TRANSLATING EMIRATI FOLKLORE

by

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Dedication

To my grandparents (may their souls rest in peace).

Abstract

As a genre in its own right, folklore is an important element in any culture. In the United Arab Emirates, folktales are known as *kharareef* (sing. *khrairifa*), which form a type of sung folklore. The translation of folktales can contribute to intercultural interaction, but because they are culture sensitive, folktales pose serious problems for translation. Translating Emirati folktales is problematic on both cultural and linguistic levels. This thesis explores the problems of translating Emirati *kharareef* into English and the strategies deployed. For the purpose of this thesis, five Emirati folktales were chosen for translation into English by an Arab translator through the one-hour translation on-line agency. The analysis of the translation shows that literal translation was mostly used, and that mistranslations resulted, most likely, from the translator's lack of knowledge of the context of the Emirati culture. The problems that the translator faced were cultural and linguistic. Ultimately, the English translation of the five *kharareef* does not reflect their Emirati cultural spirit.

Search Terms: Folklore, folktales, *khrairifa*, orality, literacy, literal translation, culture.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Chapter 1: Introduction

Folklore is an essential element in the culture of any nation. Folklore is defined on the basis on its culture. For instance, in the Emirati culture, folklore is referred to as *heritage*. The heritage of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) includes different genres such as folktales, poems, folksongs, etc. In the Emirati culture, a folktale is called "خرّوفة" (*kharrufa*) and a short sung folktale is called "خريريفة" (*khrairifa*).

Translation of folklore is important in allowing target cultures to appreciate the heritage of source ones, and asu such can bridge the cultural divides between them. This thesis explores the translation of *khrairifa* from Arabic (Emirati dialect) to English. The aim is to examine the linguistic and cultural problems a professional translator faced in rendering five Emirati folktales.

The thesis consists of five chapters, including this introduction. Chapter two reviews folk literature, in general, and Emirati folklore, in particular. It discusses the structure of folktales, the duality between orality and literacy in language and culture, focusing on the shift that occurs when shifting from an orality form to a literacy one.

Chapter three explores the translation of folklore as literature. It examines the notion of translatability from Arabic into English and the problems that a translator may face when rendering oral folk literature into a culture with literate, fixed media. The chapter also examines the translation of dialect and the mission of the translator within the context of Andre Lefevere's (1992) views. Chapter four reports the data analysis. Five Emirati *kharareef* were chosen and translated into English by an Arab translator through a professional translation agency. Twenty examples were analyzed in terms of the major linguistic and cultural problems identified. Chapter five concludes the thesis and suggests some recommendations for the translation of folklore.

<center>**Chapter 2: Folklore in the United Arab Emirates**</center>

The chapter reviews folk literature and folklore of the United Arab Emirates: types, importance, and different uses. The chapter also discusses orality and literacy with reference to oral Emirati folktales and its structure as performance art.

2.1 Folk Literature

Folklore is an important aspect of any culture. Each culture has a particularly unique folklore that distinguishes it from other cultures. Folklore has been studied under many theories, from linguistic to anthropological. Dudnes, for example, defines folklore as "the mirror of culture" (cited in Bronner, 2007, p. 55). This definition captures all meanings associated with the term.

In the broader sense of the term, folklore is defined in many ways. The *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary* (2015) defines folklore as "traditional customs, tales, sayings, dances, or art forms preserved among a people". This dictionary definition is more specific in capturing the full meaning of the term folklore, including its cultural dimensions. The *Oxford Dictionaries* (2015) defines "folklore" as the "traditional beliefs, customs, and stories of a community, passed through the generations by word of mouth." Still, it is only through a combination of all the above definitions that a fuller understanding of folklore can be formed. Furthermore, the *Merriam- Webster Online Dictionary* (2015) adds to the definition of "folk", the great proportion of the members of a people that determines the group character and that tends to preserve its characteristic form of civilization and its customs, arts and crafts, legends, traditions, and superstitions from generation to generation." And, the *Oxford Dictionaries* (2015) further includes in the definition of "folk": "Relating to the traditional art or culture of a community or nation".

According to Dudnes (1980), the term "folklore" did not exist in the English language before 1846, and that Thoms was the first to coin and introduce the term. Until then, only "*folk*" was used with the addition of other words to it such as "Folksong", "Folk belief" etc. (Dudnes, 1980, p.1).

According to the *Merriam-Webster Online dictionary* (2015), the definition of "lore" is traditional knowledge or belief", while the *Oxford dictionaries* (2015) defines it as a "body of traditions and knowledge on a subject or held by a particular

<center>11</center>

group, typically passed from person to person by word of mouth: 'the jinns of Arabian lore' 'baseball lore'".

The folklore of a culture can say a lot about its values, past and future ways of living, ethics, and beliefs. Dudnes (1969) describes folklore as a way that people of a particular culture see themselves (cited in Bronner, 2007, p.55). Dudnes' view is that folklore can be considered as an identity marker of the members of a culture as it tells who they really are. Dudnes (1969) adds, "Folklore as a mirror of culture frequently reveals the areas of special concerns" (cited in Bronner, 2007, p.55). Folklore provides an appropriate window for cultures to know about each other, hence the focus on folklore in many social sciences and humanities studies.

Both folklore and literature reflect culture. According to Dudnes (1965), there are different types for the study of folklore on a professional level. One is related to literature and the other to anthropology. He stresses the fact that the study of folklore and culture are two faces of the same coin as one cannot be examined without the other (cited in Bronner, 2007, p.70). Indeed, it is very unlikely that literature could be studied without culture being involved and vice versa. Folklore is included by default.

2.2 Emirati folklore

Hurreiz (2002) states that in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), folklore is referred to as *turath* in Arabic, meaning heritage, and is not only limited to folklore, but covers a broader meaning that includes all Emirati traditions (Hurreiz, 2002, p.34). In addition to folklore, the heritage of the UAE includes other elements such as old houses, old way of living, uses and purposes of certain traditional practices, and many other cultural aspects.

Folklore studies in the Arab world, in general, and the UAE, in particular, are very scarce. According to Hurreiz (2002), unlike the studies in the West, folklore studies that have been conducted in the Arab lack quality (p.32). There are very few books and articles on Arab world folklore, and less on UAE folklore. Academic research on folklore is usually conducted under the rubric of other fields; not independent folklore studies (p. 32). Still, this shows that folklore and other research fields that include folklore are connected, leading to a better understanding of folklore in different frameworks.

In the UAE culture, folklore consists of various genres such as "oral literature, material culture, performing arts, social folk customs (and beliefs)" (Hurreiz, 2002, p.37). Oral literature consists of two types that are folk narratives and folk poetry. Hurreiz (2002) argues that folk narratives are very few in quantity. Studies conducted on this topic are rare as well as narrations and resources (p.38). Hurreiz (2002) discusses folk poetry by examining its importance, appreciation and popularity in the Emirati culture more than other folk narratives. A considerable amount of research has been conducted on *nabati* folk poetry (Hurreiz, 2002, p.38). As a result of folk poetry being more popular in the UAE than other folk narratives, there is less research on other folk narratives, "studies on mythological and fictitious stories can be rarely found in the available literature" (Hurreiz, 2002, p.38).

2.3 Folktales

A basic definition of folk literature includes oral narratives of tales, myths, and legends passed from generation to generation orally. Folk literature is a reflection of a culture's views and belief system upon which the folk literature is based. In folktales, the narrators are anonymous and illiterate. Their goal is to entertain and teach certain morals mostly to children; the prime target audience of folk literature. In this context, Al Aswad (2004) argues that a folk literature narrator is more than an illiterate person narrating a story for morality purposes based on the culture belief system. Rather, the narrator changes as the folk literature passes from generation to generation. Folk literature itself is based on simplicity and the philosophy of life in that particular culture. It is also very popular and used more than any other type of literature as it is based on daily occasions, issues, and lessons of life (Al Aswad, 2004, p. 49).

Other scholars view folk literature in the UAE from different angles. An article published in *Al Bayan* Newspaper in Arabic (Shbair, 2015) on oral folk literature under the title of ‘‘الأدب الشفاهي.. تراث في عُهدة الذاكرة’’ , different views are expressed by different scholars stating that oral narratives are memorized and passed from generation to generation by illiterate women back in the past. The Emirati culture was dominated by illiteracy and so its folk literature has been memorized and transmitted orally across generations. The article also discusses the documentation of oral folk literature and concludes that this requires efforts to find the people who still memorize folk literature due to its importance for the Emirati heritage. In this, folk

poetry remains a very popular type in the UAE. It has certain specific characteristics that distinguish it from other types of literature, including it being orally narrated, its traditional topics and its unique style (Hurreiz, 2002, p. 80).

Proverbs also form an important part of the Emirati folk literature and culture. Proverbs are widely used and, like folklore, they have been transmitted from generation to generation. Hurreiz (2002) examines the importance of proverbs stating their values for the Emirati culture from religious, social, and general perspectives (p. 82). Besides proverbs, riddles also mirror the Emirati culture. They are usually structured in the form of questions in mysterious poetic forms for which the answer is usually one word (Hurreiz, 2002, p. 84).

