيت كله وممخلتني محتايه شي ..
أحس انها بنتي اللي يبيتها .

أم علاوي

أم سعيد مب كنك بالغتي شويه .

أم سعيد

إلا قولي ما وفيت .. الفقيرة تشتكيلي من حالتهم الكسيفة في بلادهم زاده يايتنا ممصوصة وعودها ناحل .

أم سلوم

أنا اتولهت على أم خماس من زمان ما شفناها .

أم سعيد

فكينا فكينا .. هاي اتقولين حد ماخذ عليها وحدة من يت فاطماه وهي مسوتلنا مقاطعة .

تدخل أم خماس ..

أم خماس

السلام عليكم ..

أم سعيد

وعليكم السلام حيا الله أم خماس .

أم علاوي

أم خماس ماقلتي إنك بتسوين مقاطعة حق بيت أم سعيد اشوفك رجعتي ..

أم سعيد

معلوم يميه روحها قايله درب الكلب عالقصاب .

أم خماس

عادي يام سعيد قولي اللي في خاطرك أنا لولا العشرة والعيش والملح ما ييت بس قلت حرام يمكن ناقصكم شي ولا شياته .. أم م أقول أم سعيد عندكم شكر ..

أم سعيد

هييه قولي جيه أثارينا في آخر الشهر ومير البيت اللي عندك خلصت ويايه عند العنزة الربوطة .. ادورين شكر .

أم خماس

لا عنزة ولا بقرة .. خلصينا عندك ولا ما عندك ..

أم سعيد

يميه الشي عندي يزيد ما ينقص

أم علاوي

دقي حق فاطماه على الموبايل خلها تيب حق السمسوم العود شكر .

أم خماس

عشتوا .. ألحين هاي مسودة الوجه عندها موبايل وأنا اجحت من سنين ومنين حتى بليب ماعندي ما با شكر خلاص .. أووووه أم سعيد شغلي التيلفزيون بيحطون المسلسل البدوي ألحين .. هه التلفزيون وين ؟

أم سعيد

آآآ .. تعرفين عاد يام خماس أنا ما شوف التلفزيون وايد والفقيرة فاطماه قالت تبا اطرشه بلادها .. وعطيتها إياه .

أم خماس

شوه !!

أم علاوي

أم سعيد لا تعودين البشكارة على الهدايا .. بعدين بتفتقرين .

147

أم سعيد

لا وحليلها برايها نافعتني .

أم خماس

أنا كملت 30 سنة انفعك حتى بلك ما عطيتيني .. وينها هاي الشفاطة زقريها خلها تيبلي شكر أبا أذلف من هنيه .

أم سعيد

يميه دامنها قايمتبي ونافعتني برايها خليها تاخذ اللي تباه ..

كنان متعددة تظهر أم سعيد والخادمة يستمتعن بحياتهن معن

صورة مشهد أم سعيد وفاطماه يشربن القهوة معن

صورة مشهد أم سعيد وفاطماه يلعبن الكيرم

صورة مشهد بعض الأثاث يختفي

صورة مشهد لأم سعيد وفاطماه يتمريحن

صورة مشهد لأم سعيد تخم المنزل وفاطماه تشاهدها

صورة مشهد بعض الأثاث يختفي

صورة مشهد صورة بوسعيد تختفي

مشهد داخلي في منزل أم علاوي وام خماس تدور حول الطاولة مقهورة

أم خماس

آ آ ياالقهر آ آ يا القهر ألحينه نحنا أصحاب الدار استوينا غرب والغرب مترحرحين ومرتاحين آخر راحة .. ألحينه هاي البشكارة الخايسة ما تم شي ما شلته ما تم شي ما سار مانيلا وفوق هذا هي اللي مرتاحة وأم سعيد هي اللي اتخدم .. وفوق ها كله حتى الفقيرة أم سلوم خربتها وخلتها ترطن فلبيني .

أم سلوم

أم خماس

148

آ آ آ آه

أم علاوي

تضحك ههههههه

أم خماس

أم علاوي أنا حارقه أنا أعصابي وانتي تضحكين

أم علاوي

يالسه أسمعك تراني خلاص خلصتي ؟ عيل تعالوا براويكم ليش أنا مول مب مضايقه

العيايز يتبعن أم علاوي داخل لفت .. اللفت يأخذهن من غرفة إلى غرفة تحت الأرض

الغرفة الأولى مليئة بالمقتنيات الثمينة .

الغرفة الثانية مليئة بالمجوهرات الثمينة .

الغرفة الثالثة نرى مصنع مشاوي .

الغرفة الرابعة نرى قارب مغطى بالزجاج .

الغرفة الخامسة يدخلن السيدات وهي مليئة بالشاشات

أم خماس

أم علاوي .. شوها ؟

أم علاوي

أنا كنت شاكه من زمان بفاطماه وتصرفاتها ..فقمت وركبت كاميرات داخل بيتها عشان اسجل كل تحركات البشكارة وبها الطريقة بنكشفها

أم خماس

حشى خالتي قماشة مب أم علاوي .

أم علاوي

تعالوا خلونا إنشوف .

أم علاوي تكبس الزر وتظهر منزل أم سعيد من الداخل وفي أحد الغرف أم سعيد نائمة .

أم خماس

أكيد الطمه راقدة

أم سلوم

أنا ما رقدت .

أم خماس

مب انتي الخدية .. أم سعيد والبشكارة وين؟

أم علاوي

خلونا انشوف في المطبخ .. محد !

أم خماس

دوري في الحجرة

أم علاوي

محد !

أم خماس

في الحمام عيل.

