DIALECT IN THEATRE TRANSLATION INTO ARABIC

A THESIS IN TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETING (ARABIC/ENGLISH)

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DIALECT IN THEATRE TRANSLATION INTO ARABIC

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ABSTRACT

In this dissertation, the issue of theatre translation is discussed and the translation of dialect in literary works as a means of depicting identity is further examined. It is generally assumed that in translating a variety of language employed by the author in a piece of literature as a means of characterization or a social class marker, it is very likely that the end-text will be generalized and leveled-out. In this dissertation, this assumption is assessed closely. Chapter one introduces this dissertation and argues that in languages tending to be almost classless, such as Standard Arabic, the translator either completely ignores the use of dialect, translating into a unified pattern of language, or resorts to a particular variety of the language that is probably stigmatizing or distorted. In chapter two, this dissertation presents the relevant theoretical background to translation studies from Catford till the present. In chapter three, the paper presents different definitions given to the word 'dialect' and argues that the use of dialect can be marked and relates deeply to the social and professional status of the individual. This chapter also explores the relation between language and identity. It also illustrates that there are at least two types of dialect use: the functional (contextually-motivated) and the non-functional. In chapter four, this paper studies the struggle between standard Arabic and the dialect in literary contexts. It provides a brief history of the dialect of Quraysh which is widely believed to be the

origin of classical Arabic. It also explores the other varieties that were available at that time suggesting that the translator of a text into Arabic which is originally composed of different functional dialects can always turn to one of those dialects depending on the social indications to be conveyed. In chapter five, the paper analyses one lengthy sample of the literary use of dialect in drama: an English play by George Bernard Shaw 'Pygmalion' translated into Arabic by Hussam S. Al Tamimi in the first version and by Gerges Al-Rashidi in the second. The two versions are compared and assessed. In the last chapter, the dissertation reasserts the importance of dialect in depicting literary characters, especially in drama, and the delicacy, subtlety and attention it requires from a vigilant translator.

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AKNOWLEGMENTS

Introduction

In literary works, translating dialect can be problematic. Translators often render dialect into a more generalized, leveled-out language, either in an attempt to avoid stigmatizing a particular variety of the target language, or simply because of the difficulty they face in designating a suitable equivalent. This dissertation argues that dialect can be a crucial tool in the process of depicting and individualizing characters in literature and should therefore be handled with much attention. Dialect phonetic, grammatical and syntactic effect should directly or indirectly be preserved in the target language. To illustrate this, this dissertation scrutinizes an English play by George Bernard Shaw, "Pygmalion", translated into Arabic in one sample by Hussam S. Al Tamimi, and by Gerges Al-Rashidi in another.

For example and according to Luigi Bonaffini in his paper "Translating Dialect Literature", the characters' vernacular speech in Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn is rather complex and therefore the use of dialect in this novel becomes dynamic. The dialect used tends to adapt to different situations. It is not surprising then if the complexity and semantic richness of the language in the Italian or the Spanish translations appear "sharply diminished where the local and individual varieties are in effect erased and substituted by a generically colloquial and idiomatic form of speech" (Luigi, p.3).

Bonaffini further illustrates his point of view by the following speech in the bilingual edition with Givovanni Baladi's translation by the character Jim:

I tuck out en shin down de hill, en 'spec to steal a skift 'long de sho' som'ers 'bove de town, but dey wuz people a-stirring yit, so I hid in de ole tumbledown cooper shop on de bank to wait for everybody to go away.

Jim's dialect which is strongly characterizing and different from the speech of the other characters in the novel is thoroughly flattened which actually eliminates the most markedly idiomatic and vernacular elements of the original text and transfers it to an area of 'uncertain colloquialism'. Moreover, all the other linguistic peculiarities

either they are phonetic, grammatical or syntactic, are completely erased in the Italian translation (ibid).

The first chapter in this dissertation, 'The Introduction', introduces it and gives a brief summary of its content. Chapter two discusses the relevant theoretical background to translation studies from Catford till the present. It deals with the notion of equivalence such as Jakobson's proposal that there is normally no full equivalence between the code-units of two languages because different languages partition reality differently and that only cognitive experiences can be conveyed. The dissertation also deals with Nida's formal and dynamic equivalence, as well as Newmark's semantic and communicative translation. Further, it deals with Vinay and Darbelnet's direct and oblique translation. It also studies the formal correspondent and textual equivalent according to Catford. Reiss's text types in terms of their functions are also studied in this dissertation. It also deals with the skopos, i.e. purpose, theory that stresses the interactional pragmatic aspects of translation. It also covers the discourse and Pragmatic analysis in terms of Hatim and Mason's discussion as well as the cultural turn in translation studies pioneered by Lawrence Venuti. Finally, this Chapter briefly sheds the light on theatre translation.

In chapter three, the dissertation deals with the different definitions given to the word 'dialect', and the way in which it defers from a 'standard' language. This chapter also explores the relation between language and identity. Further, it argues that the use of dialect can be marked and relates deeply to the social and professional status of the individual. It also argues that in languages tending to be almost classless, such as Standard Arabic, in most cases the translator either completely ignores the use of dialect, translating into a unified pattern of language, or resorts to a particular variety of the language that is probably stigmatizing or incompatible with the language adhered to in the text. This chapter also illustrates that there are at least two types of dialect use: the functional (contextually-motivated) and the non-functional. In this chapter, the dissertation also discusses the importance of dialect in illustrating literary characters. Moreover, it studies the qualities of a supposedly good equivalent to a particular dialect.

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In chapter four, this dissertation studies the struggle between standard Arabic and the dialect in literary contexts. It provides a brief history of the dialect of Quraysh which is widely believed to be the origin of classical Arabic. It also explores the other varieties that were available at that time suggesting that the translator of a text into Arabic which is originally composed of different functional dialects can always turn to one of those dialects depending on the social indications to be conveyed.

In chapter five, the dissertation analyses one lengthy sample of the literary use of dialect: an English play by George Bernard Shaw translated into Arabic in two different versions. Examples of translation are taken from the two versions, compared and assessed. The assessment is divided into two main phases; the pre-elevated phase of the heroine's language, and the post-elevated phase of her language.

Chapter five concludes that to avoid the undesired leveled-out result of translating all the varieties into standard Arabic, and to also avoid stigmatizing an existing Arabic dialect, the translator may choose to adhere to one of the different Standard Arabic dialects that were used by the local tribes in the past, a dialect that is expected to be spoken by the impoverished, uneducated class in a society where people spoke Standard Arabic. A second option is to use a systematically violated or distorted version of classical Arabic.

In the last chapter, the dissertation reasserts the importance of dialect in depicting literary characters and the delicacy, subtlety and attention it requires from a vigilant translator.

To sum up, this dissertation assumes the tendency of translators into Arabic to neglect the functional use of dialect in literature and therefore it proposes practical solutions to handle such literary cases.

Translation Theories

In this chapter a theoretical background to translation studies is provided with a brief summary of the most relevant theories in the field. It starts with Norman Jakobson's equivalence and effect theory to the cultural turn in translation studies pioneered by the American theorist Lawrence Venuti. It ends by shedding the light on theatre translation as well as its requirements.

2.1 Jakobson: Equivalence and Effect

The first theorist to tackle the issue of equivalence in contemporary translation studies was the American structuralist Norman Jakobson. He is frequently quoted that "Equivalence in difference is the cardinal problem of language and the pivotal concern of linguistics" (Venuti, 2000, p.114).

Jakobson (1959) argues that there is normally no full equivalence between the code-units of two languages because different languages partition reality differently. In his description, interlingual translation does not involve substituting separate code-units between two languages; however it involves substituting entire messages. He uses the word "cheese" in English as an example. This word is not identical to the Russian word or code-unit "syr" since the latter does not include the concept of cottage cheese(Venuti, 2000, p.114).

According to Jakobson (1959), any cognitive experience and its classification can be conveyed in any other language. He adds that whenever we are faced with a deficiency, "terminology may be qualified and amplified by loan-words or loan-translations, neologisms or semantic shifts, and finally, by circumlocutions" (Venuti, 2000, p.115).

However, Jakobson (1959) excludes poetry as being untranslatable. He attributes that to the fact that every semantic and syntactic form used in poetry is there for a purpose and that they all "carry their own autonomous signification" (Venuti, 2000, p.118).

2.2 Nida: Formal and Dynamic Equivalence

Eugene Nida developed his equivalence theory in relation to the pragmatics of the target culture that the sacred book was translated to. He has moved away form the old traditional concept that an orthographic word has its own fixed meaning towards a definition of meaning in which a code-unit acquires meaning through its context and thus it can create various responses according to the target culture (Munday, 2001, p.38).

Furthermore, in his paper "Principles of Correspondence" (1964), Nida distinguishes between two main kinds of translation; a translation oriented towards formal equivalence, and a one oriented towards dynamic equivalence (Venuti, 2000).

Nida (1964) explains that a translation aimed at formal equivalence is a source-oriented translation that reveals as much as possible of both the form and content of the source text. Therefore, it attempts to reproduce several formal elements like grammatical units, consistency in the usage of words as well as the meanings of the source message ((Venuti, 2000, p.134).

However and according to Nida (1964), formal translation must be viewed with a distinction of literal translation. As Basil Hatim and Jeremy Munday puts it:

> While **literal** translations tend to preserve formal features almost by default (i.e. with little or no regard for context, meaning or what is implied by a given utterance), a '**formal**' translation is almost always **contextually motivated**: formal features are preserved only if they carry contextual values that become part of overall text meaning (e.g. deliberate ambiguity in the ST) (Hatim & Munday, 2004, p.41).