Most importantly, the UAE folk literature includes types that may not exist in other cultures. According to Hurreiz (2002), there are two major categories of Emirati folk literature: prose and poetry. Hurreiz argues that William Bascom folk literature categories of myth, tale and legend do not cover all genres of folk literature in the UAE (2002, p. 71). Emirati folk literature is more than Bascom's limited categories. For instance, a myth does not exist in the UAE culture. According to Hurreiz (2002), a myth is a story that is short in length and relates to religious facts about the creation (p.72). Instead, narrative and sung folktales are Emirati kinds of folk literature that are more common than other types.

A culture's views, traditions, and beliefs can be known through its folktales. A folktale according to the *Meriam Webster Online Dictionary* (2015) is "characteristically anonymous, timeless, and placeless tale circulated orally among a people". The *Oxford Dictionaries* (2015) defines a folktale as a "story originating in popular culture, typically passed on by word of mouth." So, folktales represent the way a particular community sees itself and its similarity with or difference from other communities in terms of beliefs, traditions, values, and lifestyle. The communication between the teller and the audience in addition to the tale and its style of performance constitute what makes a folktale unique. The use of certain verbal sounds in order to capture the audience's attention is one of its important features (*The Herald*, Shoniwa, 2013)

In the United Arab Emirates, a folktale is called "*Kharrufa* خرّوفه" (pl. "*Kharareef* خراريف"). The meaning is derived from the word "خرافة" in Arabic which means an untrue story or "fictitious tale" (Hurreiz, 2002, p. 73). A *kharrufa* is a tale passed orally from generation to another. There are two types of a *kharrufa*. The first type includes tales that are categorized as fairy tales such as *bdeiha* بديحة tale, which is a tale of a fish also known by many people as "the daughter of the fisherman" or " بنت النوخذة". The tale pragmatically refers to a fish called *bdeiha*, which is a beautiful girl getting married and is considered as the UAE Cinderella story (p.73 – p.75). The *kharrufa* talks about the UAE culture beliefs, values, and traditions regarding marriage of relatives (p.79). The second type of *kharrufa* includes the tales of Jinn such as "*Um Al Duwais* أم الدويس", "*Baba Daryah* بابا درياه", and others. The purpose of these tales is to scare children about sleeping early and staying outside the house late in the afternoon or at sunset time, which are all cultural beliefs (*Al Khaleej Newspaper*, Al Yousef, 2013).

The second type of folktales in the UAE is called *khrairifa* خريريفة. It is very rare that people speak about a *khrairifa* because it is commonly known among Emiratis as folksongs الأهازيج الشعبية. A *"khrairifa"* is a short tale in the form of a song or a sung folktale, used for different occasions and for daily life purposes such as children games, a rainy day, the night of the mid of the month of Sha'aban, the Hijra (Islamic) month before Ramadan, which is a holy month for Muslims, and other purposes and occasions. Discussing the different types of folk songs, including cradles (babies), wedding and work songs, Hurreiz (2002, p. 135) says that these types "reflect and direct both individual and public life throughout its different phases and occasions." However, folksongs also cover types used national celebrations as well. The *khrairifa* is a folktale that can be subsumed under the genre of both folktales and folksongs because it is a sung story.

An article published in *Al Bayan Newspaper* titled " الخروفة الغنائية خريريفة مجيريفة" defines a *khrairifa* as a sung folktale in a poetic form with a rhetorical meaning, and adds that this type of folktales is rare, although it is very easy for memorization making it popular among people. Furthermore, these folktales accompanied many folkgames and cultural occasions (*Al Bayan Newspaper*, 2013). The reason why these folktales are so popular and widely used is due to their easy

structure. Repetition of the word at the end of every verse in the preceding verse is one of the *khrairifa* important features. The rhythm of the *khrairifa* makes it easy to memorize them.

2.4 **Structure of a folktale**

It is in the structure of a folktale that lies the difficulty of translation. According to Dudnes (1980), the study of folklore requires the analysis of three important aspects, "text, texture, and context" (1980, p.22). Firstly, the texture of the folktale is its linguistic feature. As a form of verbal art, it requires different aspects of texture. For instance, rhyme and alliteration are two types of texture that are important in creating proverbs (Dudnes, 1980 p.22). The texture of a folktale is important because the most difficult task, in the translation of folktales is to translate its texture. The Emirati *khrairifa* is of a unique texture, which includes alliteration, repetition, rhymes, and rhythm of certain words.

Secondly, the text of a folktale, a narrative form, is of a unique texture that depends on its unique genre (Dudnes, 1980, p.23). Dudnes (1980) further argues that the texture of any folkloric genre can be related or not related to the text. He adds that a texture might not be easy to translate, however a text can definitely be translated more easily (p.23). When an oral *khrairifa* is written, both text and texture are considered difficult to translate due to the complex nature of the *khrairifa*.

Thirdly, the context of the *khrairifa* refers to "the specific social situation in which the particular item is actually employed" (Dudnes, 1980, p.23). Here, it is very important to know the difference between "context" and "function" because "function" is usually used to refer to what a folklore specialist considers as the use of a particular folkloric element in the society (p.24). The *khrairifa* is used in the Emirati culture as a tale and a song and is used for different purposes and occasions. The importance of context lies in the reason of using a specific *khrairifa* for a specific occasion or circumstance and not another.

In the analysis of folklore genre such as the Emirati *khrairifa*, texture, text and context are all related as one cannot be examined without the other. In translation, the interface between a text, its context and texture poses difficulties for translators and determines the production of the final output, target text.

2.5 Orality and Literacy

Moving from orality to literacy can be critical. Ong (1990) discusses the "orality of language" and states that in cultures that are considered oral, people are considered to possess great knowledge, but less education (p. 9). Ong further adds that people in oral cultures learn through oral repetition and collection and blending of narrations without being able to study these narrations in their oral form (p. 9). In the UAE, people memorize these folktales through verbal repetition, which makes the verbal over the written mode of folktales dominant even today. Folktales were usually narrated by grandmothers, who were generally illiterate. Today, few people who recall Emirati oral folktales have shared them on various internet websites in written forms.

In oral cultures, the verbal use of language is dominant, whereas in literate cultures the focus is more on writing as a form of language use. Ong (1990) emphasizes the great output of verbal performance in oral cultures as a form of art that cannot be produced in the same way through writing (p. 14). Furthermore, even when the same verbal art such as a folktale is written, a huge difference between the performance and the written folktale is detected, including the utterance, which cannot be preserved in the written form. The psychodynamics of the orality, according to Ong (1990), is seen as a negative aspect. This is because no one can go back and "look up" for any information after it has been spoken or narrated as in writing (p.31). Ong's point of view is valid, but there are some positive aspects of orality such as memorization. Even today, people repeat folktales, proverbs, riddles, and other folklore literature that have been solely verbally narrated throughout the years, and even if written, they are not widely circulated in the written form.

According to Ong (1990), the "thought and expression" orality of words or the utterance of words is not just an expression of words, but thoughts as well (p.33). He asks further questions on the way people in oral cultures memorize orally without a written text. Ong concludes that memorizing was due to the "mnemonic patterns" (p.34).

> Your thought must come into being in heavily rhythmic, balanced patterns, in repetitions or antitheses, in alliterations and assonances, in epithetic and other

formulary expressions, in standard thematic settings … or in other mnemonic form. (Ong, 1990, p. 34).

The thoughts and expressions of a folktale and a *khrairifa* are quite similar to Ong's view since they are easily memorized due to their mnemonic form and formulary expressions, the reason why people still remember and recall them.

2.5.1 Orality of language in oral cultures

In many cultures, orality has been the base of folklore and folk literature. Although folktales are narrated by women and men, women narrators dominate this field. In the UAE, and many other cultures, women who narrated the folktales were illiterate because women were not generally educated. However, they had a special style and act of performance that was attractive to children. In an article published in *AlIttihad Newspaper* titled "الخراريف حكايات من الماضي ترتدي ثوب المعاني والقيم النبيلة", the narrator Hassan Balhoun explains that originally folktales were narrated by mothers and grandmothers, and that specific folktales were narrated by men. Folktales narrated by women included bedtime stories to help children asleep (*AlIttihad Newspaper*, Al Saadawi, 2014)The view is valid for children who used to spend most of their time with mothers and grandmothers due to the UAE cultural context where the role of women was to educate and enhance children's morals and cultural values.

2.5.2 Orality and memorization

There is a strong link between memorization and orality. In cultures that are based on oral folklore, memorization is different from that of literate cultures. Based on Ong (1990) views, a person can memorize a written text and go over it again and again as it is available, but in oral cultures memorization has been achieved through "repetition" (p.57-58). Indeed, in the past, repetition has been an effective way of memorization in oral cultures such as the UAE. For instance, through the repetition of folktales in their unique style and act of performance, it was easy to memorize them.