أم علاوي

ما حطيت في الحمامات كيمره .. خليني أشوف في الصالة ..

تفتح أم علاوي كاميرة الصالة وترى حفلة كبيرة للخدم والنساء لابسات ملابس أم سعيد

أم خماس

كبسه .. أم علاوي ابسرعة خلينا انسير انطب عليهم ونوعي أم سعيد .

أم علاوي

لا تخافين يام خماس .. أنا حاطه منبه حق عشان يوعي أم سعيد .. أ م م م ألحين

كت على غرفة أم سعيد والمنبه يقرع تصحى أم سعيد وتمشي باتجاه الباب كي تفتحه /كت على الصالة والناس ترقص والموسيقى تعلى / كت على أم سعيد تقترب من الباب/ الحضور يلتفتون إلى الباب/ كت أم سعيد تتثاوب وتنظر إلى الحضور .. الحضور ينظرون إليها بصمت ..

كت على مشهد خارجي لنر أم سعيد

أم سعيد

آه آ آ آ آ آ آ

مشهد خارجي لمنزل أم سعيد نهار

مشهد داخلي لمنزل أم سعيد

العجائز جالسات حول أم سعيد المغطاه بفراش وأم خماس تهمزها ..

أم سعيد تبكي

أم خماس

صيحي يميه صيحي صيحي هلي الدموع هليهن قلنالك بس الصمخا الصمخا

أم سعيد تبكي ..

أم علاوي

بس هبيبتي بس مسكينة ام سعيد مشاعر الحب والوفاء انجلبت واستوت مشاعر حسره وكره علشان مصدومة وتصيح ..

أم خماس

حسرة وكره ! عيل صيحي إغرقي في الدموع .. اتعايبين عليه هاه اتقولين بخليك امكسمه ومفصخه ومابيتم عندك شي ..

أم علاوي

أم خماس لا تحطين ملح عالجرح يكفيها أم سعيد إللي فيها خلاص هبيبتي فاطماه ألحين في السجن وباكر بتتلقى

أم سعيد

انا ما صيح على التكسيح إللي أنا فيه . ولاعلى الأثاث إللي سار مانيلا أنا أصيح على فاطماه اتولهت عليها .. هي هي هي

انتهت ،،،

MAID FOR YOU

DURATION: 21'20"

<u>Scene One</u>

Um Allawi

So, what do you think of this one?

Age: 20

Nationality: Filipino

Degree: English Literature

Um Saeed

Let me see...

No dear, she wouldn't last a month!

She'd marry a local and probably move in next door!

Um Allawi

Ok, how about her?

Age: 30

Nationality: Filipino

Experience: 4 years in an ambassador's house

Um Saeed

No, I'd end up serving her...

Um Allawi

Fine...what do you think of her?

Age: 70

Nationality: Filipino

Marital Status: widowed with 4 kids and 10 grandkids

Um Saeed

Oh dear, we've found the Filipino version of Um Saeed

I'm looking for someone to look after my needs...not the other way around!

Next!

Um Allawi

Ok, I think you'll like this one

Age: 45

Nationality: Filipino

Marital Status: married with two kids

Experience: 5 years working as a housekeeper in Saudi Arabia

And she speaks Arabic!

Um Saeed

Wow, she sounds great!

You know what? Just the sound of her name makes me think that she's the right choice

Um Allawi

But I haven't told you her name yet!

Um Saeed

Useless details...

Call the agency tomorrow and ask them to bring her

And tell them that salary is not an issue as long as she's lives up to expectations

Um Khammas

Hey people...open the door!

Um Saeed

Um Khammas!

Quick, hide the papers...I can't take her self-serving comments

Um Khammas

Come on...open the door!

Um Allawi

Um Saeed, don't drag me into this

You deal with them!

I'm no match for Um Khammas

Um Saeed

Um Saloom, take these papers, and don't you dare show them to anyone

Make them fly away...disappear!

Um Saloom

Sure, no problem

Um Khammas

I thought I'd be polite today and knock on the door...

But obviously such courtesy doesn't get you very far in this household!

It's too hot...I almost drowned in a puddle of my own sweat out there!

Um Saloom

Great!

We'll splash the heat away!

Um Saeed

Welcome, welcome my dear

Um Khammas

I smell something fishy!

Um Saeed

We just burned some incense...we knew you were coming and wanted you to feel welcome

Um Khammas

What? Since when?

Um Allawi

Since forever, dear

Come in, please...come in

Um Khammas

Please!

Can it be that you've finally come to appreciate my great social status and artistic gifts?

Um Saeed

Oh God, what a loon!

Um Khammas

Um Saeed, did I hear you right?

Um Allawi

She said that you're as beautiful as the moon

Um Khammas

It's true I am a moon...but I am now in full eclipse

But as the poet says, 'you cannot hide the radiant glow of the moon'

I 'm starting to enjoy this treatment

I feel like a national celebrity

Now I can finally excel in my entertainment, professional, literary and social life

I thank you all for welcoming me and for all your kindness

And for supporting me as I strive to serve our beloved land

Thank you, thank you very much!

Um Khammas

A housemaid!

I thought I smelled something fishy...it was the foul stench of conspiracy!

Um Saeed

She's not human...she's a sniffing dog!

Um Khammas

I also bite!

Now spill it...who's the housemaid for?

Um Allawi

I don't like having housemaids at my place

Besides, I'm always here...why would I need one?

Um Saloom

Um Saeed told me to make them fly away...

So I made paper planes and sent them soaring

Um Saeed

I'm so ashamed...

