

The Translatability of Near-Synonyms into English: Analytical Study of the Translation of Al-Qarni's Book 'La Tahzan'

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ABSTRACT: *This study aims at discovering the obstacles that might encounter translators while translating near-synonyms into English in the social field and discourse. It concludes that if translators follow a specific arrangement of equivalences as suggested and explained by Werner Koller (1979), the process of translating near-synonyms from Arabic into English will be facilitated. The methodology adopted in this research is based on the analysis and comparison of a professional translator's and MA students' renditions of ten texts containing near-synonyms in 'La Tahzan' book. The importance and significance of this study is to discover difficulties that might face translators in the social field and discourse, since some previous pieces of research proved that translators face difficulties in other kinds of discourses, such as the literary and Islamic field. The research chooses a professional translator rendition, Faisal Mohammad Shafeeq, and forty MA students to have a fair comparison. The choice of the 10 near-synonyms is based on searching in the old monolingual dictionaries for famous Arab linguists, and some of the interpretation books for the Holy Qur'an. The analysis aims at examining the extent to which the translators are able to find English equivalents for Arabic near-synonyms. Moreover, the research provides model translation for these near-synonyms, based on following the equivalence relations theory.*

KEYWORDS: translation, near-synonymy- equivalence relations, denotative dimensions, connotative dimensions.

INTRODUCTION

Synonymy has been defined differently by some scholars. Palmer (1976:59) states that synonymy is "sameness of meanings", words that share the same meanings are called the

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synonymy of one another. Palmer (1976) mentions that there are no identical synonyms, but he confirms the existence of near-synonyms. Synonymy has been a controversial issue among Western and Arab linguists. In English, there are two different opinions about synonymy. On one hand, some linguists deny the existence of synonymy completely. On the other hand, other linguists confirm that any two words share at least one sense are synonymous (Cruse, 1986).

As for linguists who confirm the existence of synonymy, some of them divide synonyms into different types. Lyons(1981) clarifies the common types of synonym as; Near synonyms, sense synonyms, and partial synonyms. Near synonyms are synonyms which share the same meaning but they are not identical, for example; mist and fog. Sense synonyms are synonyms which have one or more common sense, and match in all other aspects for that sense. Partial synonyms are synonyms which share some senses, but they do not match in all aspects.(Cruse,1986 & Lyons,1995)

Regarding near-synonyms in Arabic which share the same meanings but not identical, unless they share the same opposite, collocation and contextual usage. For example; *suroor* "سرور" means pleasure, and it is usually used with tangible matters, while its synonym "فرح" *farah* means joy, and used with both tangible and intangible matters. (Alqammash, 2009 & Oxford Dictionary)

In translation processes into English language, translators probably face some near-synonyms. At the beginning, translating synonyms were thought a non-problematic issue (Shiyab, 2007), but when it comes to near-synonyms specifically, the translator may need to think deeply about the appropriate equivalent in the target language, because they could differ stylistically or contextually (Edmonds & Hirst, 2002). Therefore, this research investigates if the respondents (MA Translation students) and the professional translator of the book '*La Tahzan*', Shafeeq, are capable of translating near-synonyms in their contexts from '*La Tahzan*' book, or if they constitute a problematic issue in translation processes.

Significance of the Research

There are some studies conducted on topics related to the translation of different types of synonymy. This research seeks to discover if translating near-synonyms might constitute a problem in the translation process into English. The near-synonyms are taken from the Arabic book '*La Tahzan*' and its English translation. This book is one of the best-selling Arabic books; about 10 million versions are sold. The author of the book is capable of using Arabic language correctly. Also, the book contains a lot of near-synonyms which makes it a good choice for this research. The book is translated into more than 30 languages. It is translated into English by a professional translator and institution. Also, the research attempts to find out if MA Translation students in Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud University might encounter some problems while translating near-synonyms.

Statement of the problem

During the researcher's experience in translation, she noticed that many translators do not give attention to near-synonyms while translating social texts. Moreover, some studies prove that translators do not translate near-synonyms appropriately and accurately. They tend to translate them as identical synonyms.