2.5.3 Dialect in orality

In oral cultures, people use their own dialects in oral narration. The use of dialect is essential in the process of memorization and recalling of these narrations because the mother tongue (dialect) is easier in memorization. Furthermore, in Arab

societies, deemed oral, people do not use standard Arabic in their daily lives, and thus vernaculars were, have been, always used in the narration of folktales.

A dialect is "a form of a language that is spoken in a particular area and that uses some of its own words, grammar, and pronunciations" (*Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, 2015), and is a "particular form of a language which is peculiar to a specific region or social group" (*Oxford Dictionaries*, 2015). The Emirati dialect, for example, is spoken in the UAE and shares many features (lexical and grammatical) with dialects of other Gulf Arab countries. On the issue of dialect, Ong (1990) discusses the Latin dialect because Europeans used "old Latin" for many years as it was the official language of the Church. But with time, the use of Latin decreased and people started using other own vernaculars (dialects) to the extent that people no longer understood "old Latin" except for a few (p. 112). Ong (1990) further adds that "Learned Latin" started in schools and was based on written literature. Escaping the orality of Latin and translating Learned Latin into other dialects was not possible because when moving from Latin to other dialects, the Latin dialect metaphors were lost (p. 114). Indeed, this makes translating dialects (orality) into written systems a difficult task. In the UAE, translating the old Emirati dialect which differs slightly from one area to another can be critical. Furthermore, the use of old Emirati words, in addition to moving the Emirati dialect to Standard English can be problematic.

2.5.4 Shifting from Orality to Literacy

The shift that happens when changing an oral narration to a written text and the loss that occurs are important factors in translating folklore. The translation of oral literature can affect the meaning of the original narration. According to *World Oral Literature Project,* Oral literature is defined as,

> Oral literature or folk literature corresponds in the sphere of the spoken (oral) word to literature as literature operates in the domain of the written word. It thus forms a generally more fundamental component of culture, but operates in many ways as one might expect literature to do. (Oral literature, *World Oral Literature Project* website).

This definition is restricted to the relation of oral literature to culture, but there are many obstacles that occur when speaking of oral literature and the shifting process on linguistic and cultural levels, which can all affect the original narration and therefore

the translation of folktale in terms of content and context. For example, in a written *khrairifa*, linguistic problems might occur in grammar, typographical errors, and other issues as a result of the shift in mode from oral to written. Narrations might differ from one person to another, and this might lead to cultural ambiguities in the *khrairifa* itself.

According to Olrik (1992), when shifting from the oral to the written form many changes can occur in a ballad, its length can become shorter, certain words that are not widely used might be deleted, and some morals might also be deleted (Olrik, 1992, pp. 38-39). Certainly, the same can apply to a *khrairifa*. In many cases, shifting from one form to another can make a *khrairifa* lose its original meaning. Additionally, Ong (1990) argues that shifting modes from orality to literacy yields what he calls "a sense of closure" (p.132). This closure explains the idea of preservation of oral literature, whereby the writing of oral narrations preserves them. The *khrairifa*, for example, can today be found on various websites in written forms, but its original narration has most likely been lost as some expressions might have been deleted or changed to fit the requirements of the written mode.

Consequently, when shifting modes from orality to literacy, the speech act and its effect on the reader should be considered. Ong (1990) provides the following definition for the speech act theory:

> Speech-act theory distinguishes the 'locutionary' act (the act of producing an utterance, of producing a structure of words), the 'illocutionary' act (expressing an interactive setting between utter and recipient – e.g. promising, greeting, asserting, boasting, and so on), and the 'perlocutionary' act (one producing intended effect in the hearer such as fright, conviction or courage). (p. 170)

It follows that the core of any oral literature is its speech act. There could be no effective translation if the speech act is not understood and maintained through translation because understanding what has been said and the reason it has been said is important in translation. Ong (1990) argues that the feedback of the reader is different from the feedback of the hearer for there is an "oral communication" between the sender and the receiver, which does not exist when orality shifts to literacy (p. 171). It is true that the advantage of immediate feedback is lost through

translation, which is why translators should try and accommodate this in their translations.

2.6 Structure of performance art

Like any art of performance, the *khrairifa*, includes implicit and explicit meanings. Embedded in both explicit and implicit meanings are lessons and morals, or beliefs and values that are related to the Emirati culture. These should ideally be preserved through translation. These features relate to the "characteristics of communicative interaction", which includes "a range of explicit or implicit messages which carry instructions on how to interpret the other message(s) being communicated" (Bauman, 1984, p.15). The reference here is to the hidden messages that are culturally bounded in a folktale. For instance, a *khrairifa* about a step mother might imply other things such as the step mother treatment of her step daughter, or her characteristics and so on.

In conclusion, this chapter has examined folklore, in general, Emirati folklore and folk literature. It has focused on folktales and specifically the Emirati *khrairifa*. The chapter has also examined the importance of orality and literacy in language, culture, memorization, and performance. The next chapter discusses translation of folklore as literature.

Chapter 3: Translating folklore as literature

This chapter explores the major theories of translating literature. It focuses on the translation of language and culture in oral folk literature and associated problems.

3.1 Language in the translation of folk literature

Language is the medium that connects the speaker with the listener, the writer with the reader, and the translator with the reader. It is, therefore, an important element in communication and translation. Language represents culture. Both culture and language are important in translation, in general, and in the translation of folk literature, in particular. Faiq (2007) stresses that in translation the two elements of culture and language cannot be separated from each other.

> In other words, culture refers to beliefs and value systems tactically assumed to be collectively shared by particular social groups as well as to positions taken by producers and receivers of texts, including translations, during mediation process facilitated by language. Language is the system that provides its users with the tools to realize their culture. (p. 9)

Similarly, Lefevere (1992) argues that "Language is also the expression and the repository of a culture" (p. 17). The similarity of both opinions shows that neither culture nor language can go without the other. This becomes vital in folk literature, which is related to culture and its language in an embryonic manner. Therefore, it is extremely important to understand the language and culture of the folk literature before translation. For instance, a translator who does not understand the UAE spoken language (dialect) and culture will not be able to render the cultural meanings of a *khrairifa.*

Jakobson (1959) discusses the use of language in relation to de Saussure. He argues that there is difference between what he calls a "signifier", which is the verbal and written language, and the "signified" which is the "concept" referred to, and whereby the "signifier" and the "signified" produce a "linguistic sign" (Venuti, 2004, p. 139). Here, Jakobson implies the theory of equivalence. The use of language in the translation of folk literature could be critical because culture and language are two

sides of the same coin. Translating language in folk literature can be problematic due to the issue of equivalence.

Language changes through time as a result of multiculturalism and borrowing from other languages, which in turn may introduce certain cultural elements. Al Musallam, an Emirati researcher on culture, acknowledges that the UAE dialect, for example, has been affected by many factors such as the use of other languages, foreigners living in the UAE, the extinction of many words that were currency in the past, and many other factors. Furthermore, he lists the languages that have had major effects on the Arabic Emirati dialect such as the Indian, English, and Farsi found in the sung folktales used in this thesis, and other languages and dialects (*UAEpedia* website)

Since language and culture are inseparable, the use of different languages in one language can also be problematic in translation. In the Emirati dialect, there are words that are not originally Arabic, but are widely used among Emiratis. The assumption here is that through the translator's knowledge and background, the cultural complexity and diversity should assist in producing effective translation of Emirati folktales.

3.2 Translation of culture in folk literature

What is considered an ordinary cultural element in one culture might be considered foreign and unknown in another. For instance, what Emiratis consider as normal in their culture such as the importance and value of "rain" might not be easily interpreted as such in cultures where a rainy day is considered a bad day. Ignoring this could result in misinterpretation of the source text and a mistranslation in the target text. On this point, Faiq (2004) explains,

> Starting from the premise that cultural and translation studies deal with the conditions of knowledge production in one culture, and the way this knowledge is interpreted and relocated according to knowledge production in another culture. (p.4).

The target culture impression is based on its interpretation of the source culture's traditions, values, beliefs, etc. However, the target culture reader might not be familiar

with the cultural aspects of the source culture, which might cause confusion for the receiver. The aim here is to translate and reflect the source culture in a way that is informative.

Translation is based on the translator's background, intentions, ideology and other factors that determine the final translation product. Translating an Arabic text into English can be problematic and challenging in terms of the choice of strategies used. For instance, in a *khrairifa* there are foreign words, extinct old words, alliteration, and other linguistic and cultural aspects that are positively or negatively affected by the translator's decisions. All the features of a *khrairifa* can be identified as cultural and linguistic; making it a semiotic unit with all its distinctive features.

Venuti (1995) sees that the translator should be able to keep the culture of the ST in the TT, and that by doing so the reader of the TT will be aware that the text is foreign (Bassnett, 2011, p. 17). In fact, this will do justice to both the source and target cultures. However, there might also be an equivalence issue because what exists in one culture might not exist in another.