Um Khammas

Um Saeed!!

Um Saeed

Yes, my dear...yes!

Um Khammas

Yes, my dear...yes!

Don't you ever give up?

You're getting another housemaid behind my back?!

Um Allawi

Calm down, Um Khammas

The woman was just giving it some thought...she was only discussing the idea

Um Khammas

Discussing it?

I bet you are behind this!

As they say, 'let the gazelle cook and the monkeys eat'

How many times have I told you that we don't need any foreign help?!

What do we need housemaids for? I'm here!

Instead of paying 2,000 Dirhams to a maid, give it to me!

Support the Nationalisation drive!

Um Saeed

I hear you, Um Khammas

But I need someone to take care of me and massage my poor ribs

Um Khammas

I'll massage them

Um Saeed

No, my dear, you'd break me in half...your hands are like bricks!

Thank you, my dear, but I want someone to braid my hair at night before bed

Um Khammas

What? You've got two strands of hair left...and you want them braided?

Um Saeed

The cow doesn't see her own tail!

I want someone to wake me up for the Morning Prayer, make me coffee, and wash my clothes

Um Khammas

I'll even chant the morning call to prayer in your ears

I'll make you coffee, wash your clothes...and iron them as well!

Um Saeed

No, my dear, I'd probably be stone deaf and wandering around naked within a week!

And you're like a black hole...whatever falls within your grasp never reappears!

What's your problem, anyway? The maid will serve all of us

She'll work one day at my house, the next day at yours...

Um Khammas

Really? Why didn't you just say so?

In that case, she's obviously more than welcome!

Um Saeed

Huh? What happened to all that talk about Nationalisation?

Um Khammas

Oh, spare me!

Um Allawi

Um Saeed, what are you doing?

Um Saeed

Isn't it obvious? I'm burning some incense

I don't want the housemaid to think my house stinks

Um Khammas

Who are you expecting to walk through the door...Imelda Marcos?!

You burned incense when I came...and now you're burning incense for her?

Um Saeed

The difference, dear, is that this incense is expensive...unlike the one I burned when you came

Um Khammas

Um Saeed!

Um Saeed

Oh, here she comes!

Um Khammas, open the door

Um Khammas

Now you want my help?

I offered you my valuable services for a small fee earlier and you said no

And now you want me to open the door for free?

The Maid

Hello Ma'am!

Um Khammas

Oh, camostaka!

Um Saeed

Welcome my dear...come in

What's your name?

The Maid

Mary Lou, Ma'am

Um Saeed

Mary who?

No, no, we'll call you Fatima

The Maid

Ok Ma'am

Um Saeed

What can you cook?

The Maid

I can cook khabeesa, mousagga, sleeg and damamiya

Um Saloom

Do you know how to make khbaity and naggazi too?

Um Saeed

Those are dance beats, you fool!

Um Khammas

Anyways Fatima, come and follow Ma'am Um Khammas

Um Allawi

Where to?

Um Khammas

We have a whole lot of washing, cooking and sweeping to do...

A ton of work to do!

Um Saeed

What? You're not taking her anywhere...she just arrived!

Will let you let her rest a moment?!

And, besides, she's here to serve me...not you!

Um Khammas

Betrayal!

Alright, Um Saeed, if that's how you want it...

But remember 'the dog always finds its way back to the butcher'

I'm never setting foot in this house again!

Goodbye!

Um Saeed

So, Fatima…Um Saif is my cousin from my dad's side but from a different mother,

she's also Wadeemah's cousin from my mother's side

Wadeemah is Um Khalfan's cousin

And Um Khalfan's dad got married to my aunt, Toma'ah, and she gave birth to Safia, Khadia and Madia…

Safia got married to a guy from Al-Ain

Khadia got married to a guy from Marmum

And Madia got married to Bu Rashid, who's my late husband, Bu Saeed's, half-brother from a different mother

The Maid

Ma'am, can I have some aspirin please!

Scene Two

Um Allawi

So, Um Saeed, what do you think of your new housemaid?

Um Saeed

Like an angel sent from heaven, Um Allawi

It's been a month now and she's amazing!

She does all the housework and answers to my every beck and call

She's like the daughter I never had!

Um Allawi

Um Saeed, you must be exaggerating...

Um Saeed

No, she probably deserves more!

The poor woman had nothing before she got here...

It's no wonder she looked as thin as a twig!

Um Saloom

I miss Um Khammas

I haven't seen her in a long time!

Um Saeed

Whatever...she has a little rivalry going with my maid

She's been boycotting us ever since Fatima moved in

Um Khammas

Hello

Um Saeed

Hello, Um Khammas

Please come in

Um Allawi

Um Khammas, didn't you promise never to return to Um Saeed's house?

Um Saeed

It's painfully obvious!

She said it herself, 'the dog always returns to the butcher shop'

Um Khammas

Say whatever you like, Um Saeed

I wouldn't have come back if it weren't for our lifelong friendship

I simply thought you might need a thing or two from me

Um Saeed, have you got any sugar?

Um Saeed

Ok, just say it...

It's the end of the month and your kitchen's run bare

So, you've come hunting for some sugar

Um Khammas

Spare me your analysis...do you or don't you have any sugar for me?

Um Saeed

Dear, I always have extra for my friends

Um Allawi, please call Fatima on her mobile and ask her to bring this big, black bug some sugar

Um Khammas

What? Your housemaid has a mobile?

I've been working my butt off for years and never even got a beeper from you

That's it! I don't want any sugar

Um Saeed, turn on the TV...the Bedouin soap is about to start

Huh? Where's the TV?