Therefore, this research is based on Werner Koller's equivalence relations theory to identify the problem. It aims at analyzing the English translation of the 10 Arabic near-synonyms in the Arabic book '*La Tahzan*' by Dr. Aaidh Ibn Abdullah Al-Qarni, and its translation by the professional translator, Faisal Mohammad Shafeeq, a professional translator in International Islamic Publishing House (IIPH). In addition, the research aims at analyzing forty MA students' translations of the same near-synonyms.

Objectives of the Research

This study intends to achieve the following objectives:

- Investigating the obstacles that might face translators while translating near-synonyms in the social field and discourse.
- Identifying the extent to which the referential and connotative meanings of the source text are reflected by the selected translators.
- Investigating the effectiveness of using equivalence relations theory, for Werner Koller, to facilitate the process of translating near-synonyms.
- Measuring translation students' and the professional translator's competence in finding appropriate English equivalents for Arabic near-synonyms.

Research Questions:

To attain the aforementioned aims, the study attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1- What are the difficulties that might face translators while translating near-synonyms into English?
- 2- To what extent do the selected translations reflect the referential and connotative meanings of the source text?
- 3- Is equivalence relations theory successful and effective in accounting for the translation of near-synonyms from Arabic into English?
- 4- Is there a gap/coincidence between MA students' and professional translators' output in translating near-synonyms into English?

Limitations of the Study

The present study is mainly concerned with the problem of translating a limited number of context-dependent near-synonyms in Arabic-English translation. Other aspects of meaning in the translation of the 10 sentences of near-synonyms are not analyzed, because they are not a part of this study. In addition, This study is confined to the translation of near-synonyms in the social field and register. This research concentrates on discovering difficulties that might face translators, and finding a way that may ease the process of translating near-synonyms in the social field. It is not a main objective to propose model translations of the data of the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Before searching the translatability of near-synonyms into English, the researcher found some important studies related to the present topic, so it is useful to present some of these previous studies. The results of these studies could be helpful for this research. In addition, the studies may guide the researcher to follow some good methods. Also, these studies clarify for readers and translators many concepts and ideas related to this research. These studies are very useful to enable the research to choose a different field, the social field, which is different from translating the Holy Qura'n and literary texts. This research investigates whether translators encounter obstacles in this field or not. The first section sheds light on the literature related to the definitions and types of synonyms in both English and Arabic. The second section concentrates on the studies that tackle issues of translation and synonymy. The third section shows studies in translation of synonyms in the literary and Islamic fields. The fourth section deals with the denotative and connotative dimensions that could be helpful in translating near-synonyms. The last one investigates the equivalence relations theory for Werner Koller (1979).

Synonymy from the English and Arabic linguists' perspectives

Synonymy has often been considered a non-problematic phenomenon, since there are identical synonyms which are easy to handle, or non-synonyms which will be handled like others. Edmonds and Hirst (2002) believe that synonymy might feature a serious problem; especially it affects the structure of the lexicon. Therefore, it is necessary to clarify the concept of synonymy in both Arabic and English languages.

Lyons defines synonymous lexical items are "those having the same sense"(1968:446), and they should be substitutable in the utterance without affecting their conceptual meaning. For example, "discover" could be substituted by "find" in a sentence like "we found the boys hiding in the shed", without affecting the conceptual meaning of the sentence, but "find" is not substitutable for "discover" in "Sir Alexander Fleming discovered Penicillin in 1928". (cf. Jackson, 1988:65)

From the perspective of linguists in English, some scholars including Palmer (1976), Larson (1984), Cruse (1986) stress the idea of synonymy existence in language. However, they do not accept the idea of "identical" synonyms. Palmer (1976) emphasizes the fact that English has synonyms as it is derived from different origins: Anglo-Saxon, French, Latin and Greek.

It is often suggested that synonymy is a matter of degree. Cruse (2000) mentions three types of synonym; absolute synonymy when differentiating contexts is hard to find. He explains the meaning of absolute synonymy by saying if word (a) is put in a context, and then it is changed with word (b), then the context does not become odd because of the existence of word (b).