3.3 Translatability of Arabic folktales into English.

The translation of folk literature does not only help in bridging gaps between cultures, but also preserves it from loss. So, it is important to transfer the cultural meaning and original style as much as possible. Moving away from the folk literature messages is moving away from its culture, meaning and style. If translators decide to produce a text that is TT oriented in content and context, they are moving from the intention of the folk literature, which is primarily a cultural representation.

Benjamin (1968) argues that translatability is an important aspect in some texts. The implication here is that the spirit of the ST should be demonstrated in the TT to ensure its translatability (Arendt, 2007, p.71). Although no translation can fully transfer the ST spirit because translators face many linguistic and cultural barriers, the more translators knows about the source culture, the more they will be able to transfer the ST context and content faithfully. The TT reader, who does not know the source language, should, as much as possible, be able to read the translation as the original in both content and context. Benjamin, (1968) says,

> A real translation is transparent; it does not cover the original, does not block its light, but allows the pure language, as though reinforced by its own medium, to shine upon the original all the more fully. This may be achieved, above all, by literal rendering of the syntax which proves words, rather than sentences to be the primary element of the translator. (cited in Arendt, 2007, p.79).

Of course, in many cases literal translation can be useful. However, if the TT reader is not familiar with the meaning of the word in its original context, literal translation could cause confusion and misunderstanding.

According to Benjamin (1968), to achieve 'pure language' translation the TT should be dominated by 'foreign tongue' (cited in Arendt, 2007, p.81). This can lead us to the strategy of 'foreignization' as proposed by Schleiermacher (1813), which refers to rendering the ST in a way that allows the TT reader feel the ST language in the TT (Venuti, 2004, p. 49). Notably, the strategy of foreignization can be helpful, but it may need additional strategies. Consequently, a combination of both Benjamin's view a Schleiermacher's can help in producing a more effective translation, which reflects the ST culture, but it should also be clear and understandable to the TT receivers.

3.4 The problem of equivalence.

Equivalence is a problem that appears frequently in the field of translation. In the translation of *khrairifa*, for example, finding equivalence can be a difficult task. This is because certain cultural traditions might not have equivalents in the target cultures. For example, Bedouin life, marriage of relatives, and other cultural aspects might not have equivalents in the TT, which could cause misinterpretation and confusion for the TT reader.

Nida (1964), for example, distinguishes two types of equivalence: Formal and Dynamic. Formal equivalence concentrates on the meaning in both content and context. Nida stresses that the translator should find TT equivalents that are closely similar to the ST. On the other hand, dynamic equivalence is related to the "equivalence effect", which means that the TT should have the same effect on the TT reader like the ST on its reader (Nida, 1964, p.159). According to Nida, the meaning

of formal equivalence is similar to word-for-word translation or literal translation, while dynamic equivalence can be considered as sense-for-sense as it focuses more on the message rather than the style. However, the use of formal equivalence on its own can be problematic because it is meaningless if the target culture lacks equivalents for specific cultural references. However, dynamic equivalence could be satisfactory in delivering the meaning, but not the style and rhythm, which are essential characteristics of texts like the *khrairifa.*

Newmark (1981) argues that Nida's 'equivalent effect' is irrelevant since the difference between the ST and the TT has always been an issue. Newmark claims that in order to narrow the gap between two languages, 'semantic and communicative translation' should be considered. According to Newmark (1981), semantic translation is more TL oriented, whereas communicative translation is achieving the same effect of the ST on the TT reader (Newmark, 1981, p.39). Although equivalence theories have been given different names, they all discuss the same issue. However, absolute equivalence can be hardly achieved. When translating a cultural text, there is more than just the lexical meaning. In this regard, Bassnett (2002) sees that translation is not just word-for-word translation that substitutes the ST with TT based on language rules and vocabulary matters (p.34). Finding similarity cannot be achieved through translation because there is a huge difference between languages (p.37-p.38).

As can be seen, absolute equivalence cannot be achieved. There are always positive and negative aspects of equivalence in translation especially in folk literature where the main focus is on the ST culture. Because they are culture sensitive, the translation of folk literature is not a mere finding of formal or dynamic equivalence, but involves much more.

3.4.1 Translation of dialect in oral/written texts.

A dialect is a type of language orally spoken by a group of people in a certain region of a country. These people use certain accent, words, grammar, and certain way of pronouncing which distinguish them from others in the same country (Dickins, Hervey, & Higgins, 2002, p.166). In the UAE, different areas have different dialects and different ways of pronunciation as well as different words or names to refer to the

same thing. For instance, a "chicken" is called "دیایه" in some areas of the UAE, but "تیتیه" in other areas. In translating oral literature, it is important that translators pay attention to different dialects. Pronunciations are also important because a word can differ in pronunciation from the way it is written (transliterated in the source text). The use of dialect has changed and many words and terms that were used by previous generations are not used anymore. In fact, with texts that are highly cultural and dialectical such as the Emirati folktales examined in this thesis, the translator will obviously translate into formal English and not one of its Dialects (Dickens, Hervey, Higgins, 2002, p.168), but the dialect features of the ST will be lost.

According to Dickens, Hervey, & Higgins (2002), an important feature of an "oral text" is that it is natural and effortless, which are also characteristics of narratives and other oral performances (p.180). This makes an oral text unique with special gestures or the stretch and extension of words, as well as its rhythm and tone. Dickens, Hervey, & Higgins (2002) argue that translators should know the main features of the ST because when translating an oral based text it is important to know whether they need to hear the ST before reading the written text, or vice versa. They argue that when translating a written song, for example, the translator might want to listen to the oral performance before moving to the written text. Based on the genre of the oral text, the translator makes the decision on how to move forward with the text in the translation process (pp.180-181). Indeed, knowing the genre and type of text determines the way it should be translated. When translating a *khrairifa*, the translator should take into consideration that this is a folktale narrated to children in a spontaneous manner to help memorizing it, and each text is used in for particular cultural purpose. Translators should also take into consideration the way the text is narrated by women because, unlike men, women have a certain way of speaking and narrating.

3.5 Transferring meaning and style.

A sung *khrairifa*, for example, has a specific style, which differentiates it from other narrative folktales. Further, the topics of this type of folktales are highly cultural, and as such translators might face problems in transferring the meaning and style of the sung *khrairifa*. Probably, a translator might be able to render the meaning

but not the style, or the style but not the meaning. In either case, the characteristics of the *khrairifa* will be lost because both meaning and style are important aspects in a *khrairifa*. This raises the question of whether both style and meaning can be translated and fully conveyed in the TT.

A translator might consider the meaning of the ST more important than style. Although there will be loss, but it does the job in transferring the meaning. Faiq (2004) argues that the TT should focus on the style of its language rather than the ST language (p.79). In fact, this can be useful as it will do justice to the ST and may be acceptable to the TT reader. Faiq (2004) further adds that the TT should "sound natural" keeping the ST characteristics (p.80). It is important to realize that the audience of the *khrairifa* is made up of children and repetition is an important aspect to help with the process of memorization. As such, it is important to imitate this style in the TT.   Style and meaning are major elements in a *khrairifa*. However, due to the linguistic gap between the ST and the TT languages, the translator might not fully translate both style and meaning. Translating meaning and focusing on the TT style is a solution that the translator can use.

3.6 Literal translation in oral folk literature.

Literal translation or word-for-word translation is a strategy commonly used in folk literature translation. Translators choose this strategy for several reasons, such as the linguistic and cultural gaps between the two languages or if the translator is not familiar with the source dialect and cultural references. Between literal and free translation or word-for-word and sense-for-sense translation, some strategies might be more appropriate in the translation of oral folk literature than others. Vinay and Darbelnet (1995), for example, propose translation methods that demonstrate the strategies for both literal and free translation. They differentiate between two types of translation, direct and oblique. Direct translation involves borrowing, calque, and literal translation, whereas oblique translation involves transposition, modulation, equivalence and adaptation (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995, p.31). When using borrowing or calque, Vinay & Darbelnet (1995) see that this might change a calque to 'false friends' if it is a semantic calque based on the TT language (1995, pp. 31-33). Additionally, Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) see that literal translation or word-for-word

translation is mostly used when the ST and the TT languages are close in terms of 'family and culture' such as English and French, and that it can be a solution only if it delivers completely the ST meaning. So, borrowing, calque, and literal translation should help the TT reader understand the meaning of the ST, but as Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) explain these strategies should be used for the appropriate purpose and not randomly.

On the other hand, Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) suggest oblique translation as an alternative if direct translation does not serve the TT reader. 'Transposition' is a strategy that is used to change the structure of the sentence in a way that does not affect the real meaning of the sentence (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995, pp. 94-99). The structure of the sentence differs from one language to another, hence the use of transposition. ''Modulation' is a type of oblique translation, which is used to change the meaning of the ST and its semantics (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995, p.246). Apparently, this strategy moves the text from being ST oriented to TT oriented. Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) use 'the 'equivalence' strategy in a quite different way than Nida and Jakobson. The strategy suggests finding a TL expression that is similar in the SL text in meaning, but different in structure (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995, pp. 38-39). It seems that this strategy deletes the ST culture and focuses on the TT culture, which could be damaging in the translation of the *khrairifa* (a heavily cultural text). 'Adaptation' is another type of oblique translation, which concerns expressions in the ST culture with no similar expressions in the TT culture, leading to a 'cultural reference' being changed to fit the TT culture (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995, pp. 39-40). In this case, the translation is target oriented and negates the source culture.