Um Saeed

Um Khammas, you know that I don't watch much telly

And poor Fatima said that her family back home doesn't have one...so I gave it to her

Um Khammas

What?

Um Allawi

Um Saeed, don't let the maid get used to the good life...you'll end up penniless

Um Saeed

Oh, just let her be!

She's really been a huge help to me

Um Khammas

I've been helping you for over 30 years...you never even gave me an adaptor!

Where's that vacuum cleaner?

Get her to bring me some sugar so I can get out of here

Um Saeed

Dear, as long as she's good to me, she can have whatever her heart desires

Um Khammas

This is infuriating...totally backwards!

We're treated like complete strangers, while the foreigners are living it up!

This dreadful housemaid has emptied Um Saeed's house and shipped everything to Manila!

On top of all that, Um Saeed is doing all the housework while Fatima relaxes...

And now Um Saloom is speaking Tagalog as well?!

Um Saloom

Ay! Diyos ko ang daldal mo tumahimik ka

Um Khammas

Um Allawi, I'm losing my mind and all you can do is giggle?!

Um Allawi

I was listening to you...are you done now?

Follow me...let me show you why I'm not upset

Um Khammas

Um Allawi...what's all this?

Um Allawi

I've questioned Fatima's true intentions all along...so I set up CCTV cameras around Um Saeed's house

Now we can watch everything Fatima does and catch her with her hand in the cookie jar!

Um Khammas

Who do you think you are, Sherlock Holmes?

Um Allawi

Come on...let's watch

Um Khammas

Look...the daft one's fast asleep!

Um Saloom

I'm not asleep!

Um Khammas

Not you...Um Saeed!

Where's that housemaid?

Um Allawi

Let's check the kitchen...

No, she's not there

Um Khammas

Look in the bedroom

Um Allawi

Nope

Um Khammas

What about the bathroom?

Um Allawi

I didn't put any cameras in the bathrooms...

169

Let's try the living room

Um Khammas

Gotcha!

Um Allawi, hurry up...

Let's go bust them and wake up Um Saeed

Um Allawi

Don't worry, Um Khammas

I set the alarm to wake up Um Saeed

It should go off right about…now!

<u>Scene Three</u>

Um Khammas

Cry my dear...let it all out!

We told you...but the deaf never listen

Um Allawi

Please don't cry, Um Saeed

Poor dear, all her love and loyalty has turned to hatred and despair

She's in complete shock!

Um Khammas

Hatred! Then cry my dear...drown in your tears

You made fun of me saying that I'd break your brittle old bones...

170

Look at you now!

Um Allawi

Come now, Um Khammas, stop rubbing salt in her wounds

She's been through enough already!

Don't worry, my dear, Fatima is learning her lesson in jail right now

Um Saeed

I'm not crying out of hatred...or even because all my furniture's on its way to Manila!

I'm crying because I really miss her!

THE END

Sketches

- Fatima

عند العيايز كل شي يابز

نهج المنهج

المشهد الأول :-

أم سعيد

ياربي ماعرف شو استوى على مرت ولدي سعيد

من البارحة و هي تسحر لين الحين ما ربت

أم علاوي

لا تخافين عليها يا أم سعيد

ولدج حجزلها في أحسن مستشفى

و إن شاء الله ما عليها شر

أم خماس

الله يرحم أيام أول يا أميه

لا مستشفيات و لا خرابيط

أنا مثلا خماس ييته في المطبخ

و الثاني ييته في الصالة

و الثالث ييته في بيت يراتنا، كنت سايرة آخذ عنها ملح

أم سعيد

حشة قطوة ما آدمي

أم سعيد

ألو...مرحبا بو عبدالله

هاه بشر! بعدها؟ زين زين

آمر فديتك، أسير وين؟ مدرسة عبود؟ اجتماع أولياء الأمور اليوم؟

واش عنه ما تسير انته؟ يالسلي في المستشفى يلسة حريم و تباني أنا أسير أجابي الرياييل؟

أف انزين انزين

أم سلوم

هاه ربت والا بعدها؟

أم سعيد

يا أمي أنا بحمل و بربي و هاي بعدها

حشة حتى الحريروة اللي مسوتنها لها بردت

أف و سعيد يياني أسير اجتماع أولياء الأمور عشان أييب شهادة عبود مال نص السنة... وين متفيجة أسير مدارس؟ أنا روحي في حالة

أم خماس

و اش عنه حارقة أعصابج و صايرة شرات البلق؟

اللي يسمعج يقول انتي اللي تسحرين مب مرت ولدج

أم علاوي

أم سعيد متابعة الأهل لأطفالهم في المدرسة وايد مهمة و حساسة

و هي فرصة نتعرف فيها أكثر بعلاقة أولادنا بالنحيط المدرسي

أم سلوم

ياسلام بتودونا البحر!