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Cognitive synonym as Cruse (2000) states is synonym that refers to the same object or because it has the same truth conditional properties; however, they should be used in an appropriate context.

Near-synonymy is stated by Cruse (2000) as follows:

Synonyms do not function primarily to contrast with one another (this is what was meant by saying earlier that in the case of synonyms, their common features were more salient than their differences). In certain contexts, of course, they may contrast, and this is especially true of near-synonyms: He was killed, but I can assure you he was NOT murdered, madam. (p.159)

From the perspective of linguists and grammarians of Arabic, synonyms are two or more words have the same meaning or multiple words but fixed meaning. Alssayoutti (1998) some of the linguists, such as Alaskari(1997) and Albaidhawi(2006) deny the existence of synonymy. They attribute that to some reasons; each word has a different or extra sense for example; *thahaba* (went) and *madha* (left). Moreover, when you name objects, it is like giving them a sign to distinguish them, and then it is useless to give them more than one sign.

Other linguists confirm the existence of synonymy such as Seebawaih (as cited in ya'qoub, 2009) and Arrammani (1987) They indicate if two words shall have different meanings, then people cannot express the same object by using several words. Also, the speaker could use two different words, sharing the same meaning, for confirmation.

According to these pieces of researches, this study concludes that it is illogical to completely reject the idea of existence of synonymy, but the idea of the degrees of synonymy can be more accepted. When translators look up a word in dictionaries, they discover slight and big differences between the synonyms, and sometimes they might not find differences at all, which could support that "identical" synonyms are rare. Since this present research concentrates on translating Arabic near-synonyms into English, it is necessary to explain some of the factors that led to enrich Arabic with many synonyms; these factors include:

- 1- The existence of different Arabic dialects used by various Arab tribes; they use different words to refer to the same object. For example, in Alhijazi dialect, they call wheat *Bur*, in the Levant, they call it *qamh*, and in Alkufah, they call it *hindhah*.
- 2- Arab people interacted with many non-Arab people from Persia, Abyssinia and the Sultanate of Rûm, so they borrowed many words from them. These words became later Arabicized words. For example, the word lead, which is a dark grey poisonous metal, has two names; one of them is Arabic, *aşşarfan*, and the other one is Arabicized, *arraşaş*.
- 3- The wrong usage of near-synonyms by using them interchangeably without taking into consideration the slight and deep differences in their meanings. For example, the word glass is called *kā`ş* if it is full, while it is *qadah* if it is empty.(Abduattawwab, 1994)

Translation and synonymy

Near-synonymy is an attention-grabbing issue for many translators. Several studies have been conducted on transferring and dealing with near-synonyms in languages. At the beginning, it is important to mention Nida's definition of synonymy in language, in order to understand translation and synonymy from a linguistic perspective. He defines synonyms as "words which share several (but not all) essential components and thus can be used to substitute one another in some (but not all) contexts without any appreciable difference of meaning in these contexts, e.g. *love* and *like*"(1969: 73). Moreover, Newmark agrees with Nida, he said that "I do not approve of the proposition that translation is a form of synonymy"(1981:101). Shiyab (2007) conducted a research based on Nida's and Newmark's idea, suggesting that translation is not a form of synonymy, because words may have untranslatable semantic values. The following example given by Shiyab(2007), the Arabic words *hiṣaan*, *faras*, *jawaad*, *agharr*, which stand for the English word horse, is to clarify how synonyms may not be interchangeable in all contexts:

1. The word *hiṣaan* has the components of *horse* and *male*.
2. The word *faras* has the components of *horse* and *male* or *female*.
3. The word *jawaad* has the components of *a particular horse*, which is *fast*, *male* or *female*.
4. The word *agharr* has the components of *a particular horse*, which has a *white patch on its forehead* and *male* or *female*.

The first two words can be interchangeable, without causing difficulties. Translators may not face difficulty in transferring these two synonyms into English as *horse*, since the words denote species and gender. The third word denotes a *race horse*, can be used to refer to *horse* in the general sense; however, there will be some loss of meaning in its associative meaning, i.e. *fast horse*. As for the word in (4), translators have to clarify the slight different meaning, that it denotes *a horse of a particular color*.(Shiyab, 2007) This study could make translators aware of translating the slight differences of near-synonyms, because translating them as the same words could lead to loss or gain of meaning. Also, it is not preferred to use long explanation in order to illustrate the slight difference of each near-synonym, so translators should look up first the difference in many authentic dictionaries to find the most appropriate equivalent.