On the other hand, Nida (1964) believes that a translation intended to focus on dynamic equivalence is a translation oriented towards the receptor response. He adds that one way of defining dynamic equivalence is describing it as the "closest natural equivalent to the source-language message" (Venuti, 2000, p.136). A definition that

consists of three essential terms: (1) equivalent, related to the message of the source text, (2) natural, related to the language of the receptor, and (3) closest, which combines the two previous orientations based on the highest degree of approximation (ibid).

The American linguist Noam Chomsky in the 1960s, proposed a new linguistic theory called generative or transformational grammar, claiming that the speakers of any language produce less or more complicated surface syntactic structures through a series of basic or 'deep structures' called 'kernels' (Fawcett, 1997, p.65).

Influenced by the theory of generative-transformational grammar of Chomsky, Nida, in his translation model, explains three main stages that the process of translation undergoes:

1. Analyzing the message of the source text into its simplest and structurally clearest constituents, referring to them as 'kernels'.
2. Transferring the message at this stage,
3. Restructuring the message in the target text to its most natural semantic and stylistic form to the target reader. (Hatim and Munday, 2004, p.45).

However, Nida's theory of dynamic equivalence has been faced with a gross debate that continued for the last few decades. One of the dissenters to his translation theory is Edwin Gentzler who argues that the relationship between an author and his text is far complex and deceptive, therefore the reduction of a text into its "simplest structures" is distorting and transferring those simple structures or 'kernels' from a deep structure to another, across languages and time is probably impossible. Because the translator is working with words and languages, there will always be 'metaphoric indeterminacy' and 'historical change'. "No text ever explicates its own reception" [while] Nida's translation theory wants to decipher the text and prepare it for consumption" (Gentzler, 2001, p.57).

2.3 Newmark: Semantic and Communicative Translation

The British linguist Peter Newmark substitutes Nida's formal and dynamic equivalence with his semantic and communicative translations. Newmark's description of communicative translation resembles Nida's dynamic equivalence focusing on the effect that the TT should leaves on its reader, while semantic translation is similar to formal translation in that it follows as much as possible the SL's syntactic and semantic structures (Munday, 2001, p.44).

In his "Translation and Language", Peter Fawcett explains the difference between Newmark's communicative and semantic translation: "In the first translation type [communicative], we are able to participate fully in the communication event, while in the second we are called upon simply to observe" (Fawcett, 1997, p.114).

In addition, Newmark's proposed terms of communicative and semantic translation do not only cross with Nida's dynamic and formal translation, but also with terms such as Juliane House's covert and overt translation.

In regard to this, Jeremy Munday (2001) suggests that one of the obstacles hindering translation studies from systematically following up advances in theory can be attributed to the "overabundance of terminology". Actually, Newmark himself (1981, p.52), defines Juliane House's 'overt' and 'cover' translation in the sense of his semantic and communicative translation (Quoted in Munday, 2001, p.46).

2.4 Vinay and Darbelnet: Direct and Oblique translation

Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet (1958/1995) identify two general translation strategies in their model; direct and oblique translation. They argue that translators in some cases may transpose the message of the ST element by element to the TT because of either a "structural parallelism" or a "metalinguistic parallelism" existing between the two languages. But translators may also encounter some gaps in the TL that require the use of "corresponding elements" so that the general effect is the same for the two messages. Further, because of structural or lexical differences between certain languages, some stylistic effects cannot be transposed without distorting the syntax or lexis of the TL. In such cases, more complex methods are to

be used that Vinay and Darbelnet call "oblique translation methods" (Venuti, 2000, p.84).

Vinay and Darbelnet (1958/1995) suggest seven procedures that direct and oblique translation cover. The following three are considered to be direct:

1. Borrowing: that is when a word in the ST is transferred directly to the TT.
2. Calque: that is when an expression or structure in the ST is transferred directly to the TT.
3. Literal translation: it is a word for word translation that Vinay and Darbelnet consider to be the most common between languages belonging to the same family and culture.

To Vinay and Darbelnet, literal translation is the way for good translation. They believe that "literalness should only be scarified because of structural and metalinguistic requirements and only after checking that the meaning is fully preserved" (Munday, 2001, p.57). However, in cases where literal translation is not acceptable, oblique translation which covers the remaining four procedures, must be used (ibid).

The four oblique or indirect procedures of translation as suggested by Vinay and Darbelnet (1958/1995) are:

1. Transposition: this is replacing a word class with another and without changing the meaning of the ST message.
2. Modulation: it is a 'variation of the form of the message'. The translator can resort to such technique when other translations result in unsuitable or unidiomatic TT.
3. Equivalence: this is different than Nida's definition of the same term. To Vinay and Darbelnet, equivalence usually applies to the substation of proverbs and idioms in the TL. It is when languages describe the same situation but in different words.
4. Adaptation: this is the 'extreme limit of translation', when the TL lacks the situation or cultural references described by the SL (Venuti, 2000, pp.88-90).

2.5 Catford: Formal Correspondent and Textual Equivalent

In his "A Linguistic Theory of Translation", the English translation theorist J. C. Catford proposes the terms formal correspondent and textual equivalent. The first, as Catford himself (Venuti, 2000, p.27) defines it is "any TL category (unit, class, element of structure, etc.) which can be said to occupy, as nearly as possible, the 'same' place in the 'economy' of the TL as the given SL category occupies in the SL". On the other hand, textual equivalent is "any TL text or portion of text which is observed […] to be the equivalent of a given SL text or portion of text" (Quoted in Hatim and Munday, 2004, p.27).

In other words, while formal equivalence is a "more general system-based concept" that concerns a pair of languages, textual equivalent is precise and situation-tied therefore it should be looked at in the light of a particular ST-TT pair (Munday, 2001, p.60).

Thus, Catford distinguishes between features in situations that are "linguistically relevant", and features which are 'functionally relevant' to the communicative function of the text in that particular situation. As a result, for translation or textual equivalence to happen, 'both SL and TL text must be relatable to the functionally relevant features of the situation'. A decision, as to what is functionally relevant in this sense, according to Catford, must remain to a relative extent a "matter of opinion" (Gentzler, 2001, p.98).

In his paper "Translation Shifts", Catford (1965) also suggests another term; i.e. translation shifts. He defines it as the "departures from formal correspondence in the process of going from the SL (source language) to the TL (target language)". Further, he explains two types of shifts; level shifts, and category shifts (Venuti, 2000, p.141).

By level shifts, Catford (1965) illustrates that it should be used when a SL item at a linguistic level has a TL equivalent at a different level. However, he limits it

to shifts between grammar and lexis and vice-versa which he believes are quite common and the only possible level shifts.

The other type of shifts is category shifts. This is divided into four main subcategories: structure shifts, class shifts, unit shifts, and intra-system shifts.

Fawcett believes that Catford's translation terms and techniques are much more restricted, in comparison with other translation terms, because they are 'based rigorously on a purely linguistic system (Fawcett, 1997, p.54).

Catford's theory has been criticized for being unrealistic. For example, in her "Translation Studies: An Integrated Approach", Mary Snell-Hornby (1995) argues that:

> "Catford bases his approach on isolated and even absurdly simplistic sentences of the type propagated in theories of transformational grammar as well as on isolated words; from such examples he derives "translation rules" which fall far short of the complex problems presented by real-life translation" (Snell-Hornby, 1995, p.20).

2.6 Reiss: Text Type Model

Katharina Reiss's theory of translation in the 1970s is based on the concept of equivalence but she believes that the text, not the word or sentence, is the stance at "which communication is achieved and at which equivalence must be sought" (Munday, 2001, p.73).

Reiss work draws on the achievements of pragmatic linguistics, and she builds her types of texts upon the function of the language used in these texts. Thus, she classifies the language used into three main functions: representational [in informative texts], expressive [in expressive texts], and appellative [in operative texts]. Though she admits that a single text seldom holds to just one function, she argues that even in

hybrid forms of texts, one of those functions is predominant (Gentzler, 2001, pp.69-70).

So, if the text type is informative and thus its function is to 'inform', its content must be preserved at all costs and the translation method will be plain-prose. If the text type is expressive and the language function is to express an attitude, then the translation method should aim at producing the same aesthetic effect by using analogous means or what Reiss calls an author-adapted (identifying)' translation method to produce the same or similar effect. Finally, if the text type is operative and its function is to persuade, then the translation method will be what Reiss calls 'parodistic/adaptive' (Fawcett, 1997, pp.105-106).

However, Reiss's text typology evokes criticism and questions like why should there be only three types of text functions? Nord, a functionalist himself, feels the need to add a fourth function; phatic. Further, there are questions to how Reiss's methods should be applied in specific texts. Actually, can text types be really differentiated? (Munday, 2001, p.76)

2.7 Vermeer: Skopos Theory

The skopos theory is "an approach to translation proposed in the late 1970s and early 1980s by Reiss and Vermeer. Skopos theory stresses the interactional, PRAGMATIC aspects of translation, arguing that the shape of TT should above all be determined by the function or 'skopos' that it is intended to fulfill in the target context" (Shuttleworth, 1997, p.156).

Theorists of this school give the skopos a major status. They argue that translation is a form of action, and an action is always governed with by its purpose or function. Thus, it is the skopos of the translation that matters the most, not that of the original. (Chesterman, 1997, p.33)

Furthermore, Hans J. Vermeer (1989) in his "Skopos and Commission in Translational Action", argues that a ST is usually composed for a particular situation in the original culture, therefore we should not expect that merely 'trans-coding' a ST

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or 'transposing' it to a target language will result in a 'serviceable *translatum*' or TT. The latter is oriented towards a different culture, and it is this which eventually defines its adequacy. The source and target text may diverge considerably in regards to the form and distribution of the content and also in regards to the goals set for each one of them (Venuti, 2000, p.222-223).