The issue of literal translation has been a topic of debate among theorists for decades. Although some theorists such as Vinay and Darbelnet see that literal translation is acceptable in some cases, others see that it should not be used. For instance, as far back as (1540), Dolet argued that the translator should not use literal translation, but should focus on understanding the meaning of the ST and know both languages thoroughly, and that the translation should be natural and well-arranged (see Munday, 2012, p.43). After all, the use of literal translation can be useful in some cases. However, it should be used for the appropriate purpose and place, otherwise it can easily cause confusion to the TT reader. Using sense-for-sense

translation can dislocate a *khrairifa*, for example, out of its culture. A balance use of strategies could be the effective way in translating a culturally oriented text so as to do as much justice as possible to the ST.

3.7 Loss of culture and pragmatics in oral literacy translation.

There are different views on the loss of cultural references and pragmatic meanings through the translation of a texts such as a *khrairifa*. Bassnett (2002), for example, argues that the focus is usually on the loss that occurs in translation although there is also gain in translation (p.38). A translator can produce a translation that gives more clarity to the ST culture, which might not be very clear to the TT reader without the translator's effort. The translator is often confronted with different problems that require decisions when a ST expression does not exist in the TT culture; not only the expression, but its pragmatic meaning. The pragmatic meaning of a *khrairifa* is its indirect message. For example, a *khrairifa* about Bedouin life says a lot about the harsh living conditions in the desert, and all narrated in an indirect simple and meaningful style. According to Bassnett (2002), facing such problems can lead to 'untranslatability', which occurs when an equivalent is not available in the TT on the levels of syntax and linguistics (p.39), but this can also occur on a cultural level, which requires more effort from the translator.

Bassnett (2002) argues that when faced which different translation problems, the translator should be able to find a solution using the strategy of the MINIMAX: finding the maximum effect with minimum loss (p.44). A number of decisions can be considered appropriate in this case, and the MINIMAX can be one of them. However, it is important to reflect the ST culture in the TT, otherwise the spirit of the ST will be altogether lost.

3.8 Lefevere and the translation of literature.

Lefevere (1992) identifies and discusses common problems associated with the translation of literature. Some of the problems he discussed are:

- **Alliteration**

  Alliteration is the repetition of the same sound in a verse. Alliteration gives the text a specific rhythm. The problem with the translation of alliteration is that the translator will have to make a decision because sometimes both sound and meaning of repetitive words or letters cannot have equivalents in the TT (p.20)

- **Allusions**

  Allusions occur when the ST refers directly or indirectly to something from a different context. The translator should be able to understand and locate the allusions in order to use a translation strategy based on the importance of the allusion (p.23). Lefevere gives the following types of allusion:

  - **Biblical Allusions**

    Biblical Allusions are allusions that refer to religious aspects in the Bible, or to any other religious text (p.23).

  - **Cultural Allusion**s

    Cultural Allusions refer to cultural aspects in the ST culture (p.25).

  - **Literary Allusions**

    Literary Allusions are allusions used to refer to other literature writings (p.27).

  - **Classical Allusions**

    Classical Allusions are allusions used to refer to historical figures (p.24).

- **Foreign words**

  These are words used in the ST that are originally from another language. Foreign words are used to raise the illocutionary level (p. 29).

- **Grammatical norms**

  Grammatical norms are found in a ST on purpose and turn a word from being grammatically accepted to unusual. This is considered as a 'mistake', but for a reason (p. 35).

- **Metaphor**

  Metaphors are expressions that relate referents in an indirect manner. They are used as implications to something else; adding a further dimension to illocutionary effect in the ST (p. 37).

- **Names**

  Names are allusions used in the ST for a reason. The use of names allows the reader to know the character behind the name used (p. 39).

- **False Friends**

  False friends are words that are of a certain specialty used in a specific ST register. If translators lack the necessary knowledge of the ST culture, they will likely translate the words in their usual sense, which is not the intention in the ST (p. 63).

- **Rhyme and Meter**

  Rhymes are similar vowels at the end of each verse of a poem that are also of a specific meter and give a poem a sense of balance. The rhyme and meter are difficult to translate (pp.70-71).

- **Sound and Nonsense**

  Sound and nonsense are related to the use of rhymes to produce a meaningless sound. Yet, this used to balance the sound in the verse (pp.75- 76).

- **Situation and Situation**

  Situation and situation occurs when the illocutionary level of the ST is heightened through the contrast between elements that often cannot be contrasted (p. 60).

The chapter has discussed different aspects of language and culture in the translation of literature. It has presented the problem of translatability and equivalence and discussed the translation of dialect in terms of meaning and style. Lefevere's main problems in the translation of literature have also been examined. The next chapter introduces the data, methodology, data analysis, and discussion of findings.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis

This chapter analyzes the cultural and linguistic problems associated with the translation of Emirati *khrairifa* from Arabic to English by a professional Arab translator. It discusses the problems the translator faced on linguistic and cultural levels.

4.1 Data and Methodology

A *khrairifa* is a very short sung folktale that is part of the Emirati material culture. The *khrairifa* is usually narrated to children and is memorized and sung by children during their games or at different cultural occasions such as the mid of the Islamic month of Sha'baan, or other occasions. People have memorized and passed these folktales from generation to generation. As such this oral transmission is bound to cause some changes, additions, or deletions. The five folktales used in this thesis are all extracted from different social forums on the internet. The chosen folktales represent different regions of the UAE. The first folktale is "خريريفة مجيريفة" (*Khrairifa Mjairifa*). It is used in certain games and as an introduction to a longer folktale to attract the children's attention. The second folktale is "ياأمي ياامي يامايه" (Ya Ummy Ya Ummy Yammayah), which is a story of a girl talking to her mother about a sailor, who proposed to her, but being a Bedouin, the girl prefers to marry her beloved Bedouin cousin, not the sailor. The third folktale is "عطونا من حق الله" (Atouna Mn Hag Allah). This folktale is recited and sung particularly on the night of mid-Sha'ban, which is an important occasion for Muslims, when they celebrate the oncoming of the Holy month of Ramadan, after Sha'ban. On this evening/night, children go around houses to collect candies, nuts and pray for the people of the houses they visit (this is almost like Halloween). The idea behind the singing of the folktale is to get more candies, nuts and sweets from every house the children visit. The forth folktale is "خوصه بوصه" (Khusah Busah). It is sung by children during a specific game that involves counting fingers and pinching the finger at which the folktale ends. The fifth and final folktale is "يا صباره" (Ya Sbarah), which is a conversation between a girl and a cactus, where the girl asks the cactus about the visitors who passed by on a Friday.

The folktales were collected and sent to a translation agency (www.onehourtranslation.com) and were translated by a native speaker of Arabic, non-Emirati, professional translator.

The translation of folktales, in general, and a *khrairifa*, in particular, poses many cultural and linguistic problems. In this thesis, the analysis of the English translations of the five sample texts includes the following:

- Identify and discussing the problems found in the translation of the *khrairifa*.
- Assessing whether the strategies used were successful in transferring the ST cultural and important linguistic aspects or not, and if not, what alternatives can be proposed.
- Examining the effect on TT readers to see if they would appreciate the Emirati culture through the translation of its folk literature.

For the purpose of this thesis, twenty examples from the five chosen folktales and their translations were chosen for analysis and discussion. The ideas of Lefevere (1992) on translating literature will be used in the analysis.

4.2 Analysis

In this analysis 20 examples derived from the five Emirati folktales and their English translations are assessed. The examples are divided into 5 parts corresponding to the five sample folktales. The Arabic representations of the folktales are transliterations of their oral features that is they are written the same way they are pronounced in the Emirati dialect. The translator added foot notes to the translation of certain words, which are in bold with the foot note explanation between brackets. The five folktales are given in full under Appendix A, while the corresponding five English translations are given under Appendix B.

1. **Khrairifa Mjairifa خريريفة مجيريفة**

Table 1: Khrairifa Mjairifa

NO.	ST	TT
1.	خريريفة مجيريفة	Myth, **Shovel (Random coo, without certain meaning)**
2.	سبع قطيوات معلقات في التنور	Seven cats, hanged in the **Tannour (Traditional Arabic Old Oven, made by stone)**
	والتنور يبغي حطب	The Tannour needs firewood
	والحطب في السمرة	And the firewood is in the tree
3.	والسمرة تبغي جدوم	The tree needs an axe
	الجدوم عند الحداد	The axe is at the **smith (The profession, the man who work with metals)**
	و الحداد يبغي بيضة	The smith wants an egg
	و البيضة عند التيتية	The egg is at the hen
	و التيتية تبغي حبوه	The hen needs food
4.	ركاب الخيل	A horse rider
	ماينام الليل	He never sleeps at night

Example 1:

خريريفة مجيريفة

Myth, Shovel
(Random coo without certain meaning)

In this example, the opening of the *khrairifa* starts with two words "خريريفة"
(*Khrairifa*) and "مجيريفة" (*Mjairifa*). The word "خريريفة" means the mini short sung
folktale, which should not be confused with the normal narrative folktale. The word
"مجيريفة" has no actual meaning in the Emirati culture, but it is used for the purpose
of sound and rhythm effect. Therefore, the problem here is **sound and nonsense**
because the meaningless word was used for the purpose of sound.