Edmonds (1998) illustrates that it is a hard job to find the same exact equivalent while translating from one language into another. The target language could be rich of near-synonyms for a source language word that differ in nuances of meaning. As Edmonds compared the English word *provide* to the French near-synonyms, he discovered that the differences are complex and often language-specific, and none of the words match up exactly. He clarifies two major problems in representing the meaning of a source language word. First, although some of the slight differences could be represented by using simple features, most of the words cannot, because they are complex and have an internal structure. Second, many of the nuances are conveyed indirectly, so the reader will judge whether a nuance was unintended, or unnecessary conditions for the definition of the words.

Edmonds (1998) tackles three types of mismatches; they are denotational, stylistic, and attitudinal mismatches. Denotational mismatches occur when translators prefer to concentrate more on the syntactic and collocational structure, or when there is no good equivalent in the target language, therefore; translators might choose a semantically different target word, but still conveys the main idea of the source language text. Stylistic mismatches, translators could convey the style of a source language text by both the structure and the words, which are best represented as a global property in an interlingual presentation. This means, it is not compulsory to maintain the style of specific words across languages. Attitudinal mismatches, each word expresses different attitude, so these attitudes should be included in the interlingual representation.

It is known that translators should be faithful and try as much as possible to convey the whole meaning and style of the source language text. However, sometimes the style does not fit the target-language reader. For example, the original book of this research 'La Tahzan', the author is so qualified in Arabic, and he knows how to use it in an attractive style for the Arab readers. He used many near-synonyms, in order to confirm the ideas, which is acceptable in Arabic. On the contrary, this kind of repetition is not favorable for the English readers, so the translator has to deal with it carefully and intelligently. The professional translator 'Shafeeq' omitted some of the repeated synonyms that are not compatible with the English style.

Translation of synonyms in the literary and Islamic fields

Translating near-synonyms is an interesting topic that attracts many translators. Therefore, they conduct several pieces of research on some different fields within different theoretical frameworks. One of the studies found out that translating cognitive synonyms based on formal equivalence is not successful. However, translating these synonyms depending on the functional and/or ideational equivalence theory is often appropriate to select the corresponding equivalent. These findings are concluded from applying this theory to several fields. (Shehab, 2009)

Alswoaidi (2011) analyzed two different translations of four near-synonymous pairs in the Holy Qur'an, which are *gayth* and *maṭar*, *al-ḥilf* and *al-qasm*, *bakhīl* and *shahīḥ*, and *ʿāqir* and *ʿaqīm* by two professional translators, Yusuf Ali and Irving. The researcher chose a combination of text-analysis translation-oriented approaches of De Beaugrande & Dressler (1981); Neubert & Shreve (1992); Halliday (1994) and Hatim & Mason (1990). The research concludes that Qur'an translators have failed to notice the main differences between the pairs of near-synonyms. They treated them as absolute synonyms and used them interchangeably. The study proves that translating near-synonyms in the Holy Qur'an is not an easy task, because the translators must carefully handle the meaning of the original near-synonyms. Moreover, the translators take into consideration the nuances in meaning in near-synonyms. The researcher attributes the problem of translating near-synonyms to the insufficient background of the contextual and socio-cultural elements. In addition, the problems of translating near-synonyms affect the denotative and connotative meaning, and the textuality and the texture of the Qur'anic text. However, the research provides some suggestion to help the translators

overcome the translational obstacles. The researcher emphasizes the need for adequate and sound knowledge of translation theories to produce accurate translation.

Also, the researcher stresses that the translators should be aware of the direct connotative shades of meaning. The researcher adds that the communicative strategy should be adopted in place of literal translation while translating sacred texts (Newmark, 1980). The problems and suggestions mentioned earlier are concluded from analyzing sacred texts; however, these problems and suggestions may differ in other types of texts, since the translators realize that translating sacred texts may have different strategies. Therefore, this research seeks to discover the difficulties in translating near-synonyms in the social field, and to discover whether there is a suitable solution for it.