Munday summarizes the basic underlying rules of the skopos theory derived from Reiss and Vermeer 1984:119. These are:

1. A TT is determined by its skopos.
2. A TT is an offer of information in a target culture and TL concerning an offer of information in a source culture and SL.
3. A TT does not initiate an offer of information in a clearly reversible way.
4. A TT must be internally coherent.
5. A TT must be coherent with the ST.
6. The five rules above are hierarchical, with the skopos rule predominating (Munday, 2001, p.79).

To conclude, in the process of assessing skopos theory, Basil Hatim (2001) considers it "a timely reminder of how useful text-classifications are in sharpening the translator's awareness of discourse and other textual and extratextual factors. More specifically, text typologies continue to be seen as valuable in helping the translator to determine those equivalence relations that are more important in a given context …" (Hatim, 2001, p.79)

2.8 Hatim and Mason: Discourse and Pragmatic Analysis

In the 1990s discourse became prominent in translation studies. Text analysis normally focuses on describing the way in which a text is organized, however, discourse analysis concentrates on the way language communicates meaning and social and power relations (Munday, 2001, p.89).

Munday further points out that "Hatim and Mason go beyond register analysis to consider the pragmatic and semiotic dimensions of translation and the

sociolinguistic and semiotic implications of discourses and discourse communities" (Munday, p.90).

Basil Hatim and Ian Mason define discourse as: "modes of speaking and writing which involve social groups in adopting a particular attitude towards areas of sociocultural activity (e.g. racist discourse, bureaucratese, etc.)" (Hatim & Mason, 1997, p.216).

In their translation model, Hatim and Mason view register as a social semiotic where "intentionality is inevitably involved in the text producer's desire to be part of particular social institutions and processes, to be power- or solidarity-oriented or to adopt a particular distance with regard to the addressee and the object of description" (Hatim & Mason, 1997, p.22).

2.9 Venuti: The Cultural Turn

Producing a text that reads 'naturally' and has a transparent meaning in order to make it fit with the expectations of the TT readers is what the American translation theorist Lawrence Venuti calls domestication. Venuti believes that this kind of translation is preferred by the Anglo-American publishers as well as readers. It involves conceiving the foreign characteristics of the source language and culture. This is opposed to the strategy of foreignization that is encouraged by Venuti. A foreignizing strategy seeks 'to bring out the foreign in the TT itself', sometimes through calquing the ST syntax and lexis or through 'lexical borrowings' that preserve SL items (Hatim & Munday, 2004, pp.229-230).

Venuti argues that translation tends to be an invisible practice in the United States. By invisible, he means that the translators tend to be self-effacing in their work. They deny their own voice in favor of the voice and power of the author and/or the prevailing styles in the target culture. The term invisible also extends to translation criticism where scholars tend to ignore the decisions and traces of the translators, commenting instead as if they communicate directly with the original author (Gentzler, 2001, pp.36-37).

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2.10 Theatre Translation

Translating for the theatre requires certain specifications on the part of the 'text' and translator himself. According to Patrice Pavis (1991, p.131) "the situation of enunciation specific to theatre has been hardly taken into consideration: that is, the situation of enunciation of a text presented by the actor in a specific time and place to an audience receiving both text and mise en scene". He adds that in the process of translating for the stage, the literary translator must consult with the director and actor and their contribution must be incorporated into the much broader sense of 'translation'; the mise en scene of a dramatic text.

Translating for the theatre has its own challenges. The language of the play is written to be spoken and therefore it must be pronounceable leaving an immediate effect on the audience (Hung, 2002).

Francesca Bartrina and Eva Espasa discuss three important requirements of stage translation which are common to drama and to screen texts too. They are concision, fictitious orality and negotiation of the translated text with other professional agents such as the director and actors. Direct and concise language is an important requirement of stage translation because the text is received immediately and there is no time to reread it. Furthermore, theatre texts are texts that are written to be spoken as if they had not been written. However this second requirement is also subject to other factors like the complexity of the original texts: it sometimes clashes with professional or institutional restrictions controlling register and dialect acceptability. Moreover, in stage translation, "the translated text is one link in a chain of agents and component such as the actors who will have to speak the text, the adaptors who will have to study the technical restrictions of space and time, the requirements of lip synchronisation. The director orchestrates all of these components and gives the suitable prominence to each one (Tennent, 2005).

Translating Dialect in Literary Texts

In exploring the relation between language and identity, this chapter starts with the definition of the word 'dialect' in comparison to terms like 'standard language'. This chapter argues that the use of dialect can be functional and highly marked in literary works. It can be used as a social, economical and educational marker of the characters. Thus, this chapter argues that in languages tending to be almost classless like Classical Arabic, the translator either ignores the dialectical use of language or renders it into a particular variety, a technique that can be highly stigmatizing or incompatible. The qualities of a supposedly good equivalent to a particular dialect are further explored in this chapter.

3.1 What is a Dialect?

One of the definitions that the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language provides for to the word 'dialect' is "a regional or social variety of a language distinguished by pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary, especially a variety of speech differing from the standard literary language or speech pattern of the culture in which it exists" (American H. D.). Thus a 'dialect' is related to the 'culture' of its speakers. It further gives the Cockney as an example of a dialect of English. In contrast, a vernacular is defined as, "the everyday language spoken by a people as distinguished from the literary language" (ibid). Another definition provided for 'vernacular' in the same dictionary is "a variety of such everyday language specific to a social group or region, such as *the vernaculars of New York City"* (ibid). Thus, to the authors of this dictionary, 'dialect' and 'vernacular' are synonyms.

On the other hand, a 'dialect' in the Merriam Webster Dictionary is defined as "a regional variety of language distinguished by features of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation from other regional varieties and constituting together with them a single language" (Merriam Webster). In the same dictionary, another definition for dialect is "a variety of a language used by the members of a group" (ibid). It also can be "a variety of language whose identity is fixed by a factor other than geography (as social class) [such as] spoke a rough peasant dialect" (ibid).

In both dictionaries above, it is obvious that the concept of dialect in English is grossly related to the culture and social group that a speaker belongs to. In contrast, the Arabic dictionaries seem to be short of definitions for the word 'lahjah', i.e. dialect. For example, in Al-Qamous Al-Muheet, a 'dialect' is the language a person is used to speak or a way of speaking a language such as the Bedouin dialect or the Moroccan (Al-Muheet). Al-Qamous Al-Ghani also defines a dialect as the language a person is used to speak (Al-Ghani).

Obviously, the word 'dialect' can stand for (a) a variety of language that is specific to a particular region (b) or a variety of language that is specific to a particular group of people (c) or both, a variety of language that is specific to a particular region as well as a group of people. In other words, 'dialect' can expand horizontally according to the geographical distribution of a language, or vertically according to the social status of the different groups living in the same area.

On the other hand, Mona Baker (Baker, 1992, p.15), in her discussion of evoked meaning arising from the variation in dialect and register, defines 'dialect' as "a variety of language which has currency within a specific community or group of speakers." She adds that a dialect may be classified based on the below criteria:

1. Geographical: such as American English as opposed to British English.
2. Temporal: like words and structures used by people at different stages of their life, or words and structures belonging to different times of the same language in history.
3. Social: words and structures used by the different social classes in the same area. (Baker, 1992, p.15)

However, Robert Fawcett (1997, p.117) makes a distinction between 'dialect', and what he calls, 'sociolect'. Fawcett believes that there is an overlapping between the two terms. He explains that a dialect is normally defined as a way of speaking related to a group of people living in the same region. Whereas, a 'sociolect' characterizes a group by its members' social class, status, profession, and so on.

In this case, an example of a 'dialect' in the Arab countries would be the Egyptian or the Lebanese dialect, and an example of a 'sociolect' would be the dialect of the uneducated, impoverished class in any modern city in the same countries.

3.2 Dialect & Literary Register:

In literary works, in particular, translating dialect can be a crucial element in the process of depicting and individualizing characters. Dialect phonetic, grammatical and syntactic features, as part of the text register, should be handled with much care.

A register, as defined by Basil Hatim (1997, p.231), is "the set of features which distinguishes one stretch of language from another in terms of variation in context concerning the language user (geographic dialect, idiolect, etc.) and/or with language use (field or subject matter, tenor or level of formality and mode or speaking vs. writing)." So, while the filed, tenor, and mode are components of the context of the language use, dialect, or in some sense idiolect, is a component of the context of the language user.

M. A. K. Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan (1985/89, p.24-5) argues that while the context of situation (field, mode, and tenor) determines the set of meanings and situational features expected to be found in a particular text, the context of culture may further provide its socio-cultural background that would reconstruct a great deal of the language of such a register.

They further explain (1985/89) that a particular shift in the context of situation, for example a shift in the filed of discourse or in the mode or tenor, is expected to be reflected somehow in the texture of the discourse. In comparison, a shift in the context of culture in regard to the user of the language, is also expected to be reflected in the discourse and therefore is an essential feature of the original text that must be preserved in any translation.

Actually, a shift in the language used in a literary work, in this case a shift from the standard language to the vernacular or vice versa, can be also related to the context of situation, in particular to the tenor. While the standard language is seen as

the formal pattern of language, speaking the dialect, in most cases, it is considered to be informal.