أم خماس

لا بنسير الدختر علشان ايركبلج مخ يديد..أف

أم سعيد

لا لا حشة عليه أنا مب سايرة مكان الين ما تربي مرت ولديه و أتطمن عليها و عالصغيرونه

ترا قايلين بتين بنت

أم علاوي

شكلها أم سعيد اتخاف سعيد ايسمي البيبي اليديد اسم ما يعيبها

أم خماس

لا تخاف يسمونهل عليها

أم سعيد

لا يا أميه أنا بس ماباهم ايسمون الصغيرونة أسامي ماصخة و مب غاوية

حلاة البنت يوم ايسمونها عذيجة و الا عوشة و الا عفرة و الا اليازية و الا موزة

مب شرات أسامي هالأيام اتقولين مسمين قطوة

أم سلوم

مياو؟

أم سعيد

أم سلوم عاد انتي مول مب راكب عليج مياو

أم خماس

هاي راكب عليها امباع

أم سعيد

عدال يا دلال! انتي مب أحسن عنها يا الانقوح

أم خماس

أنا انقوح يالسطرقة

أم علاوي

أوه حبيباتي ممكن نطلع الحين و انسير المدرسة؟ قبل ما يستوي الظهر و تربي مرت سعيد

أم سعيد

أف انزين بس ان ربت الحرمة و نحن في المدرسة بازوالكن

يالله انقبظن دهديه عشان انسير و نرد بسرعة

المشهد الثاني:-

أم سعيد

اش يحافظ عليها المدرسة عودة و فنانة

أم علاوي

أم سعيد هبيبتي المدرسة مب بشكلها

المدرسة منو يدرس فيها

أم خماس

إيي بدينا بالفلسفة

ويه...اندوكم هكي أم جميل

أم جميل

السلامن عليكن

أم خماس

و عليكم السلام ، أم جميل

مب من العادة تين الين عندنا و تسلمين

أم جميل

شسوي أكسب من وراكن أجر

و أقول لكن أنه جمال ولد ولديه جميل طالع الأول عصفه

أم سعيد

هيه بالبركة، و هاي الصحون الخالية في ايدج مال شو؟

أم جميل

هاه ماشي ماشي فامان الله

و مب تنسون هدية نجاح جمال

أم سلوم

طاعوا الحريم اللي هناك....كلهن كاشخات

يحافظ معاريس معاريس كلولولولولي

أم سعيد

انطبي فظحتينا

أم علاوي

هيه والله هبيبتي مب هني بس حتى المولات

اتقولين سايرات عرس

أم سعيد

ويدي هكو عبود

عبود

يدوه انتي شوتسوين هني؟

أم سعيد

176

يايه أشوف انته شو مسوي في المدرسة

ليكون يايب دويرة حمرا!

آها بازوالك، يالله قم ودنا عند المدرسين بناخذ شهادتك و بنروح

عبود

لا مابا مابا

أبا أسير ألعب

يدوه أم سلوم تعالي بنسير نلعب بلي ستيشن

أم علاوي

بلاي ستيشن في المدرسة؟

أم سعيد

لا تكسر يدوه أم سلوم

أم سلوم عن ترقدين عنه

أم خماس

أوه هكوه صف العربي

أم سعيد

ويدي وينه هذا؟

ما أشوف حد

مدرس العربي

قم للمعلم وابده التبجيلا

كاد المعلم أن يكون رسولا

من منكن ولية أمر الولد الملقب بعبود قبضوا عليه؟ أي عبود زخوه

أم سعيد

أنا يا بويه ولية أمر أبوه و سووني ولية أمره

لا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله

أنا أم سعيد أبو عبود

مدرس العربي

أم سأيد هازا ولد أربي وايد زئيف

أم سعيد

ياالله بالستر! زئيف؟

مدرس العربي

زعيف والله أم سعيد

أنا كم مرة أقول حق هذا ولد كم مرة أقول له لازم يتألم

أم سعيد

يتألم؟

لحقي أم خماس ييا يضرب الولد

أم خماس

هاه ليكون انته من المدرسين اللي يظربون الأولاد!

ياويلك يا سواد ليلك

مدرس العربي

انتي ما تفهمين أربي؟

يتألم يتألم

أم علاوي

أم سعيد الريال قصده يتعلم

أم سعيد

يتعلم؟

مدرس العربي

والله أم سعيد هذا ولد عربي زئيف...علشان تربية في البيت زئيف لا؟

أم سعيد

حسبي الله عليج يا سونيتا خربتي رمسة الولد

أم علاوي

المدرسة تعق اللوم علا الأهل و الأهل يعقون اللوم على المدرسة

و اليهال هم اللي يظيعون فس النص

مدرس العربي

هاذا ولد زعيف ما يعرف قواعد ما يأرف شئُ ما يعرف بهو

أم خماس

نهو؟

مدرس العربي

لا لا لا يا أم سأيد

هازا ولد أربي وايد زئيف و لازم أعطيه دويرة أهمر

أم سعيد

يا بويه حشرتنا أربي زعيف و أربي زعيف

من دخلنا عندك استوى العربي مالنا زئيف اف يالله انروح من هني

179

المعلمة زيزي

أهلاً أهلاً أنا زيزي مدرسة الانجليزي هاو أر يو؟

أم خماس

يو بخير و يو بخير و يو توها متظاربة

أم سعيد

فكينا انتي بعد

با امي أنا يايه أتنشد عن عبود ولد ولديه

المعلمة زيزي

ياالهوي! مين؟ عبوت كلتش يو؟

أم سعيد

ويدي عبود بيكاتشو منو بعد؟

أم علاوي

تقصد عبود زخوه

المعلمة زيزي

لا لا يا أم سعيد

الواد ده ما بيتكلمش الانجليزي خالص

أم سعيد

ويدي هلك يقول عربي زئيف

و انتي تقولين مابيتكلمش الإنجليزي

المعلمة زيزي

والله ما بيتكلمش الإنجليزي

ورطت معاه ما بيجيش منه استني عندك و أنا هندهلك اياه عشان اتشوفي بنفسك ازاي الواد ده ما بيتكلمش الإنجليزي

عبود انته يا عابود يا كلتش يو تعالا هنه

عبود

عبوود زخووووه

أم سعيد

ويدي عبود حسبي الله عليك ملبس أم سلوم توايرا!