The denotative and connotative dimensions

Another study conducted by DiMarco, Hirst, and Stede (1993) describes the problem of lexical choice and structure, and the representations of world knowledge and meaning that the task requires. It also tackles nuances of denotations and connotations, shades of meaning, and style. It depends on dictionary usage to find out the dimensions that may differentiate synonymous words. Since absolute synonyms are rare, it is more common to find word senses, synonyms that share the same denotation, but differ in their usage such as collocational constraints. Moreover, many sets of words are plesionyms (Cruse, 1986) which are nearly-synonymous such as *stared and gazed*. The study states that the notions of synonymy and plesionymy can be illustrated accurately by a notion of semantic distance (Hirst, 1987), but it could constitute a problem if the research wants to formalize it.

The study deals with two dimensions of pairs of words which they vary; they are "semantic and stylistic, or, equivalently, denotative and connotative". For example, if there are two semantically different words such as *mist* and *fog*, then using one word for another in a discourse might not preserve truth conditions, which means the denotations are not identical. On the other hand, if there are two stylistically different words, such as *frugal* and *stingy*, then substituting one for another does not change truth conditions, but it changes the connotation, which means it does not maintain the same style and interpersonal effect of the text. For example, *the police [questioned the witness / interrogated the suspect] for many hours*, the two plesionyms differ in the stylistic and semantic features. The word *question*, unlike *interrogate* indicate a less adversarial situation and it is less formal word. (Cornog, 1992)

This idea could be generalized across languages. Two or more word senses taken from two different languages can be considered as plesionymous or synonymous if they have particular conditions. For example, the word *forest* in English and the word *Wald* in German are plesionyms, because *Wald* refers to a smaller group of trees, while *bear*, ursine mammal, and *Bär* in German are synonyms. (Hervey and Higgins, 1992)

The problem of choosing an equivalent word increases in translation processes, because the target language may provide many words corresponding to the source language word, and these

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corresponding words might differ in different aspects such as in style, emphasis, collocational requirements and shades of meaning. (Di Marco, Hirst and Stede, 1993)

The researcher used two English dictionaries; online-copy of the Oxford advanced learner's dictionary (OLAD) (1987), and a paper copy of the Longman dictionary of contemporary English (LDOCE) (1987), then they noted some dimensions for denotation and some for connotation. Also, they added from the discussion of Vinay and Darblnet (1958). These dimensions are used to identify the differences between the meanings, not to explain the whole meaning. Denotational dimensions are; intentional and accidental such as *stare/glimpse*, continuous and intermittent such as *seep/drip*, immediate and iterative such as *strike/beat*, sudden and gradual such as *shot/edge*, terminative and non-terminative such as *crumple/crumple up*, emotional and non-emotional such as *relationship/acquaintance*, and degree such as *mist/fog*. While connotative dimensions are; formal and informal such as *inebriated/drunken*, abstract and concrete such as *error/blunder*, pejorative and favorable such as *skinny/slim*, forceful and weak such as *destroyed/ruined*, and emphasis such as *cry/weep*. These dimensions could be useful for both translating near-synonyms, and identifying the nuances of the near-synonyms. Therefore, this present research combines these dimensions with the main theory of this research 'Equivalence Relations', also with the aid of dictionary usage notes, and applies them to the near-synonym translation process.