In the Arab countries for example, where the standard language, i.e. classical Arabic, is only taught in schools and used through most public media conduits, but not considered to be the language of daily life or street conversations, deciding to compile a literary work partially or as a whole, in the dialect can be spiny and thorny in itself.

In her paper, "Foreignizing Strategies in Drama Translation: the Case of the Finnish Oleanna", Ritva Leppihalme (2000) argues that the use of the formal register, in a Finnish play, almost inevitably results in a 'distancing effect'. She attributes this 'effect' to the fact that the formal literary language in Finland tends to be spoken only in front of audiences, but not in face-to-face encounters. She adds: "The translator's choice of the formal register in the dialogue of John and Carol [characters in the play] may well be symptomatic of the distance between the two speakers; but it also, at the same time, distances the speakers from the audience" (Chesterman, 2000, p.156-7).

However, if what Leppihalme calls a 'distancing effect' is created deliberately by the author of an original text, not translated as her example above, such an effect would be functional and therefore must be somehow preserved in the TT.

Moreover, Munday (2001, p.140) gives an example of a Punjabi novel translated into English with a dialogue of a mixture of registers. The translator has simply substituted the regional and social dialect of a small village community with the sociolect of urban working-class North America. The archaic insults with the references of rural life, as well as modern American expletives, and the lexis, all clearly show a cultural context that is very much different to the one within which the novel was conceived. By doing so, the translator has uprooted the characters from rural Punjab to the speech accents of 'street-smart urban North America'. This takes us to the next point of our discussion, language as identity.

3.3 Language as Identity:

In his demonstration of the three parameters defining language user: time, region, and social class, Fawcett (1997, p.76) asserts that dialect translation is by no means an easy task as one might think, "especially since it often relates to questions of status and repression." The variety of language that a certain group speak, is not only its members' means of communication and expressing needs, desires, and thoughts, but it also constitutes their linguistic individuality or the conduit through which they present their own unique identity. Thus, when a character in a literary work speaks a variety of language that is different than the language spoken by the rest of the characters in the same work, a difference in his or her identity must be then conceived.

In a study by Llamas (Quoted in Britain, 2003, p.248) about dialect leveling in North East of England focusing on regional identity in a town some fifty miles south of Newcastle, she finds out that young adults are adopting th-fronting as a response to 'image-consciousness', a dialectal pattern that distinguishes the speakers of this town from the speakers of Newcastle. Actually, Llamas finds that those speakers are highly negative in their attitude to the speech of Newcastle. According to her, "the large majority of the speakers from the combined young group . . . claimed that they would object to being mistaken for a Geordie, with many professing a strong dislike of the Geordie accent" (ibid).

Furthermore, according to Gunilla Anderman (2005, p.283) the first major novel to be written in American English, The Adventures of Augie March, with its juxtaposition of vulgar slang and high style was composed by Saul Bellow while he was sent on a scholarship in Paris in 1948. Bellow hated Paris as much as he loved his homeland America. Gunilla argues that for Bellow as an expatriate living in Europe it was the common American vernacular that he felt desperate to recreate in writing.

3.4 Dialect as a Marked Form of Language:

According to R. L. Trask, markedness is a very broad concept applying at all levels of analysis. He defines a marked form as any linguistic form which is less usual

or less neutral than the other forms that are considered to be unmarked. A marked form may be distinguished by different characteristics such as the presence of additional linguistic material, additional nuances of meaning, by more rarity in a language or in a number of languages, or in many other ways (Trask, 1998, p.80).

Trask further illustrates that the English *lioness* is an example of a marked word on the phonetic level when compared to *lion*, since the first contains additional morphological material and being of less general applicability. *Brethren* is also marked on the lexical level in comparison to the word *brothers*, since it is restricted to certain special contexts. On the level of grammar, a passive sentence like *Janet was arrested by the police* is marked with respect to its active counterpart *The police arrested Janet*, since the passive is rarer, contains more material, and has a more complex structure in English (ibid).

Thus, a different variety of language spoken by a particular character in a literary work compared to the standard language given to the rest of the characters is considered a marked form of language. If incorporated in a text of neutral language, the variety, vernacular or dialect does not only imply the uniqueness of the character, but also it becomes a marker of its status in the society where the work is supposed to take place in.

On the other hand, Nigel Armstrong (2005, p.96) believes that markedness finds expression in many ways, and "can also reflect quite deep-seated psychological tendencies." Such as our tendency to assume the good as the natural or normal state which is built into language, so when we say *I was impressed* we mean by default the favorable state of impression.

In comparison, the readers of a piece of literature may assume the characters in this work to speak the 'natural' literary language or the standard language in which the whole work is composed. Therefore, for a character to speak the colloquial, it reflects the 'strangeness' of his or her position in the novel or the literary work, with the kind of assumptions the readers have about such a variety of language and the people who speak it. On his part, the writer himself must have his own 'assumptions' that somehow cross with the assumptions of the readers that he has in mind.

In her paper "Dickens as Sociolinguist: Dialect in David Copperfield", Patricia Poussa thinks that the narrative parts in Shakespeare's plays must have been delivered in the High variety of English, with the metropolitan pronunciation. While "English regional dialect was always socially marked in Shakespeare's plays wherever or whenever they were set. This diglossic dramatic convention persisted in the distribution of the literary standard language and literary dialect in eighteenth-century Prose and in the work of Dickens" (Irma, 2000, p.28).

3.5 Approaching Dialect:

There are cases in which an entire work of literature is composed in one dialect with all the characters speaking the same variety of language. Translating a text with such a monolingual context is expected to be much easier and straightforward than translating a text with a multilingual context.

In his paper "Translating Dialect Literature", Luigi Bonaffini, an Italian literary translator, (p.4) asserts that the entirety of the linguistic context in which dialect appears is crucial and decisive for the various compensatory strategies available to the translator. If we can speak of naturalness in monolingual contexts, in which only dialect is spoken, and the persisting combat between standard language and dialect is kept controlled, this becomes practically impossible the instant the standard language is introduce. In the presence of the standard language, the vernacular unavoidably becomes 'eccentric and deviant.'

Robert Fawcett (1997) argues that there are parts of literary and non-literary texts which make use of different stages of language history, such as the discovery of an archaic manuscript. In such cases, a 'holistic or illusionistic' approach of translation is to be applied.

Furthermore, Zimmer (1981), gives an example of a German novel by Thomas Mann which contains a passage in 'archaic' language. The French translator has not tried to use an 'authentic' archaic French, rather he preferred to 'take whatever opportunities arise to use older forms of spelling and the occasional archaic word,

giving a form of French that has never actually existed but which gives the illusion of being plausibly dated for modern readers" (Quoted in Fawcett, 1997, p.76).

Barbara Godard points out that the translators strategies have differed from a phonetic transcription to creating the shock and novelty of Acadian as literary language, to hers and others' creation of a synthetic language to stand for the writer's idiolect (Quoted in Whitfield, 2006, p.207).

Hatim and Mason, defines the term 'idiolect' as the "individual's distinctive and motivated way of using language at a given level of formality or tenor." However, they insist that only when this idiolect is proven to be used for a specific purpose, it becomes truly functional and therefore an indispensable part of the chain of meanings intended to be conveyed to the receiver of the text (Hatim & Mason, 1997, p.98).

Annie Brisset (1989) believes that in translation into French, original works written in sociolects tend to run into a barricade not created by a deficiency in the French linguistic system, but rather by "the linguistic void within its literary normative system". The same can be applied to the Arabic normative system (Quoted in Anderman & Rogers, 2005, p.283).

Fawcett mentions that the ideology of the target culture sometimes do not permit the use of variety of language other than the standard. As a result, suppression becomes the only translation strategy available for the translator. Alternatively, in the case that the translator has the choice, s/he should try to represent the different social class markers in the original text, and therefore s/he must be able to recognize these markers as well as reproducing them as appropriate in the TT (Fawcett, 1997, pp.76-77).

For example, in Pygmalion, the play by Bernard Shaw, the heroine's dialect is deliberately set to be different from the rest of the play's characters. She speaks the Cockney dialect that was spoken in the East End of London. Thus, the dialect the heroine speaks in the play is employed as a marker of her social, and educational status, or actually as a prominent trace of her identity.

In one of this play's German translations, Zimmer (1981) finds the attempt to translate the cockney dialect of the flower girl quite successful. The translator has not tried to achieve the effect by equivalence at the same linguistic level. However, while the dialect in the English original text is represented mainly by pronunciation and poor grammar, the translator of the German text uses indications of nonstandard pronunciation and grammar, as well as 'vulgar' lexis and syntax (Quoted in Fawcett, 1997, p.121).

By Eliza, the user's status could adequately be reflected not primarily through phonological features but through a deliberate manipulation of the grammar or the lexis to relay the necessary ideological thrust (Hatim & Mason, 1997, p.107).

To sum up, the occurrence of tagging in Pygmalion is a textual phenomenon which has to be handled in translation by ensuring that the characteristics of use and user, intentionality and semiotic interaction are reflected. It is the latter characteristic of texts which is perhaps the most crucial (ibid, p.109).

Dialect vs. Standard Language in the Arab World

This chapter sheds the light on the struggle between the standard language in the Arab world, i.e. classical Arabic, and the dialect in literary contexts. It starts with a brief historical background of the dialect of Quraysh which is widely thought to be the origin of Classical Arabic. This chapter also deals with the different varieties of Arabic that were available in the advent of Islam and which, in certain cases, the translator can use as an identity marker.