أم سلوم

أم سعيد أحس بعمري خفيفة أطير أطير أطير!

المعلمة زيزي

تعالا يا واد هنا أول لستك كلمتين بالانجليزي

عبود

هممم...شو تبيني أقول؟

المعلمة زيزي

أوول لها أنا أتكلم الإنجليزي بالإنجليزي

عبود

أنا أتكلم الإنجليزي بالإنجليزي

المعلمة زيزي

يخرب عألك ياواد دانتا بتتكلم الإنجليزي أهوه

181

أم علاوي

بس هذا مب إنجليزي هذا عربي

المعلمة زيزي

انتي حتعلميني الإنجليزي يا ست إنتي؟

أول يا واد أنا إسمي عبود بالإنجليزي

عبود

أنا إسمي عبود بالإنجليزي

المعلمة زيزي

في انجليزي أحسن من كده يا ناس؟

هاه تعالا هنا إنته بتاخد دروس خصوصية من ورايا؟

أم خماس

يوم هذا إنجليزي عيل أنا بلبل بالانجليزي حتى شوفو "إزايك يا زيزي" بالإنجليزي

أم علاوي

Excuse me I personally think you can't speak English, let alone teach English.

المعلمة زيزي

اسكيوز إيه

بصيلي هنا يا ولية انتي عايزة تردحيني بالفرنسي؟

صف الفرنسي الناحية التانية أما هنا صف الإنجليزي

أم علاوي

هذا صف العلوم

أم خماس

إلا قولي زريبة العلوم

مدرس العلوم

سكروا الباب ما نبا الإنجاز العلمي يفشل

أهلاً أهلاً أنا الاستاذ جوعان جزرو مدرس أحياء أول عالم جيولوجيا مرموق

أم سعيد

يابويه نبا انشل نتيجة ولدنا و انروح

مدرس العلوم

لا لا لا إنتي ييتي في الوقت المناسب!

أنا من زمان أجهز لتجربة فريدة من نوعها بتغيير مسار الحركة البيولوجية و الجينية للأبد.

و الحين و قبل ما تدخلون عل] الغرفة تمت العملية بنجاح و كتبت اسمي من ذهب في تاريخ البيولوجيا المعاصرة

أم سعيد

إشو عاده؟

مدرس العلوم

أوه آسف آسف أنا بقول لكم بس لا تخبرون حد.

شو يستوي يوم انزوج أرنب بفار؟

سؤال محير يطلق العيان لخيال العلماء و المهتمين

أدري لكن جوعان الجزرة يعرف النتيجة

شكراً شكراً أعزائي الحضور

أقدم لكم أحدث السلالات الهجيمة

المشهد الثالث:-

مدرس الجغرافيا

إيش هذا يا أم سعيد الولد مش نافع في الجغرافية

اتصوري يا أختي الفاضلة أنو حتى ما بيعرفش السوفييت وين موقعها عالخارطة

أم علاوي

السوفييت؟

مدرس الجغرافيا

اتصوري يا أختي الفاضلة لما أسألو وين بريطانيا يقول لي مدينة الجميرا

لما أسألو روسيا وين محلها بيقول لي ميدان جمال عبدالناصر

أم سعيد

يالله بالستر

مدرس الجغرافيا

اتصوري يا أختي الفاضلة حتى لما أسألوا الهند وين محلها بيقول لي

أم خماس

بس خلاص عرفنا عرفنا

مدرس الجغرافيا

هذا ناهيكي أنو ما بيعرفش صادرات كينيا إيش و ما بيعرفش واردات انجونا إيش

أم سعيد

وانتوا اش عنه تحشون روس الفريخات خرابيط ما يستفيدون منها؟ شلنا نحنا في كينيا و أنجولا؟

اش عنه ما تعلمونهم شي يستفيدون منه؟

زاد عيالنا يتخرجون فاهمين كل شي عن الغرب و ما يعرفون شي عن بلادهم.

علموهم وين المرموم و الاسهيلي و الهباب وو وين مسافي و الذيد و العوير.

علموهم التاريخ جيف كانوا العرب قبل في ليوا و الظفرا و عن أراظيهم و مساكنهم و جبايلهم و علموهم عن أنواع الرطب في البلاد و عن الغنص و الغوض

خلهم يعرفون بلادهم عشان باجر ينفعونها

بس لاعت جبدي من هالمدرسة الحين عرفت ،مه عبود وحليله ما بلاه شي الولد مب كسلان و لا هو غبي الولد طاح في إيد مدرسين ما يعرفون ساسهم من راسهم.

أم خماس أم علاوي قومن نروح

هيه والله صدقتي يا أم علاوي المدرسة مب بشكلها و لا بكبرها، المدرسة بالناس اللي اتدرس فيها

أم علاوي

أنا أعرف وايد مدارس مدرسينها من أحسن ما يكون و نحن ماشاءالله عندنا مدرسين وايد أكفاء

بس المدارس يا أم سعيد مثل هالدنيا فيها الزين و الشين و الواحد في أي مجال يشتغل لازم يشتغل بظمير علشان عيالنا و الجيل الجديد أمانه في رقبتنا

أم علاوي

ألو...والله؟

مبروك أم سعيد مرت ولدج ربت و يابت بنت

أم سعيد

والله؟ الحمدلله الحمدلله

عيل قوموا قوموا بسرعة خلنا انسير المستشفى

أم خماس

عبود، أم سلوم

يالله انروح

عبود

عبووود زخوووووووه

THE MEETING

Duration: 17'06"

<u>**Scene One**</u>

Um Saeed

Oh my God! What's going on?