Equivalence relations theory

This research applies Werner Koller's equivalence relations of translation theory. Koller (1979) is a Swiss scholar, who is influenced by Nida's move towards a science of translation as he tries to make Bible translation into a more scientific era by involving modern works in linguistics. He contributes to improve the equivalence concept by doing "Research into the science of translation" (Koller, 1979). In his point of view, equivalence refers to equivalent elements in specific source language and target language pairs and contexts. He defines five types of equivalence relations: denotative equivalence when the source text and the target text have the same indications, connotative equivalence refers to lexical choices between near-synonyms, text-normative equivalence relates to different types of texts behaving differently, pragmatic equivalence also called 'communicative equivalence' is directed to the target text audience, and formal equivalence refers to the form and aesthetics and stylistic features of the ST.(Koller,1979)

According to what is mentioned above, translation is not a form of synonymy (Newmark, 1981), which means finding the exact equivalent in a dictionary for a source language word is not enough. Since translators do not deal with words or synonyms separately, they almost deal with them within a specific text and context. The five types of equivalence relations may help the translator if it is possible to achieve these types while translating synonyms. These types may help translators to deal with the different "types of equivalence" which translation could have such as linguistic, textual and non-textual aspects. The translators can arrange these types hierarchically according to the essential requirements of a specific text.

Koller (1979: 211-16) suggests a checklist for translationally relevant text analysis as follows:

- language function;
- content characteristics;
- language-stylistic characteristics;
- formal-aesthetic characteristics;
- pragmatic characteristics. (as cited in Munday, 2001: 49)

This chapter presented the previous studies that tackled synonymy phenomenon and showed that there is a heated debate between scholars about the existence of synonymy in both Arabic and English. Some of them completely deny the idea of synonymy existence, and some of them confirm it. Scholars who assert the existence of synonymy, they have divided synonymy into different types. One of the common division is Cruse's classification (2000); absolute synonyms, cognitive synonyms and near-synonyms. There are some pieces of research about translation and synonymy; some of them are conducted on different languages such as French and German. They experienced some theories to examine their effectiveness in translating synonyms. One of the studies (DiMarco et al, 1993) suggests using denotational and connotative dimensions to differentiate the slight and deep differences between synonyms. These dimensions are used in this research along with equivalence relations theory for Koller (1979), also with the use of dictionary usage notes. Koller defines five types of equivalence relations, which are applied in this research especially the denotative equivalence and connotative equivalence. In addition, there are similar studies in Arabic English translation that discussed different types of synonym. There are also some studies about translating near-synonyms conducted on the Holy Qur'an and literary texts. These studies inspire the researcher investigating the translation of near-synonyms in the social field. One of the main reasons for choosing this specific topic is to help translators to use effective way to find appropriate equivalents for near-synonyms. The research follows a particular methodology, which is clarified in details in the next chapter.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This paper investigated the translatability of Arabic near-synonyms identified by the researcher as might pose difficulties to translators of Arabic texts into English. Specific criteria are followed to choose the appropriate near-synonyms. The researcher chooses 10 near-synonyms with specific criteria. These criteria depend on the characteristics of near-synonyms. Each two near-synonyms have slight differences from each other. The slight difference may not be noticed by the ordinary readers, but the specialists will recognize them by looking up their meanings and usages in specialized Arabic dictionaries. The near-synonyms belong to formal Arabic not dialects. These near-synonyms share at least one sense.

The ten near-synonyms are chosen from the Arabic book '*La Tahzan*' for Al-Qarni(2003) which was translated into English by Shafeeq (2005).This book has been chosen as a reference

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for this study, because it is one of the best-selling Arabic books, about 10 million versions are sold. The author of the book is a good writer, who is capable of using Arabic language correctly. Also, the book contains a lot of near-synonyms which makes it a good choice for this research. The book is translated into more than 30 languages. This book is directed to all people over the world. It helps people to deal with their problems especially sadness. It tackles many social issues, therefore; it is suitable to classify it in the social field.

This study is an analytical and comparative study. It analyzes the translation of ten near-synonyms, each two synonyms are a pair of near-synonyms, in complete sentences from the English translation of '*La Tahzan*' book by Shafeeq (2005), who is a professional translator at International Islamic Publishing House (IIPH). The previous chosen sentences have been distributed to forty MA Translation students at Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud University; they were asked to translate them into English.

The analysis is done to discover whether the translators were able to translate the given near-synonyms taking into consideration the whole meaning of the sentences, and how they achieved that. The research uses many different Arabic and English dictionaries and thesauruses, also Qur'an interpretations for some near-synonyms to be as objective as possible. Then, the respondents' translations and the professional translation are compared with each other, to discover if there is a gap between them. Also, it seeks to clarify if there are difficulties facing the translators while translating the near-synonyms into English.