The translator opted for "Myth, Shovel" with a foot note to explain that "مجيريفة" is a meaningless coo. This a literal translation where the translator considered that if "خريريفة" was a short folktale or myth, then "مجيريفة" would be derived from "مجرافة", just like "خريريفة" which is derived from "خرافة". Unfortunately, this is not the case here. Furthermore, a "خريريفة" cannot be translated as "myth" because in the Emirati culture folktales are not considered myths. Transliteration could have been a better strategy in this case.

Example 2:

<div dir="rtl">

سبع قطيوات معلقات في التنور

و التنور يبغي حطب

و الحطب في السمرة

</div>

Seven cats, hanged in the **Tannour**

The Tannour needs firewood

And the firewood is in the tree

(Traditional Arabic Old Oven, made by stone.)

There are multiple translation problems in this example. Firstly, based on the register of the *khrairifa*, which addresses children, it is obvious that "قطيوات" is meant for kittens and not adult cats. The translator rendered the word as "cats", changing thus the illocutionary effect of the word. This is a good case for what Lefevere (1992) identifies as **situation situation,** which relates to the illocutionary level of certain words in the source text that are used for a particular purpose.

The translator used transliteration in the example of "التنور", which is a **cultural allusion**. He also included a footnote to explain "التنور"as an old oven in Arab culture. Through transliteration and the footnote, the translation was effective in delivering the cultural elements of the source text.

In this example, "seven kitten hanged in an oven" is used for exaggeration. The TT reader will understand the meaning of the word, but might not understand its purpose. The ST also includes "و" (lit. and) at the beginning of every verse as a connector to keep the children engaged with the folktale. But this was deleted and only translated once; perhaps adopting the writing system of the English language. Perhaps, the

translator should have repeated "and" in every verse to preserve the rhetorical characteristic of the repetition in the *khrairifa*.

Example 3:

<div dir="rtl">

والسمرة تبغي جدوم

الجدوم عند الحداد

والحداد يبغي بيضة

والبيضة عند التيتية

والتيتية تبغي حبوه

</div>

The tree needs an axe.
The axe is at the **smith**
The smith wants an egg
The egg is at the hen
The hen needs food
(The profession, the man who work with metals)

In this example, we can notice the problem of **alliteration**. The problem regarding alliteration is that the translator might be able to translate the sound, but fail to translate the meaning, or the opposite. While the repetition was rendered, there are linguistic mistakes that do not give the appropriate meaning because, for example, "axe" cannot be "at the smith", but **with** the smith. The translator explained "smith" in a footnote, but the translation was not effective.

Example 4:

<div dir="rtl">

ركاب الخيل

ماينام الليل

</div>

A horse rider
He never sleeps at night

In this example, occurring at the end of the *khrairifa*, the purpose is to attract the children to listen to the next folktale. The example is considered as a **metaphor**

because it describes a strong horse rider who stays awake all night. In other narrations, there is also a continuation for this part, which says "بايده سكين ذابح مسكين") A knife in his hand., Killed a poor fellow), also used to attract children's attention. The TT literal translation does not preserve the metaphorical meaning, and as such it bordered on the meaningless. An addition to "strong" to explain the imagery and the horse rider characteristics would have done justice to the ST.

2. Ya Ummy Ya Ummy Yammayah يا امي ياأمي يا مايه

Table 2: Ya Ummy Ya Ummy Yammayah

No.	ST	TT
5.	يا امي ياأمي يا مايه*** راعي البحر ما باه	Oh mom, Oh mom, Oh Maya, the seaman I don't want him
6.	ناجل جفير العومة*** يقطر على علباه	The carrier of the fish basket, dropping on his back neck
7.	اب وليد عمي *** ابخنير وارداه	I want my uncle's son, with a Dagger and his robe
8.	زامط عليه ابخشمه*** ياخشم الكوفرة	Arrogant on me with his nose, like the nose of fish
9.	يار الله خشم ابويه*** عن حبة ليدري	My father's nose, on his love if he knew

Example 5:

يا امي ياأمي يا مايه*** راعي البحر ما باه

Oh mom, Oh mom, Oh Maya, the seaman I don't want him

In this example, the girl calls her mother "أمايه". The word is pronounced as "مايه" without "أ" and was thus written the way it is pronounced. It is widely used and literally means "my mother" in Emirati dialect. The use of " أمايه" (mother) here is for the purpose of insistence as the girl is adamant not to marry the sailor man. "**False**

friends" is the problem detected in this example because it is used in a specific register. The translator rendered "مايه" as "Oh Maya". Perhaps, not being conversant with the culture and its dialect caused this of mistranslation. Since the *khrairifa* is written just as it is pronounced, the translator did not recognize "مايه" as "mother" rather than the name of a person called "Maya". The translation should have been "Oh mother" instead of "Oh Maya".

Example 6:

<div dir="rtl">ناجل جفير العومة*** يقطر على علباه</div>

The carrier of the fish basket, dropping on his back neck

In this example, there is a specification of a type of fish. The use of a special word or in this case a special kind of fish in a folktale is for a purpose. The "عومة" fish, sardine, was important in the lives of the people of the sea. However, Bedouins do not eat fish a lot due to their living circumstances in the dessert. As with example 5, the problem here is also one of **false friends** where culture and dialect are highly intertwined. The translator's decision was to move from specific to general although an equivalent for the type of fish "العومة" exists in the TL, namely sardines.

Example 7:

<div dir="rtl">اب وليد عمي *** ابخنير وارداه</div>

I want my uncle's son, with a Dagger and his robe

In this example, the orality of the *khrairifa* makes the verse difficult to interpret unless one is familiar with the dialect. The problem here is **grammatical norm** because in the source text "ابخنيرَ وارداه" is written just as it is pronounced. This caused confusion for the translator since he rendered "خنجر" as a noun "Dagger" rather than "his dagger". Also, "وُلَيد عمي" is related to the special register of the *khrairifa* that is used to address children. This is a type of **false friends** since "وُلَيد عمي" refers specifically to her "young cousin". The translator decided to move from specific to general by translating it as "my uncle's son".

Example 8:

زامط عليه ابخشمه*** ياخشم الكوفرة

Arrogant on me with his nose, like the nose of fish

In this example, the ST specifies a type of fish that is "الكوفرة" or "الكوفر". The feature of the nose of this fish is used to allude to arrogance and pride. This is a **cultural illusion** issue since the girl is specifying this type of fish for a reason; its features. Unfortunately, the translator opted for generalization as a strategy by translating "Al Kofarah" as "fish", which killed the purpose of the cultural allusion. The translator could have used transliteration.

Example 9:

يار الله خشم ابويه*** عن حبة ليدري

My father's nose, on his love if he knew

In this example, "يار الله", which means in standard Arabic "أجار الله" (God protect), is a type of **Biblical allusions** (Lefevere, 1992) used for religious references. The translator decided to delete the allusion killing thus the effect of the source.

3. Atouna Mn Hag Allah عطونا من حق الله

Table 3: Atouna Mn Hag Allah

No.	ST	TT
10.	عطونا من حق الله واللا الرزاق الله	Give us from the right of the God, and we swear that the giver is the God
11.	عطونا من حق الليلة واللا بنذبح عييله	Give us from the right of this night, otherwise we slaughter a young cow
12.	جدام بيتكم طمطمه متحرطمه	In front of your house, there is a female sheep …… broken
13.	جدام بيتكم مله مشتله جدام بيتكم طاسه محتاسه	In front of your house, there is a bowl ….. crooked In front of your house there is a **cup (Old fashion cup, mostly made by metal or stone.)** …. crooked

Example 10:

عطونا من حق الله واللا الرزاق الله

Give us from the right of the God, and we swear that the giver is the God

In this example, the recurrent problem concerns names. First, "من حق الله" is a name of an event called "The night of mid-Sha'ban"; also called "من حق الليلة". The translator opted for a literal rendering "the right of God". As it is a name of an occasion, transliteration should have been used with a footnote to explain its meaning. Second, the translation of "واللا الرزاق الله" was not an effective one, where the translator opted for the literal "and we swear that the giver is the God". In the Emirati dialect "واللا" is "و إلا" in Standard Arabic, which is translates as "or" in English. The translator misunderstood the force behind the structure. The children say in the *khrairifa* that if you do not give us from the goods that God gave you, then God is the Giver. Here,

"الرزاق" is used in its religious sense as one of the names of Allah; not a person's action.