4.1 Classical Arabic, a Sacred Stature:

It is quite obvious that the Standard language in the Arab world, i.e. classical Arabic, possesses a highly prestigious status not only due to its political and social role as a crucial unitary means, but also due to its sacred importance being the language of the Qur'an, the holly book of the vast majority of the people belonging to this area. Classical Arabic is not only the canonical language of Islam in the Arab countries but also wherever a Muslim community exists. In countries such as India, Pakistan, and even the United States, certain Arabic words and expressions can often be heard, even if not fully understood, among young and old Muslims who may not speak Arabic at all, only as a way of showing their identity. Thus, many calls have been always heard across the Arab world, in particular, demanding to protect and preserve the Arabic language, i.e. classical Arabic, from the 'aggressive assault' of *Al-Amiah,* or in other words the assault of dialect.

Furthermore, language relates to the colonial question, too. According to Muohsin J. Mausawai (2003) the language issue is loaded because it cuts through the questions of national identity and the concerns of social groups. Arabic in its classical, written, form is looked at as a weapon against the colonialist, though it is also expected to fulfill the communicational needs of the deprived. Actually, classical Arabic is advanced by the revivalist of the nineteenth and early twentieth century as the most worthy weapon against colonialism. For instance, it was called upon in the Algerian struggle against the French colonizer. And thus, "the year of independence, 1962, intensifies preoccupations with issues of identity, nation and narration, and the

language issue as identity figures with prominence in the post-independence agenda" (Mausawai, 2003, p.10).

4.2 A Brief History:

In Sahih al-Bukhari, (Vol.6, Book 61, No.514), Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) says:

"This Qur'an has been revealed to be recited in seven different ways, so recite of it whichever (way) is easier for you . . ."(Ummah).

In the original Arabic text, it is 'seven ahruf', that is 'seven letters'. There are clear indications in the history records of Islam that those seven 'ahruf' are actually seven different readings or dialectal variants that came for the convenience of the different Arab tribes, and that what is known today as classical Arabic is originally the dialect spoken by Quraysh, the tribe that possessed a higher religious and thus economical and social status in the whole area.

According to Martin Zammit, prior to the advent of Islam and during its early years, various western and eastern dialects characterized the linguistic situation in the Arabian Peninsula. Those dialects or varieties of Arabic were spoken by the Bedouin tribes in the area, and though were different, but in general they were mutually intelligible. Zammit argues that the central area of the Arabian Peninsula: Nagd, witnessed constant interaction between the different dialects and it was in this area that "a literary supra-tribal *'arabiyya* gradually came into being . . . the poetic and Qur'anic varieties of *'arabiyya* represent the supra-tribal literary medium of the ancient Arabs, and were clearly distinguished from the Arabian vernaculars." (2002, p.42-43)

Furthermore, Corriente (1976) posits a kind of Arabic that was called *Nabati*, and which he considers as 'the immediate forerunner of the Middle Arabic of Islamic cities'. Corriente believes that the *Nabati* dialect was the *lingua franca* of economically and politically more mature cities in the area along with their hinterlands (Quoted in Zammit, 2002, p.43).

What can be inferred here is that Arabic dialects in the past were also considered markers to which social class a person's belonged. Furthermore, in his discussion of the differences between the dialect of the sedentary and the dialect of the Bedouins, Ibrahim Anis asserts that among the sedentary themselves, there were people whom social status was measured by the dialect they speak. He adds that for a sedentary to realize his aspirations he must work on improving his language and articulation (Anis, 1984, p.89).

It seems that there was a clear distinction between the sedentary and the Bedouin dialects. For example, and according to F. J. Cadora (1992, p.17) the articulation of the *hamza* must have constituted part of the linguistic competence of the Bedouin; however, exaggerated or hypercorrective use of it by them was often reported.

On the other hand, Versteegh (1997) argues that whenever differences existed between western and eastern varieties, the Qur'an reflects eastern (Tamimi) linguistic usage. He further believes that classical Arabic seems to be closer to Eastern Arabic (Quoted in Zammit, p.42).

According to Jaber Gumayha (Gumayha), people in the Arabian Peninsula spoke different dialects depending on the tribes they belonged to, and the places they lived in. Consequently, linguistic differences were found between those dialects, such as:

1. Differences in the letters of particular words, like the substitution of the definite article 'al' with 'am'.
2. Differences in pronunciation like the substitution of 'kaf' with 'sh', a dialect that can be still found in the Arabian Gulf countries.
3. The semantic references of certain words creating what is known now as the 'almushtarak allafdhi' or the 'joint pronunciation'.

Furthermore, Anis believes that for a dialect like the dialect of Quraysh, to be preferred in comparison to other varieties of the same language, two conditions must exist:

1. It should be looked at as a linguistically higher variety of the language.
2. The speaker of such a dialect cannot be traced to which region s/he belongs (Quoted in Gumayha).

So, as the nature of all languages, what is known today as Standard or classical Arabic was one day a variety of a range of varieties of the same language. Those varieties may have differed in grammar and pronunciation, or even in their lexis, but they all possessed much the same linguistic system and therefore were intelligibly communicated. Thus, the translator of an Arabic target text which is originally composed of different functional dialects can always turn to one of those dialects depending on the social indications s/he wants to convey.

4.3 The Language of Literature:

The literary context of the Arabic literature is still confined to writing in classical Arabic. Most of the literary works published everyday in the Arab world such as novels, fiction and even drama, are composed in classical Arabic. However, dialectical literature is also witnessing a noticeable rise in the mid of the output of modern Arabic literature.

Mausawai argues that "the context of Arabic language and its abiding impact on the mind and consciousness of writers are no less markedly present, not as mediums of expression, but more significantly as ways of acting and thinking" (2003, p.9). Moreover, publishers insist in certain cases on explications and classical replacements of the dialect or local and regional varieties to reach wider readership through the Arab world, not acquired through the local dialect, and more important to preserve affiliation with the classical tradition. Paradoxically enough, critiques of the authority of classical Arabic in the patriarchal discourse are written in classical Arabic too (ibid).

However, the debate between the defenders of classical Arabic as the only medium of expression in literature and the advocators of the dialects has been always there since the first heralds of modern Arabic literature.

According to Roger Allen (2000, p.199) by the turn of the nineteenth century an obvious split in the medium of drama performance was clearly seen between the mainly comic fare that is expressed in the daily spoken language of the audience and the more serious literary desires of those who seek a higher form of art performed in the standard language of the cultural heritage of Arabic. The latter is a theatrical style that is accompanied by musical interludes, however, the comic has always proved the more popular, a fact that continues to provoke the complaints of the Egyptian theatre establishment.

Farah Anton (*d*.1922) , who is a pioneer figure in the Egyptian drama, argues that if an original play is composed in the colloquial language of its people, with a theme addressing the same topic, it would be irrational to render it in standard Arabic (Quoted in Ismail, 1996, p.42).

According to Abdel-Malek, for contemporary writers whose medium of expression is Arabic, it is a language that is soaked in various debates their generation has inherited about its function. These debates evolving around the concept of the proper use of language, colloquial or modern standard Arabic, are in fact about "which linguistic idiom best represents authentic Arab experiences, or the spirit of the nation (2000, p.187).

Actually no matter how they debate the case, argues Mausawai (2003, p.10), the common denominator is their concurrence on a lucidly written Arabic as argues by the Egyptian intellectual Taha Husayn in a response to his conservative compatriot intellectual Mustafa Sadiq al-Fafii on the 4th of June 1923: "the question of the old and the new is not restricted to language in its accentuations and meanings, for it relates to language and other material and moral manifestations and conditions in life".

4.4 Dialect in Use:

One of the distinguished pioneers of Arabic drama is Tawfeeq al-Hakim, whose earliest plays were all composed in the standard language. Nevertheless, he has

some others in which he conducts experiments with different levels of the dramatic language. *Al-Safqah,* or the deal 1965, may be a good example of one of the plays in which he uses what he terms as a ' third language' in the dialogue. It is a language in which the dialogue could be read as a text in the standard written language of literature, but could also be performed on theater in a way which though not exactly the resemblance of the colloquial dialect, but is definitely comprehensible to a larger audience than the literate elite (Allen, 2000, p.203).

Actually Alfred Faraj, another distinguished figure in the Arabic drama, also suggests a similar language, that is simple and in the middle between classical and dialectical Arabic. He is quoted in Al-Majallah, July 1965, p.127: "a new, fully dramatic language will only emerge through serious efforts in the spheres not only of written [classical Arabic] and colloquial languages but also in the middle languages between the two poles (Quoted in Allen, 2000, p.206)".

Moreover and according to Sayed Ali Ismail (1996, p.42), Farah Anton was the first dramatist to practically address the issue of dialect in the Egyptian drama. In his play 'Old and New Egypt' 1913, Anton proposed a solution to the riddle of dialect in which each character speaks the language that most suits its educational and social status. Thus, he composed some of the dialogue in classical Arabic, some in the dialect, others in a language he calls 'medial'.

However, there are writers who believe that the incorporating of dialect in literary works can be functional if used to give the suppressed a voice, depicting their suffering and aspirations being the less heard fraction of the society, a view that many pro-classical Arabic writers disagree with, arguing that classical Arabic is rich enough to express every state of the being.