My daughter-in-law's been in labour since yesterday and still hasn't delivered

Um Allawi

Don't worry about her, Um Saeed

Your son took her to one of the best hospitals in town
She'll be fine, God willing

Um Khammas

In the old days, there were no hospitals or any of that nonsense

I gave birth to Khammas in my kitchen
The second one was delivered in my living room
And the third one at my neighbour's house...while I was over there borrowing some salt

Um Saeed

Sounds like a cat

Um Saeed

Hello…Bu Abdullah

So, give me the good news...she still hasn't delivered!

What do you want me to do...go where? Abood's school?

It's parent-teacher conferences today?

And why aren't you going?

You're sitting in the hospital like a woman...and you want me to go mingle with the men

Alright...I'll do it

Um Saloom

So, has she delivered yet?

Um Saeed

Dear, I could get pregnant and give birth again before she does!
Even the soup I've prepared for her has gone ice cold

My son, Saeed, wants me to go to Abood's parent-teacher conference to collect his midterm report card

I'm not in the mood to go to a school...I'm quite frazzled myself!

Um Khammas

What's wrong with you? You're like a matchstick...about to ignite!
You're acting as if you're the one giving birth...not your daughter-in-law!

Um Allawi

Um Saeed, parents need to be involved in their children's education

It's a great chance to learn more about how the school is helping them to navigate the great sea of knowledge

Um Saloom

Are you taking us to the beach?

Um Khammas

No, we're going to the doctor to replace your brain...the one you have has clearly gone dead!

Um Saeed

No, I'm not going anywhere until my daughter-in-law delivers

I need to hear that she and her precious little daughter are healthy
You know, the doctor said that it's going to be a baby girl

Um Allawi

It seems Um Saeed is worried that they'll give the child a name that she doesn't like

Um Khammas

No, she's worried that they won't name the baby after her

Um Saeed

No my dear, I just don't want them to give the child a dreadful name

There are so many beautiful names for girls...like Atheeja, Oshah, Afra, Elyazia or Moza

Some of today's popular names sound like they should be for cats

Um Saloom

Meow?

Um Saeed

Um Saloom, meow doesn't suit you at all!

Um Khammas

I think baa suits her more!

Um Saeed

Look who's talking!

You're no better than her, Mrs MOO!

Um Khammas

You're calling me a cow, you brittle little bird?!

Um Allawi

Oh dear, let's just head to the school now...before Saeed's wife gives birth and it's too late

Um Saeed

Alright, but if she gives birth while we're at the school, I'll never forgive you

Now, hurry up! Let's go quickly and come back right away!

Scene Two

Um Saeed

Wow, the school's so big...it looks wonderful!

Um Allawi

Um Saeed, my dear, don't judge a book by its cover

It's the teachers within the school that matter most

Um Khammas

Here we go with the philosophy again
Look...there's Um Jameel

Um Jameel

Hello

Um Khammas

Hello, Um Jameel

That's strange...it's not like you to come and say hi!

Um Jameel

My good deed for the day!
And I wanted to tell you that Jamal, my grandson, is ranked first in his class

Um Saeed

I see...congratulations

And why are you carrying those empty pots?

Um Jameel

What? Oh, that's nothing

And don't forget Jamal's gift for his extraordinary achievement

Goodbye

Um Saloom

Look at the ladies...so beautifully made up

It's a wedding, a splendid wedding!

Um Saeed

Shut up! You're embarrassing us!

Um Allawi

Yes, my dear, not only here
Even at the malls, ladies look like they're off to a wedding

Um Saeed

Look, there's Abood!

Abood

Grandma, what are you doing here?

Um Saeed

I came to see how well you're doing in school

Don't you dare tell me that you didn't pass!

Now, take us to your teachers, so we can collect your certificate and go home

Abood

No, no...I don't want to

I want to go and play

Grandma Um Saloom, let's go play Playstation

Um Allawi

191

Playstation at school?!

Um Saeed

Don't give Grandma Um Saloom a hard time!

And Um Saloom, please keep your eye on him!

Um Khammas

There's the Arabic class

Um Saeed

What? Where's the teacher?

I don't see anybody here

Arabic Teacher

'Stand up in respect for your teacher

For a teacher is a blessing from God'

Which one of you is the parent of the little one they call Abood Get'im?

Um Saeed

I'm his grandmother, which makes me his parent for the day...God help me!

My son, Saeed, is Abood's father

Arabic Teacher

Um Saeed, your son's Arabic is very weak

Um Saeed

What? Weak?

Arabic Teacher

Yes, weak, Um Saeed

I've told this boy a hundred times that he has to lead more

Um Saeed

Lead what?

Um Khammas, come help me out...what does he want the boy to lead?

Um Khammas

What? Don't tell me you're one of those teachers who leads little boys to the brink of madness?!

If you are, I'll lead you to the valley of pain

Arabic Teacher

Don't you understand Arabic?

He needs to lead, lead!

Um Allawi

Um Saeed, he means that the boy needs to read

Um Saeed

Read???

Arabic Teacher

This boy's Arabic is very poor...obviously nobody makes him lead at home

Um Saeed

Thanks to Sonita, the housemaid, the boy can't speak proper Arabic

Um Allawi

The school blames the parents

The parents throw the blame back on the school

And the students are stuck in the middle of the whole mess!

Arabic Teacher

This boy can't spell, can't recite poems, and knows nothing about glammar

Um Khammas

Glammar?

Arabic Teacher

Yes, glammar!

He doesn't know if a verb should be in the present or past

Um Saeed

No one's living in the past but you!