Example 11:

عطونا من حق الليلة واللا بنذبح عييله

Give us from the right of this night, otherwise we slaughter a young cow

The translation problem in this example includes a **name** and a **cultural allusion.** In the verse, "حق الليلة" refers to the night of the mid of Sha'ban. This is translated literally, where the name lost its illocutionary force and meaning. The cultural allusion expressed by "بنذبح عييله" refers to daughter of the cow because in the Emirati culture people usually do not slaughter a cow or its daughter due to its great benefits to any family. Although an equivalence to "عييله" is established in the TL, "heifer" results in a weak translation because there is a direct equivalence in the TL. A further problem is caused by the the khrairifa is written the way it is spoken. So, "و اللا" is "و إلا" in Standard Arabic, but it is pronounced without the "همزة" in the Emirati dialect.

Example 12:

جدام بيتكم طمطمه متحرطمه

In front of your house, there is a female sheep …… broken

In this example, there is a **cultural allusion** expressed by "طمطمه متحرطمه". In the Emirati dialect, "طمطمه" is a female sheep, which can have "ewe" as equivalent in the TL. "متحرطمه" refers to a nagging and talkative woman. This is an imagery scene that is considered as figurative simile where the female sheep is compared to a nagging woman. The sound of a sheep is "bleating" or "baa-ing", which could have been more appropriate as a choice than "broken".

Example 13:

<div dir="rtl">

جدام بيتكم مله مشتله

جدام بيتكم طاسه محتاسه

</div>

In front of your house, there is a bowl ….. crooked

In front of your house there is a **cup**…. crooked

(Old fashion cup, mostly made of metal or stone)

In this example, there is a **cultural allusion** problem. "مِشْتَلَّه" is the description of the "مَلّه", and "مِحْتاسِه" is a description of "طاسِه". The translator rendered "مَلّه" as "bowl" and "طاسِه" as "cup"; which can be effective equivalents in the TT. However, "مِشْتَلَّه" and "مِحْتاسه" do not have the same meaning. "مِشْتَلَّه" can be rendered as "crooked", but the meaning of "مِشْتَلَّه"in this context is a "shrunken" cup; not "crooked". The translator failed to render the cultural and linguistic meaning. The imaginary scene of a shrunken cup has its specific signifying purpose. The cultural image was not conveyed in the TT. Since the Emirati *khrairifa* is a transliterated the way it is pronounced, the words "ملة", "مشتلة", "طاسة", and "محتاسة" all end with a "تاء مربوطة" (sounding as -t) which is "هاء الوقف" in standard Arabic, but it is written as pronounced with a "هاء" (sounding as -h) at the end of each verse in the Emirati dialect.

4. Khusah Busah خوصه بوصه

Table 4: Khusah Busah

No.	ST	TT
14.	خوصه بوصه يالنبوصه كلاج الدود من حندود	**Small, one inch Palm fronds, (Random coo, without certain meaning)** The worms ate you from the roots
15.	ياكلون الشباح والنباح	Eating everything
16.	فيها صبي غاوي عماري يسند على ضو القمر وييب لامه ناري من حلتي لي حلة الكفاري	In it, there is a young handsome boy Leaning on the moonlight And brings fire to his mother From my bowl to the bowl of the unbelievers
17.	ياسند ويا سنيدوه ويارطيبات الخشكاروه	Oh Sanad, Oh **Sneidouh (Same name Sanad with some addition for pleasantry)** Oh the unripe bad **dates (The Fruits)**
18.	حباتي حبة لولو ما ينسمع ما تقولو	My pieces are a pearl piece Unheard what it says

Example 14:

خوصه بوصه يالنبوصه

كلاج الدود من حندود

Small, one inch Palm fronds

The worms ate you from the roots

(Random coo without certain meaning)

In this example, there is a problem of **nonsense and sound**. The example is used for the sake of sound, but does not have a real meaning. Literally, "خوصه" is a "palm frond" and "كلاج الدود" is "the worms ate you", however they do not have any meaning in the folktale itself. They are used for the sake of sound patterns. The translator translated the ST based on his understanding, but this is not the case as the verse is

meaningless. Further, the translator added a footnote to explain that it is a meaningless coo. Transliterating "خوصه بوصه يالنبوصة" because it is the title of the folktale and deleting "كلاج الدود من حندود" could be effective solutions that would not affect the overall meaning of the folktale,

Example 15:

<div dir="rtl">

ياكلون الشباح والنباح

</div>

Eating everything

In this example, a **metaphor** represents the image of strong Bedouins who can eat "ghosts" and "barking dogs". As a fictional *khrairifa,* this imagery aims to show the characteristics of the people of the desert. The translator missed the meaning of the imagery and thus the translation here is meaningless and weak.

Example 16:

<div dir="rtl">

فيها صبي غاوي عماري
يسند على ضو القمر
ويبب لامه ناري
من حلتي لي حلة الكفاري

</div>

In it, there is a young handsome boy
Leaning on the moonlight
And brings fire to his mother
From my bowl to the bowl of the unbelievers

In this example, there are issues of **grammatical norms**, **metaphors**, and a **cultural allusion**. In a *khrairifa*, some words are changed for sound, rhyme, and meter purposes and **grammatical norms** are broken for rhythm purposes. For instance, "عمّاري" is someone who builds "يعمر", but it was changed to "عمّاري" in the folktale. The translator deleted the word, but he could have simply used "a builder". A **metaphor** is expressed by "يسند على ضو القمر", which refers to the boy who brings fire on the moon's light. This is to signify the darkness of the place. The translator used

literal translation to handle the metaphor, which preserved the meaning as it is still clear in the ST. In addition, a **cultural allusion** problem is found in " من حلتي لي حلة الكفاري", which refers to the place. This alludes to the difficulty of finding fire. Instead of rendering as "from place to place", the translator opted for a literal translation that is not short of a mistranslation.

Example 17:

ياسند ويا سنيدوه

Oh Sanad, Oh **Sneidouh**
(Same name Sanad with some addition for pleasantry)

In this example, there is a **name** problem. The translator was successful in translating the name "سند" (Sanad) and "سنيدوه" (Sneidouh) using transliteration, which is common in the translation of names. In order to narrow the cultural gap, the translator added a footnote to explain that "سنيدوه" is the same name as "سند", but with addition for pleasantry, which is a cultural matter that has been preserved in the TT.

Example 18:

ويارطيبات الخشكاروه
حباتي حبة لولو

Oh the unripe bad **dates**
My pieces are a pearl piece
(The Fruit)

In this example, there are two problems foreign names, and a cultural allusion. Here, "الخشكاروه" or "الخشكار" is originally a Persian word which means the unrefined brown bread (*Almaany* website). The folktale changes the reference of the foreign word from bread to dates. This is a cultural allusion because in the Emirati culture dates are used more than brown bread. Instead of "ripe dates", the translator ended with a mistranslation where the opposite meaning is given. In addition, as a name, "لولو" (Lulu dates) refers to a kind of dates. "Pearl piece" may refer to the size, but the verse refers to a type with a certain shape and color. Transliteration of the name as "lulu" could have preserved the meaning with a footnote providing an explanation.

46

5. Ya Sbarah يا صباره

Table 5: Ya Sbarah

No.	ST	TT
19.	يا صباره ما دريتي عن خطارن لفوج قالت لفوني غبشه على خيول وبوش	Oh Cactus, you didn't know about the guests above She said: they visited me on horses and camels
20.	يالس على الديجيجه.. يالس ويعد الفلوس والطاسه المنقوشه ما ضمت الفلوس	Sitting on the **chair (Old traditional chair, made by stones),** sitting and counting money And the engraved cup didn't accommodate the money

Example 19:

<div dir="rtl">

يا صباره ما دريتي عن خطارن لفوج
قالت لفوني غبشه على خيول وبوش

</div>

Oh Cactus, you didn't know about the guests above
She said: they visited me on horses and camels

In this example, there are two problems, **grammatical norms** and a **cultural allusion**. First, in "خطارن لفوج", for poetic purposes the ST changes "التنوين" to "ن" in the word "خطار". Second, "لفوج" is derived from the word "لفى", in the Emirati dialect, meaning "came". Further, in the Emirati dialect, sound/letter "ك" (k) is changed to "ج" (g). The translation "the guests above" does not render the intended meaning leading thus to a mistranslation. A more appropriate translation could be "the visitors who visited you". Last, the word "غبشه", meaning "early morning before sunrise", is

deleted; a decision that led to a change in the cultural allusion, namely the visitors were early risers.

Example 20:

يالس على الديجيجه.. يالس ويعد الفلوس

والطاسه المنـقوشـه ما ضمت الفلوس

Sitting on the **chair**, sitting and counting money
And the engraved cup didn't accommodate the money
(Old traditional chair, made by stones)

In this example, there are two problems: **False friends** and **alliteration**. In the ST, "الديجيجه" refers to a small chair that is made of stones and mud. It is a **false friends** problem since it is a specific cultural issue. In standard Arabic, a دكه is a rectangular chair usually made of wood (*Almaany* website). However, the *khrairifa* addresses children and is sung by children, and as such "الديجيجه" is a small "دكه". The translator failed to translate this small detail and moved from a specific reference to a general one, but he managed to maintain the alliteration. For "الديجيجه", a ''small chair'' with a footnote could have been more effective.