Mausawai is one of those writers who believe in the functional incorporating of dialect. According to him, the growing political awareness, especially after the Second World War, directed attention in the Arab homeland beyond the debate between tradition and modernity, and Islam and Europe, which was paramount in the Nahdha era or Renaissance. The impact of the war on the lower classes in the nation, and the complications of the political scene, especially in regard to the Palestinian

issue, made it inevitable for the narratives to develop a polyphonic style, a text that is multi-voiced catering and accommodating to the languages of the different social groups. Examples of polyphonic novels are the Iraqui Ghaib Tumah Farman's (1927-1995) and Al-Nakhlah wa-Aljiran (The Date Palm and the Neighbors, 1965). They are polyphonic not only in the hybrid use of the classical and the Baghdadi dialect, "but also in the attempt to recover scenes and anecdotes typical of periods of transition, change and challenge". He adds, "The significance of Farman's novel, for instance, lies in tits focus on the dialogic principle to let people, and women in particular, voce their views and commitments against the encroaching foreign powers and their comprador (ibid) ".

I would like to conclude this chapter on dialect literature in the Arab world by the following quotation from Hatim and Mason (1997):

In the context of Arabic, to borrow the scale of formality from English and use it uncritically would inevitably entail the erroneous assumption that categories such as classical/vernacular always correlate with standard/non-standard English, on the one hand, and with formal/informal speech, on the other. What is suspect in this kind of approach to language variation is not only the unconstrained positing of correlations, but also, and perhaps more significantly, the perpetuation of the notion that varieties that such as RP and cockney or classical and vernacular Arabic are mere catalogues of static features, to be called up mechanistically with little or no regard for what is actually going on in communication" (1997, p.99).

Sample Analysis

In this chapter, a play entitled 'Pygmalion' by Bernard Shaw will be examined in order to show whether or not the translators of the two Arabic versions are conscious of the importance of dialect as a means of depicting and individualizing characters. The focus will be on the heroine's dialect phonetic, grammatical and syntactic effect and its realization in the target texts.

5.1 Methodology:

In this play, Bernard Shaw tells the story of a poor, uneducated, cockney speaking, socially low class girl who is being transferred into a lady. Higgins, the language specialist, places a bet with his fellow comrade to create a Duchess-like speaker out of this girl, a bet that he eventually wins. Thus, this play presents the reader with two different varieties of English; the Standard English and the Cockney. Furthermore, adopting such a technique in the novel does not only serve a linguistic purpose but it also carries a social, contextual importance. The characters in the play are divided according to the language they speak into two groups; the educated highbrows' upper class and the uneducated poor lower class. Further, whereas the first class speaks very refined English, the members of the impoverished lower class speak a stronger dialect that is relatively different in pronunciation, grammar, and sometimes even vocabulary.

Obviously, the language the characters speak in this play is used as a marker of their social status or identity. Thus, any attempt to translate it into a second language must pay much attention to the linguistic contrast that the plot is heavily built upon and the importance of preserving its language variations.

Five examples are taken from the stage in which the flower girl's language is still raw and thus marked. Five other examples are taken from the stage in which her language is turned into very good English, i.e. Standard English. In the process, the

two Arabic translated versions by Hussam S. Al Tamimi and Gerges Al-Rashidi are compared and assessed.

Finally, I would like to commence this analysis by Patricia Pussa's words that "for nineteenth-century London writers, Cockney was both a regional and a social dialect, and thus was highly suitable for depicting comic low-life characters"(Irma, 2000, p.28).

5.2 Pre-Elevated Dialect Phase:

The following are examples of how the two Arabic versions tackle the notion of dialect during this phase in the play:

1. In Act 1, when the flower girl first meets the Eynsford Hills, she is quoted saying:

The Flower Girl: [picking up her scattered flowers and replacing them in the basket] Theres menners f' yer! Te-oo banches ovoylets trod into the mad … p.19-21

In the first Arabic version of the play, the above speech is translated as follows:

بائعة الزهور: [تلتقط زهورها المتناثرة و تعيدها إلى السلة] يا لهذا السلوك! تتمرغ باقتان من البنفسج في الوحل. ... ص.18

In this translated version of Pygmalion by Hussam S. Al Tamimi, the translator overlooks the significance of the functional dialect of the flower girl and renders it in an absolute Standard Arabic. Consequently, he equates the language of the flower girl, as a representative of the lower class, to the language of Professor Higgins who has a higher social status. Thus, the target text loses the crucial contrast created between the different characters in the original text by the way they speak.

Moreover, it is obvious that the translator has resorted to a more comfortable technique, translating the speeches of all the characters into the same linguistic and rhetorical level. Actually, he translates what the flower girl says into very good Arabic. For instance, in the above extract, he could have used the word تمتزج or تختلط

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instead of تتمرغ which delivers a more sophisticated intellectual style. Also, the phrase يا لهذا السلوك could have been changed into a less eloquent style like ما هذا السلوك.

However, the translator of the second Arabic version, Gerges Al-Rashidi, has chosen to resort to the Egyptian dialect as the language of the flower girl during her first stage and before her dialect is elevated:

بائعة الزهور: (تجمع زهورها المبعثرة وتضعها في السلة) مافيش حيلتك ذوق! حزمتين بنفسج يروحو كده في الطين! (تجلس على حافة قاعدة العامود الذي عن يمين السيدة تفرز زهورها...). ص.40

The Egyptian dialect that the flower girl speaks, when compared to the Standard Arabic that the rest of the characters use, sounds peculiar and out of place. Under the normal circumstances, no linguistic environment can combine both varieties of the language in terms of time and place. It is either the Standard Arabic language that was spoken by the majority of people living in this area hundred years ago along with its coeval variations at that time, or the Egyptian dialect spoken nowadays also in combination with its coeval social and regional variations.

In other words, from my point of view, if the flower girl's speech should be translated into a particular Arabic dialect, Egyptian, Lebanese or Moroccan, the language of the higher social status characters must also be rendered into the equivalent language variety that is used by the higher social status class in Egypt, Lebanon, or Morocco.

2. The following is a second example:

The FLOWER GIRL: Ow, eez, ye-ooa san, is e? Wal, fewd dan y' de-ooty bawmz a mather should, eed now bettern to spawl a pore gel's flahrzn then ran awy athaht pyin. Will ye-oo py me f'them? [Here, with apologies, this desperate attempt to represent her dialect without a phonetic alphabet must be abandoned as unintelligible outside London]. P.21

In the first Arabic version we have it translated as:

بائعة الزهور: هو ابنك، أليس كذلك؟ كان من الأفضل أن يعيد زهور فتاة مسكينة إلى حالتها الطبيعية بدلا من أن يهرب، هل ستعوضينني عن تلك الزهور. [هنا، مع الاعتذار، فإن هذه المحاولة اليائسة لتمثيل لهجتها من دون أبجدية صوتية يجب أن يتم التخلي عنها كحالة غير مفهومة أو غير واضحة خارج لندن] ص.20.

The apology Shaw provides here to the English reader suits the contrast he presents him or her with in the language used by the character. However, translating such an apology in a target text that does not preserve the same contrast or effect seems worthless if not contradictory. The language used in the above extract is absolutely both lexically and syntactically good Standard Arabic. The grammar is fine and the vocabulary too. Thus, to apologize for the difficulty of representing a character's dialect in a text that equates it to the way all the characters speak, is certainly useless.

On the other hand, although the translator of the second Arabic version has indeed searched for an equivalent, i.e. by changing the way the heroin speaks, resorting to the Egyptian dialect that has no established approbated orthography; nevertheless he has preferred to get rid of that apology:

بائعة الزهور: هو ده يبقى ابنك! بقى بذمتك لو كنت ربيتيه كويس كان خسر الزهورات بتاعة بت غلبانة زيي وجرى كده من غير ما يدفع تمنهم. ياللا ادفعي لي تمنهم انت بقه! ص.41

Actually, translating just the speech of the flower girl who is presented as uneducated, poor and socially belonging to a lower class, translating it into a particular dialect while keeping the rest of the play in the Standard Arabic language may imply inappropriate disgraceful connotations, and therefore evokes questions like: why that dialect in particular? why not other?

On the other hand, if the translator chooses not to translate into a dialect used nowadays, which is more probable, he still has to show the difference in speech. I believe this is can be done by resorting to one of the different Standard Arabic dialects that were used by some local tribes in the past, a dialect that is expected to be used by the impoverished, uneducated class in a society where people spoke Standard Arabic. A second option is to use a systematically violated Standard language as the dialect of the lower class. For example, the translator can break a particular grammatical rule

every time it is used by the character. S/He may even prevent that character from a certain sound of the language.

As we can hear different dialects spoken in the different Arab countries nowadays, many dialects of the Arabic language were spoken by the different Arab tribes in the past too. Actually, the holy Quran itself as mentioned in Sunnah was read on seven 'levels', or as interpreted, seven dialects. I believe that these effaced dialects of the ancient Arab tribes can be looked at as possible resource for the languages of the differently speaking characters in literature. For example, the above extract of the flower girl can be translated as follows:

بائعة الزهور: هو ابنك، أليس كذلك؟ كان من أمأفضل أن يعيد زهور فتاة مسكينة إلى حالتها أمطبيعيـة بدلا من أن يهرب، هل ستعوضينني عن تلك أمزهور؟

The above dialect is called 'Al-Tamtamaniah', i.e. to change the definite article ; 'Al-Atareef' into the sound 'M'.

Thus, it is either a novel in which the higher class characters speak an existing superior dialect while the lower class characters speak a coeval lower dialect, or a novel in which the higher class characters speak Standard Arabic whereas the lower class characters speak an ancient Arabic dialect, or a systematically violated Standard Arabic, i.e. to deliberately break the rules of the Arabic language creating linguistic violations.