Arabic Teacher

No, no, no, Um Saeed

This boy's Arabic is very poor...I'm afraid I have to fail him!

Um Saeed

You're getting on my last nerve saying the boy's Arabic is poor

Since we entered this classroom, our Arabic has gone downhill too!

Come on...let's get out of here!

Mrs. Zee Zee

Hi, I am Zee Zee, the teacher of English

Um Khammas

You is fine, and you is fine

And you was just about to get into a fight

Um Saeed

Spare us!

I'm here to ask about my grandson, Abood

Mrs. Zee Zee

Oh my God...who?!

Abood Catch you!

Um Saeed

What? Who is Abood Pikachu?

Um Allawi

She meant Abood Get'im!

Mr. Zee Zee

No, no, Um Saeed

The boy can't speak a word of English!

Um Saeed

What?

The other guy said his Arabic is weak

And now you're saying that he's hopeless at English!

Mrs. Zee Zee

That's right

I'm sick and tired of trying to teach him...I've completely given up!

Wait a moment...let me call him so you can see for yourself

Abood Catch you, come here...quickly!

Abood

Abood Get'im!

Um Saeed

God help me!

Abood, what's Um Saloom doing on roller skates?!

Um Saloom

Um Saeed, I feel very light…like I'm flying, flying, flying!

Mrs. Zee Zee

Come here, boy...I want to hear you speak in English!

Abood

What do you want me to say?

Mrs. Zee Zee

Say... 'I speak English' in English

Abood

'I speak English' in English

Mrs. Zee Zee

Boy, you're very smart!

You really are speaking English!

Um Allawi

But this is not English...it's Arabic!

Mrs. Zee Zee

Are you here to teach me English?

Come on, boy, say, 'My name is Abood' in English

Abood

'My name is Abood' in English!

Mrs. Zee Zee

Oh my God...what perfect English!

Have you been taking private classes behind my back?

Um Khammas

If this is English, then I'm as fluent in English as Shakespeare!

'How are you Zee Zee?' in English!

Mrs. Zee Zee

Excuse what?

Listen to me...if you're here to show off your French, you're in the wrong room!

The French classroom is next door...this is the English class!

Um Allawi

Is this the science class?

Um Khammas

It's more like the science barn

Science Teacher

Shut the door...we don't want to ruin the science experiment

Welcome, welcome, I'm Mr. Hungry Carrots, the science teacher and a reputed biologist!

Um Saeed

I'd like to collect my grandson's report card and hit the road

Science Teacher

No, no, no, you came at the right time!

I've been preparing for ages for a breakthrough experiment that will forever change the path of biology and genetics

And now, just minutes before you came in, the experiment yielded its results

My name will be forever etched in gold in the history of modern biology

Um Saeed

What is it?

Science Teacher

Sorry, I'll tell you...but promise not to tell a soul

What happens when you cross a mouse and a rabbit?

A mind-boggling and confusing question, indeed?

It stretches scientists' imaginations beyond belief

Only Mr. Hungry Carrots knows the answer!

Thank you...thank you very much!

Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you the latest in genetic hybrids…the mabbit!

Scene Three

Geography Teacher

What is this, Um Saeed?!

The boy doesn't have the slightest clue about geography

Imagine, he doesn't even know where the USSR is on the map!

Um Allawi

USSR?

Geography Teacher

Imagine, when I ask him where the United Kingdom is...he answers Jumeirah!

And when I ask him where Russia is, he says it's in Jamal Abdul Nasser Square

Um Saeed

Oh my God!

Geography Teacher

And imagine, when I ask him where India…

Um Khammas

That's it...enough!

We know the rest of that story!

Geography Teacher

He also doesn't have the faintest idea about Kenya's exports or Angola's imports!!

Um Saeed

Why do you fill our children's minds with useless nonsense?

Why should they care about Kenya or Angola's imports and exports?

Why don't you teach them something that they'll be able to use in life?!

Our kids graduate knowing more about the West than they know about their own country

Teach them where Marmum, Lesaily, Hebaab, Masafi, Dhaid and Al Aweer are!

Teach them more about our history...how the Arab tribes used to live in Liwa and Al Dhafrah

Educate them about the land where their ancestors lived...and about their tribes

And teach them about hunting, pearl diving, and the many different types of local dates

Let them learn about their country, so they will grow up proud to serve it

That's it! I've had enough of this school!

Now it's clear that there's nothing wrong with Abood

He's not stupid or lazy...he's stuck with teachers who can't tell their toes from their elbows!

Um Khammas, Um Allawi...let's get out of here!

Um Saeed

You're completely right, Um Allawi

We shouldn't judge a school from the outside, but by those who teach within

Um Allawi

There are many great schools in this country...with smart, insightful teachers

But schools are like everything else...some are good and others bad

Whatever profession you choose, you should give it everything you have

In the end, our kids will always be our responsibility

Um Allawi

Hello...really?

That's great! Congratulations, Um Saeed!

Your daughter-in-law just gave birth to a healthy baby girl!

Um Saeed

Really...thank God, thank God!

Ok, let's go to the hospital!

Um Khammas

Abood, Um Saloom...let's go!

Abood

Abood Get'im!

THE END

VITA

Nouf Alwan is a U.A.E. national. She graduated from Al Ma'aifa International School in Sharjah, British high school curriculum in 2004. She studied at the American University of Sharjah (AUS) where she majored in English Literature and minored in Translation Studies. She graduated in 2008 and worked as a translator in a governmental sector. Nouf completed her Masters of Arts in Translation and Interpreting requirements at AUS in 2011.