4.3 Results and Findings

The analysis given in the previous section has examined cultural and linguistic problems in the translation of five Emirati folktales. Based on Lefevere's (1992) problems of translating literature, twenty examples were discussed to illustrate the different problems the translator faced in rendering oral Emirati literature into written English.

In the translation of each *khrairifa*, the strategy most used by the professional translator was literal (word-for-word) translation. As explained in the previous chapter, literal translation is preferred only if the translator has a thorough knowledge of both ST and TT cultures (see Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995). This is because translators would be able to establish effective equivalence; otherwise the translation would be meaningless.

In the translations of our five sample texts, the translator used footnotes in some cases to help explain certain elements where no equivalence could be established in the target culture. Though this strategy can be helpful, footnotes should be limited to clarifying difficult cultural references, but should not be the sole way out of translation difficulties. The translator used other strategies as well, such as semantic translation. However, the translator was not very sure about the meanings of some cultural references such as "الخشكاروه". Semantic translation can work, if the translator is not sure of the purpose of the ST word and the reason behind its use (pragmatic force), then the result may well be a mistranslation. In the case of the data analyzed in this chapter, the translator wrongly rendered a number of linguistic aspects of the STs. Since the five STs are s highly cultural and dialectic, our and other translators should be aware of the contextual meaning of every *khrairifa* and every term used. The lack of this type knowledge and cultural background caused weak translations that did not reflect the cultural context of the five Emirati folktales.

In Addition, the translator used deletion when faced with religious and highly dialectical words such as "يار الله" and "غبشة". Given the importance of such elements in the type of texts used in this thesis, the translations were in many places meaningless, because the deleted terms are essential in interpreting the intended meanings of the verses in each *khrairifa*. All in all, the translations of the five Emirati folktales were weak vis-à-vis their complex structure and high illocutionary power. Given that the five source texts are culture sensitive and orally produced (dialect), their translation requires a solid knowledge of the Emirati culture, its dialect, and accents. This chapter has examined the cultural and linguistic problems found in the translations of the five Emirati folktales. The next chapter concludes the thesis.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Translators face many cultural and linguistic problems in the translation of oral literature, in general, and in the translation of specific oral cultures like the Emirati one, in particular. In our case, the translation of Emirati oral literature produced in the Emirati dialect into written English is supposed to bridge the cultural gap between the East and the West. The thesis has discussed folklore, Emirati folklore or "heritage" of the Emirati culture. It has examined Emirati literature, folktales, and their orality that shifts into literacy through translation. The thesis has discussed different translation strategies used mostly in the translation of literature as proposed by different theorists.

For the purposes of this thesis, five Emirati folktales were translated into English by a professional Arab translator who was commissioned through a translation agency. The translator mostly adopted the literal strategy in rendering each *khrairifa* into English. This was not fully successful as the meanings of many words and a number of cultural references were lost in English, leading often to mistranslation. Based on Andre Lefevere's (1992) problems of translating literature, the analysis reported in the previous chapter has examined linguistic and cultural problems found in the translations of the five folktales. Given the type of problems faced by the translator, one could perhaps hypothesize that had the translator been a native Emirati, the English translations would have been more effective and the mistranslations of linguistic and cultural references would have been avoided. Only an experiment can establish a plausible answer. In order for translators to produce an appropriate cultural TT, they should be effectively knowledgeable with a sound background about the source culture they are transferring through translation. Under the genre of folktales, Emirati *khrairifa* or Emirati short folktales have not been translated. So and to the best of my knowledge, this thesis presents perhaps a rare academic translation of Emirati folktales into English. In this regard, further research into and more academic translation of Emirati folklore are required. This thesis is intended as a step in this direction and a small contribution to the study of Emirati heritage.

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Appendix A: Arabic (source) texts examined

1. خريريفة مجيريفة
سبع قطيوات معلقات في التنور
والتنور يبغي حطب
والحطب في السمرة
والسمرة تبغي جدوم
الجدوم عند الحداد
والحداد يبغي بيضة
والبيضة عند التيتية
والتيتية تبغي حبوه
والحبوه عند الزراع
والزراع يبغي فلوس
والفلوس عند العروس
والعروس يابت ولد
والولد سمه سند
ركاب الخيل
ماينام الليل

2. يا امي ياأمي يا مايه *** راعي البحر ما باه
ناجل جفير العومة*** يقطر على علباه
اب وليد عمي *** ابخنير وارداه
ماهد خطام الصفرا*** ولا ضيع عصاه
اعيال عمي سبعه*** خلوني بتنقاه
بتنقى بوطاقية*** بويوخة ما ارضاه
زامط عليه ابخشمه*** ياخشم الكوفرة
خشمي طويل وعالي *** شفته في المنظرة
يار الله خشم ابويه*** عن حبة ليدري
شارب حليب وسكر *** عن لونه يندري

3. عطونا من حق الله واللا الرزاق الله
جدام بيتكم وادي والخير كله ينادي
عطونا من حق الليلة واللا بنذبح عييله
جدام بيتكم طمطمه متحرطمه
جدام بيتكم مله مشتله
جدام بيتكم طاسه محتاسه

4. خوصه بوصه يالنبوصه
كلاج الدود من حندود
لي عجارب لين السود

56

مرينا على غريب
ياكلون الشباح والنباح
يتنايلونا من قطر إلى قطر
فيه الزعاع والمطر
فيها صبي غاوي عماري
يسند على ضو القمر
وييب لامه ناري
من حلتي لي حلة الكفاري
ياسند ويا سنيدوه
ويارطيبات الخشكاروه
حباتي حبة لولو
ما ينسمع ما تقولو
دوسة خيل ولا مطيه
كوكوه

5. يا صباره ما دريتي عن خطارن لفوج
قالت لفوني غبشه على خيول وبوش
مصلين الجمعه وأحمد ولد الشيوخ
يالس على الديجيجه.. يالس ويعد الفلوس
والطاسه المنقوشه ما ضمت الفلوس

Appendix B: English texts (translations) examined

1. Myth, Shovel[1]

   Seven cats, hanged in the Tannour[2]

   The Tannour needs firewood

   And the firewood is in the tree

   The tree needs an axe

   The axe is at the smith[3]

   The smith wants an egg

   The egg is at the hen

   The hen needs food

   The food are at the farmer

   The farmer wants money

   The money are with the bride

   The bride gave birth to a child

   The child was named Sanad

   A horse rider

   He never sleeps at night

2. Oh mom, Oh mom, Oh Maya, the seaman I don't want him

   The carrier of the fish basket, dropping on his back neck

   I want my uncle's son, with a Dagger and his robe

   He didn't let the camel, nor lost his steak

   My uncle's sons are seven, Let me choose him

   I choose the one with a hat, the one with broadcloth I don't accept him

---

[1] Random coo, without certain meaning
[2] Traditional Arabic Old Oven, made by stone.
[3] The profession, the man who work with metals

Arrogant on me with his nose, like the nose of fish

My nose is long and high, I saw it in the mirror

My father's nose, on his love if he knew

Milk and sugar drinker, by His color known

3.   Give us from the right of the God, and we swear that the giver is the God

In front of your house there is a valley, and the whole good call

Give us from the right of this night, otherwise we slaughter a young cow

In front of your house, there is a female sheep …… broken

In front of your house, there is a bowl ….. crooked

In front of your house there is a cup4…. crooked

4.   Small, one inch Palm fronds [5],

The worms ate you from the roots

The so black scorpions

We passed some strangers

Eating everything, moving us from place to place

In it there are the camels and the rain

In it, there is a young handsome boy

Leaning on the moonlight

And brings fire to his mother

From my bowl to the bowl of the unbelievers

Oh Sanad, Oh Sneidouh[6]

Oh the unripe bad dates[7]

My pieces are a pearl piece

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[4] Old fashion cup, mostly made by metal or stone.
[5] Random coo, without certain meaning
[6] Same name Sanad with some addition for pleasantry
[7] The fruits

Unheard what it says

A horse step or camel one

Crowing

5. Oh Cactus, you didn't know about the guests above

She said: they visited me on horses and camels,

Friday prayers and Ahmad the son of Sheikhs

Sitting on the chair[8], sitting and counting money

And the engraved cup didn't accommodate the money

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[8] Old traditional chair, made of stones

Vita

Shaikha Hassan Al Khamiri finished her school education at Al Ma'arifa International School in Sharjah, UAE. She joined the American University of Sharjah (AUS) in Fall 2008 and graduated in Fall 2012 with a B. A. in Mass Communication, concentration Public Relations, and a Minor in Translation Studies. She joined the MATI program at AUS in Spring 2013.