3. The third example is:

THE FLOWER GIRL: [springing up terrified] I aint done nothing wrong by speaking to the gentleman. I've a right to sell flowers if I keep off the kerb. [Hysterically] I'm a respectable girl: so help me. I never spoke to him except to ask to him to buy a flower of me. P.27

بائعة الزهر [منتفضة بذعر]: لم أقترف خطأ بكلامي مع هذا السيد، لي الحق في بيع الزهور إذا ابتعدت عن الحاجز الحجري، [بهستيريا] أنا فتاة محترمة. لذلك ساعدني، أنا لم أكلمه إلا حتى يشتري مني زهرة. ص.26.

Lexically and syntactically speaking, the above translation is obviously very well composed. For example, instead of the word أقترف which is very eloquent Standard Arabic, the translator could have used the word أرتكب which conveys almost the same meaning, but is less eloquent and more frequent.

For the flower girl to speak in such a language during her pre-elevated dialect phase is a misrepresentation of the original text and the heroin's character. I believe that the translator could have still used Standard Arabic in his translation of the flower girl's speech, as a coeval dialect for the rest of the characters in the play, but with alterations or hypothetical systematic linguistic violations.

For example, a suggested translation of the above sample may be:

بائعة الزهر [منتفضة بذعر]: لم أصنع خطأ في كلامي مع هذا السآيد، حقي أن أبيع الزهور إذا ابتعدت عن الحاجز الحجري، [بهستيريا] أنا بنت موحترمة. لذلك ساعدني، أنا كلآمته ليشتري مني زآهرة. ص.26

The speech of the flower girl can be manipulated on the levels of pronunciation, grammar, and even lexicon. Translators can also make use of Al E'rab markers in Arabic to indicate a different variety of language that is less accurate or less controlled.

In the second Arabic version of the play, the above speech of the flower girl is translated as follows:

بائعة الزهور: (تهب مذعورة) أنا ما غلطش لما اتكلمت مع السيد. أنا حرة أبيع زهوري في أيها حته تعجبني (بانفعال هستيري) أنا بت محترمة لازم تساعدوني كلكم، أنا ما قلتلوش حاجة غير إنه يشتري مني زهرة... ص.45

Again, the translator has resorted to the Egyptian dialect which is in my judgment inappropriate and does not convey the original message of the text.

4. Another example is:

THE FLOWER GIRL: Good enough for e-oo. Now you know, dont you? I'm coming to have lessons, I am. And to pay for em te-oo: make no mistake. P.67

And in the first Arabic version, it is translated into:

بائعة الزهور: كافيا لك. أنت تفهمني الآن، أليس كذلك؟ جئت لكي أتلقى الدروس التعليمية على يديك، بالتأكيد. وأدفع الأجور لكي أتخلص من الأخطاء اللفظية. ص.66

For the flower girl to use an expression like الأخطاء اللفظية in her pre-elevated dialect phase is absolutely unacceptable and does not suit the personality she is given at that stage. An expression like that is only expected to be used by an educated, more sophisticated kind of person.

On the other hand, the translator of the second version has completely got rid of that phrase but by doing so, in my judgment, his translation has not been faithful to the original text. It is saying that 'she is there to take lessons', but lessons for what?

بائعة الزهور: تعجبك إنت. أديك عرفت. أنا يا خويا جيه آخد دروس وكمان حادفع تمنهم، أوع تكون فهمتني غلط. ص.69

For example the translator could have said:

بائعة الزهور: تعجبك إنت. أديك عرفت. أنا يا خويا جيه آخد دروس عشان أحَسِن لغتِي وكمان حادفع تمنهم، أوع تكون فهمتني غلط. ص.69

5. In the following example the flower girl explains her reasons for desiring to change the way she speaks:

THE FLOWER GIRL: I want to be a lady in a flower shop stead of sellin at the corner of Tottenham Court Road. But they wont take me unless I can talk more genteel. He said he could teach me. Well, here I am ready to pay him- not asking any favour- and he treats me zif I was dirt. P.69

In the first Arabic version, it is translated into:

بائعة الزهور: أريد أن أكون سيدة محترمة في محل زهور بدلا من بيع الزهور عند زاوية طريق ساحة توتنهام كورت. إن أصحاب المحلات لا يقبلونني ما لم أستطع التحدث بطريقة صحيحة ورقيقة. لقد أخبرني أن في استطاعته تعليمي. حسنا، أنا جاهزة كي أدفع له مقابل ذلك، لا أطلب منه صدقة ولا أنتظر منه أن يتفضل علي، لكنه يعاملنني كأنني حثالة. ص. 68

While in the original text it is very clear that the flower girl speaks English with phonetic, grammatical, and syntactic violations, such as 'sellin' instead of 'selling' and 'zif' instead of 'as if', in the target text all of these linguistic mistakes are omitted. Actually, she speaks very good Arabic.

As for the second Arabic version, the above example is translated as follows:

بائعة الزهور: عايزه أبقى ست راقية عشان أشتغل في دكان زهور بدل ما بيع على ناصية شارع توتنهام كورت. لكن مين يشغلني إن كنتش أتكلم زي الستات الراقيين؟ سمعته بيقول إنه يقدر يعلمني. واديني أهه مستعده أدفع له ــ هو أنا باطلب إحسان عشان يعاملني زي ماكون زبالة؟ ص.70

This is verily the dialect that can be heard in the poor and uneducated areas of Egypt; however using such a language for the flower girl is not in consistent with the language used by the other characters in the play.

5.3 Elevated Dialect Phase:

6. In the following example, the flower girl's dialect has clearly changed and therefore requires a similar or equal change in translation:

LIZA: The shallow depression in the west of these islands is likely to move slowly in an easterly direction. There are no indications of any great change in the barometrical situation. P.183

And in the first Arabic version it is translated into:

ليزا: المنخفض الجوي السطحي غرب هذه الجزر ربما يتحرك ببطء باتجاه الشرق ليست هناك مؤشرات على تغير حاد في حالة درجات الحرارة. ص.182

Unlike the previous samples when the girl's language was still raw and unwrought, in this elevated-dialect phase an eloquent translation of her speech is required if not necessary. Therefore, for the translator of the above TT to use good Standard Arabic this time is justifiable.

In the second Arabic translation, this speech is translated as follows:

ليزا: سيتحرك الانخفاض المتمركز غرب الجزر البريطانية ببطء تجاه الشرق. ليس هناك ما ينبئ بتغيرات كبيرة في الموقف البارومتري. ص.133

Strangely, the dialect the heroine speaks in the beginning of the play has been totally changed into the language that all Arabic dialects descend to, i.e. into Standard Arabic. The translator of this passage even uses a better language of the one seen in the first Arabic version. For example, instead of 'غرب هذه الجزر' he uses 'المتمركز غرب الجزر', he also adds البريطانية. Further and instead of 'درجات الحرارة', he prefers a more complex term; 'الموقف البارومتري'. I do not believe that this translation is good in comparison to the Egyptian dialect that the heroine speaks in the beginning of this version.

7. The following is another example of the way the flower girl speaks after her dialect is transformed:

LIZA: But of course you are: you are never ill. So glad to see you again, Colonel Pickering. [He rises hastily; and they shake hands]. Quite chilly this morning, isn't it? [She sits down on his left. He sits beside her]. P.291

Her language is perfect English and thus requires perfect Arabic as the translator of the first Arabic version has done:

ليزا: ولكن بالطبع أنت بوضع جيد؛ أنت لا تصاب أبدا بالمرض. سعيدة جدا بلقائك ثانية، كولونيل بيكرنغ: [ينهض بسرعة. ويتصافحان] الطقس شديد البرودة هذا الصباح، أليس كذلك؟ [تجلس على يساره. يجلس هو بجانبها]. ص.290

The following is the translation of the above passage in the second Arabic version, which is also very good Standard Arabic:

ليزا: طبعا أنت بصحة طيبة! إنك لا تمرض أبدا. كم أنا سعيدة أن أراك مرة أخرى يا كيرنل بيكرنج. (يقف بسرعة ويصافحها). الجو بارد جدا هذا الصباح، أليس كذلك؟ (تجلس عن يساره. يجلس بجوارها.) ص.187

This translation can be accepted only if it was in contrast with a counterpart violated Standard Arabic or with a dialect that was really used during the era in which Standard Arabic was considered the language of daily life.

8. Another example is in the last chapter when the change of the heroine's dialect is clearly obvious. She says addressing Professor Higgins:

LIZA: It's not because you paid for my dresses. I know you are generous to everybody with money. But it was from you that I learnt really nice manners; and that is what makes one a lady, isn't it? You see it was so very difficult for me with the example of Professor Higgins always before me. I was brought up to be just like him, unable to control myself, and using bad language on the slightest provocation. And I should never have known that ladies and gentlemen didn't behave like that if you hadn't been there. P.295

The above passage in the first Arabic version is translated as follows:

ليزا: إنني مدينة لك ليس بسبب دفع تكاليف ملابسي. إنني أعرف بأنك كريم مع كل شخص بالنقود. لكنني تعلمت منك بالفعل السلوك الرقيق اللطيف؛ وهذا ما يجعل من المرء سيدة محترمة في المجتمع، أليس كذلك؟ كما ترى فلقد كان ذلك عسيرا جدا بالنسبة إلي مع وجود شخص مماثل للبروفيسور هيغنز دوما أمامي. نشأت لأكون تماما مثله، غير قادرة على ضبط أعصابي. مستخدمة لغة سيئة عند التعرض لأقل إثارة من الآخرين. وما كنت أبدا لأعرف أن السيدات المحترمات والسادة المحترمين لا يتصرفون بهذا الشكل إن لم تكن أنت في الصورة معي. ص.294

On the other hand, the translator of the second Arabic version renders it as follows:

ليزا: ليس لأنك دفعت ثمن ملابسي فأنا أعرف أنك كريم بمالك مع الجميع. ولكن لأني تعلمت منك السلوك الحسن وهذا هو الذي جعل مني فتاة راقية، أليس كذلك؟ لقد كان من الصعب أن أتعلم ذلك ومثل بروفسور

هجنز أمامي باستمرار. نشأت مثله تماما غير قادرة على ضبط النفس واستعملت لغة قبيحة لأقل إثارة. مـا كنت لأعرف أن السيدات والسادة لا يسلكون هكذا لولا وجودك أنت. ص.188-189

If we compare the two translations, we will find that there is a very slight difference between them. Both are eloquent Arabic and are composed in the style of an educated woman.