Subjects

The researcher chooses forty female MA Translation students from all levels at Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University to answer a translation task consisting of 10 phrases or sentences that have 10 near-synonyms, which equal five pairs of near-synonyms taken from the book '*La Tahzan*' (in Arabic language) to be rendered into English by the respondents. One of these phrases mentioned in the book is for the scholar Baqqie bin Mukhallad. It is expected that the professional translator 'Shafeeq' had enough time and access to dictionaries, so no time limitation is set to finish the translation test. In addition, the respondents can use either electronic or paper dictionaries. The sample is randomly chosen. The task is given only to the students who expressed their willingness to do the job. All of these students are native speakers of Arabic. Since translating near-synonyms is not a very easy task, then choosing MA students specifically is appropriate because they have studied different courses in translation, which makes them more qualified. In addition, it is more fair to compare MA Translation students with a professional translator than BA Translation students.

The Analysis of Data within the Theoretical Framework

As stated previously, the different types of equivalence relations are denotative equivalence, connotative equivalence, text-normative equivalence, pragmatic equivalence, and formal equivalence. The present research arranges these types hierarchically in order of priority for near-synonyms in the social field. The different types of equivalence relations are arranged as follows:

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- 1- The denotative equivalence
- 2- The connotative equivalence
- 3- The formal equivalence
- 4- The text –normative equivalence
- 5- Then, the pragmatic equivalence

The present research focuses on applying the first four equivalences. In case the equivalence selected from the previous ones is not appropriate for the target-text reader, the researcher moves to the fifth equivalence, the pragmatic equivalence.

The denotative equivalence comes in the first place in the process of translating near-synonyms in the social field, because it tackles the primary meaning of the word in dictionaries. Then, the connotative equivalence needs to be achieved, because it identifies the nuances of the near-synonyms. However, the connotative dimensions are not identified in this theory, therefore; the present research depends on the dimensions of Di Marco, Hirst and Stede (1993). The denotational dimensions are; intentional and accidental, continuous and intermittent, immediate and iterative, sudden and gradual, terminative and non-terminative, emotional and non-emotional, and degree. Whereas, connotative dimensions include formal, informal, abstract, concrete, pejorative, favorable, forceful and weak. Also, the research depends on the dictionary usage notes to identify other denotative and connotative dimensions.

The formal equivalence is achieved when the same style of the text is followed in the target text. The text –normative equivalence is achieved when the chosen equivalent word is related to the same field or type of the text. The pragmatic equivalence comes in the bottom of the hierarchal arrangement.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In this part of the study, the data are analyzed within the previously mentioned theoretical framework. They are analyzed according to the equivalence relations theory for Koller(1979) to decide whether it is useful in translating near-synonyms or not. This study analyzes and discusses Shafeeq's selected translations, and attempts to provide a model translation for the selected near-synonyms. Furthermore, it investigates the respondents' translation, and compares them with Shafeeq's translation, in order to figure out the difficulties that might encounter translators while translating near-synonyms in the social field. It also aims to find out if there is a gap between the translation competence of MA translators and the professional translator in translating near-synonyms.

The analysis of 'Shafeeq's translation as a professional translator:

This part analyzes and discusses the professional translator /Shafeeq's selected translation according to the following arrangement; the denotative equivalence, the connotative equivalence, the formal equivalence, the text –normative equivalence. In case the previous

equivalences were not effective or appropriate for the target-text reader, then the translator can move to the pragmatic equivalence.

The analysis of the first synonymous pair

The 1st example:

- 1- لا تحزن : فإنَّ المَرَضَ يزولُ.
- 2- أيامُ السَّقَمِ لا صِحَّةَ فيها.

The translation:

- 1- Do not be sad: for sickness is a transient state of being.
- 2- The days of sickness are devoid of health.

In these two sentences, there is a pair of near-synonyms, *almaradh* and *assaqam*. The first sentence states that transience is one of the features of *almaradh*. While the other phrase, Baqei bin Mukhallad, indicates that *assaqam* is a permanent state.