9. This is another example:

LIZA: [looking fiercely round at him] I wouldn't marry you if you asked me; and youre nearer my age than what he is.
HIGGINS [gently] Thank he is: not 'than what he is'. P.321

In this example Liza commits a grammatical mistake and the Professor corrects it for her. In the first Arabic version, this is translated as follows:

ليزا [تنظر بشكل حاد إليه]: ما كنت سأتزوج بك لو طلبت مني ذلك مع أنك أقرب سنا مني من ما هو.
هيغنز [برقة]: منه. ليس: من ما هو. ص.320

In my judgment, this is a very good translation because the translator has preserved the effect of the grammatical mistake by substituting it with a similar mistake in Arabic.

As for the second Arabic version, the above speech is translated as follows:

ليزا: (تنظر إليه بغضب وحشي) لن أقبلك إذا عرضت علي الزواج وأنت أقرب إلى سني مما هو.
هجنز: (بلطف) "منه" : ليس "مما هو". ص.205

It is a very good translation for the same reason.

10. The last example is towards the end of the play and it reads as follows:

LIZA [defiantly non-resistant] Wring away. What do I care? I knew youd strike me some day. [He lets her go, stamping with rage at having forgotten himself, and

recoils so hastily that he stumbles back into his seat on the ottoman]. Aha! Now I know how to deal with you. What a fool I was not to think of it before! You cant take away the knowledge you gave me. You said I had a finer ear than you. And I can be civil and kind to people, which is more than you can. Aha! [Purposely dropping her aitches to annoy him] That's done you, Enry Iggins, it az… P.329

In the first Arabic version, it is translated as follows:

ليزا [بازدراء]: اقطع رقبتي. ماذا يهمني؟ أعرف أنك ستضربني في يوم ما. [يدعها، يضرب بأخمص قدمه بعنف وعصبية لاكتشافه بأنه قد نسي نفسه، ويرتد بسرعة بحيث يتعثر بمشيته وهو يغور في مقعده على المتكأ العثماني]. آها! أعرف الآن كيف أتعامل معك. كم كنت غبيا بحيث أنني لم أفكر بهذا من قبل! لا نستطيع استرجاع المعرفة التي قدمتها إلي. لقد قلت إنني أمتلك أذنا أكثر دقة من أذنيك. وإنني قادرة على أن أكون مهذبة ورقيقة مع الناس، وهي أشياء أستطيع أن أكونها أكثر مما تقدر أنت عليه. آها! [تلفظ كلماتها بدون حرف ﻫ عن قصد كي تزعجه] هذا ما قضى عليك، اينري إيغنز ... ص328.

True the above translation is good Standard Arabic, however I believe that the translator in this passage has committed a mistake and proven another. He has mixed between what Liza, the heroine, says and what the Professor Higgins does. The phrase 'What a fool I was' is said by Liza not Professor Higgins, a reference to herself not to him. So, it should be 'كم كنت غبية' not 'كم كنت غبياً'. Further, what the translator has proven is that a systematic violated Standard language can be created as opposed to the violated English source text. By omitting the sound 'ﻫ' from the Professor's name he proves that he could have used such a system in all the previous speech of the girl during her pre-elevated dialect phase.

On the other hand, the above extract in the second Arabic version is translated as follows:

ليزا: (لا تقاوم بل تثبت متحدية) اكسر رقبتي. ماذا يهمني؟ كنت أعرف أنك ستضربني يوما ما. (يرفع يديه من عليها، ويدق الأرض بقدمه غضبا وقد نسي نفسه. يتراجع بسرعة فيتعثر ويسقط في مكانه على الأريكة الإسطمبولي) أها! عرفت الآن كيف أتعامل معك. كم كنت غبية إذ لم أفطن إلى ذلك من قبل! لن يمكنك أن تنزع عني المعلومات التي لقنتها لي. قلت لي إن أذني أدق من أذنيك، ويمكنني أن أعامل الناس بذوق وكياسة وهذا ما لا يمكنك أنت. أها! انتصرت عليك يا هنري هجنز، انتصرت ... ص212.

Actually, this is better Standard Arabic but the translator has not preserved the sarcasm in the girl's speech, i.e. by dropping the aitches and changing the vowel in the verb 'is'. Therefore, in my opinion, the first translation is still better.

Conclusion

Socrates once said: Speak, so I can see you. To the others, an individual is what he utters, the language he uses, and his choice of his words. We all recognize the seen, not the hidden. Thus, language and identity are closely intertwined, and this has been the thesis of this dissertation, that is dialect can be a crucial element in the process of depicting and individualizing characters in literature and should therefore be handled with much attention. Dialect phonetic, grammatical and syntactic effect should directly or indirectly be preserved in the target language.

Chapter one introduces this dissertation and gives a brief summary of its content. Chapter two deals with the relevant theoretical background to translation studies, such as Jakobson's proposal of equivalence and Nida's formal and dynamic equivalence in comparison to Newmark's semantic and communicative translation. Vinay and Darbelnet's direct and oblique translation, the formal correspondent and textual equivalent of Catford, Reiss's text types in terms of their functions, the skopos theory, the discourse and pragmatic analysis in terms of Hatim and Mason's discussion as well as Lawrence Venuti's theory of the invisibility of the translator and theatre translation are all studied in this chapter of the dissertation.

In chapter three, the paper defines the word 'dialect', and compares it to relevant terms like 'vernacular' and 'standard' languages. It also sheds the light on the relation between language and identity. This chapter argues that the use of dialect can be marked and thus be used as a social, economical, and educational marker of the individual. It also argues that in languages tending to be almost classless, such as Standard Arabic, the translator either completely ignores the use of dialect, translating into a unified pattern of language, or resorts to a particular variety of the language that is probably stigmatizing or incompatible with the language adhered to in the text. This chapter further illustrates that there are at least two types of dialect use: the functional (contextually-motivated), and the non-functional. Chapter three also discusses the importance of dialect in depicting literary characters. It concludes with the qualities of a supposedly good equivalent to a particular dialect.

In chapter four, this paper sheds the light on the struggle between standard language in the Arab world, i.e. classical Arabic, and the dialect in literary contexts. It begins with a brief history of the dialect of Quraysh which is the source of Arabic the standard language as it is known nowadays. It also explores the other varieties that were available at that time suggesting that the translator of an Arabic target text which is originally composed of different functional dialects can always turn to one of those dialects depending on the social indications s/he wants to convey.

In chapter five, this dissertation studies 'Pygmalion', an English play by Bernard Shaw. This play tells the story of a poor, uneducated, socially low class flower girl who speaks the Cockney dialect and who is being transferred into a lady. Thus, the reader in the play is presented with two different varieties of language; the Standard English and the Cockney, each one representing a different social group. While the educated highbrows' upper class speaks the standard, the uneducated poor lower class speaks the Cockney. Further, while the first class Standard English is refined, the dialect of the members of the impoverished lower class is raw and relatively different in pronunciation, grammar, and sometimes even vocabulary.

Translation studies nowadays is moving towards function. Dialect on the other hand is highly functional, in certain contexts. 'Pygmalion' is one of these texts in which the heroine clearly speaks English with phonetic, grammatical, and syntactic functional violations, such as 'sellin' instead of 'selling' and 'zif' instead of 'as if'. 'Pygmalion' is translated into Arabic in two versions, both studied in this dissertation. In the first, the translator's decision has been to translate the Cockney dialect of the Flower girl into a leveled-out eloquent classical Arabic, which is incompatible with her social and educational status, while the other translator's choice has been to restrict the Flower Girl's dialect to the Egyptian dialect, which is on the other hand stigmatizing and incompatible too with the language used by the rest of the characters.

Chapter five concludes that to avoid the undesired leveled-out result of translating all the varieties into standard Arabic, and to also avoid stigmatizing an existing Arabic dialect, the translator may choose to use one of the different Standard Arabic dialects that were used by some local tribes in the past, a dialect that is expected to be spoken by the impoverished, uneducated class in a society where

people spoke Standard Arabic. The second option in order to give a voice to the poor uneducated social class is to use a systematically violated or distorted version of classical Arabic.

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Appendix
Samples of Plays

VITA

Al Khaili, Mrs. Deema Mohammed Salmeen Saeed was born on August 15, 1975, in Sharjah, UAE. She was educated in the local public schools in Al-Ain. She finished her higher education in 1993. Later, she received a Bachelor of Arts in the English Language and Literature from the UAE University in 1997.

Mrs. Al Khaili worked for the Ministry of Education in the period from 1997 to 2001. She taught in elementary, preparatory and secondary cycles at the governmental schools. In 2001, she joined the UAE University staff and since then she has been working as a librarian at Zayed Central Library. She began a master's program of Arts in Translation and Interpreting (Arabic/English/Arabic) at the American University of Sharjah in 2004.