Shafeeq translated *almaradh* as sickness, and also translated *assaqam* as sickness. He considered the two near-synonyms as identical synonyms. However, the meanings of the two sentences give different and contrastive ideas.

Lisan Alarab Dictionary (1993) defines *almaradh* as the opposite of health, and it could be in both the body and the heart. *Almaradh* in the heart could be used idiomatically such as a person's heart full of hatred and hypocrisy. Although, *assaqam* shares the same meaning of *almaradh*, it carries a slight different meaning. It refers to a chronic disease.

On one hand, when Shafeeq translated *almaradh* as sickness, he succeeded to achieve the denotative and connotative equivalences. He conveyed the same effect of the source-text reader, because the target-text reader could deduce that *almaradh* is a temporary state. The professional translator maintains the same style of the original word, as he translated it into *sickness*, which does not affect the formal equivalence. Moreover, using *sickness* in a social text is suitable, since it is not restricted to only medical field, and this would achieve the text-normative equivalence.

On the other hand, when Shafeeq translated *assaqam* as sickness, he considered the pair of near-synonyms, *almaradh* and *assaqam*, identical synonyms, but most dictionaries show that both of these two words have senses that they do not share them with each other. He did not take into consideration the nuances between the near-synonyms, thus he achieved the denotative equivalence, but he could not achieve the connotative equivalence. In addition, the target-text reader would not get the idea of this sentence. The target-text reader could ask why the author would contrast himself. As he said in the first sentence that *almaradh* is a temporary state, and in the second sentence, he said the days of sickness are devoid of health. Also, the translator did not change the formal equivalence of the sentence. Moreover, the text-normative equivalence was achieved as the word *sickness* itself is not awkward in the social text.

Regarding the word *almaradh*, the American Heritage Dictionary defines *Sickness* as “a pathological condition of mind or body”. The most important part used to decide whether it is an appropriate equivalent or not is to search for the slight difference which distinguishes it from other near-synonyms. In addition, in Collins English Dictionary the word *sick*, the adjective of *sickness*, means “mentally, psychologically, or spiritually disturbed”. It also describes *sick* as “mentally, morally, or emotionally deranged, corrupt, or unsound,” or a characteristic of a sick mind such as “*sick fancies*”. Also, the word *sick* could be used idiomatically to mean a person “affected with madness or insanity”. Therefore, these two near-synonyms have a different denotational dimension; the word *assaqam* is continuous while *almaradh* is temporary. These definitions clarify that *sickness* shares with *almaradh* its most distinguishing differences. Firstly, they both describe mentally, spiritually and physically unsound. Secondly, they can be used idiomatically to describe undesirable feelings or characteristics.

According to Collins English Dictionary, the word *ailment* is defined as a minor but usually persistent illness. In addition, Random House Kernerman Webster's College Dictionary defines *ailment* as “a physical disorder or illness, especially of a minor or a chronic nature”. Both of the dictionaries agree on the persistence feature, the first one describes *ailment* as persistent, and the second dictionary describes it as a chronic situation. These features are compatible with the word *assaqam* in Arabic, because its main feature is being a chronic. Therefore, the researcher might suggest the word *ailment* as an equivalent for the word *assaqam* in Arabic, because it presents the slight difference between *assaqam* and *almaradh*. Furthermore, Random House Kernerman Webster's College Dictionary describes *illness* as “unhealthy condition”. According to Collins COBUILD English Usage the adjectives *long* and *short* can be used in front of *illness*, so *long illness* could be considered suitable to meet the requirement of the connotative equivalence.

The analysis of the second synonymous pair

The 2nd example:

3- أَنْصِتْ لكلام الله.

4- وَاسْتَمِعْ إلى القارئ الذي يعجبك.

The translation:

3- Listen attentively to the words of Allah.

4- You should allot a few minutes of every day to listen to a tape of recitation.

These sentences contain a pair of near-synonyms, 'ansit and istami'. In the first sentence, the word 'ansit is used with the words of Allah. Regardless that people embrace various religions, it is a common concept that god is always glorified in most religions. Thus, when the words of Allah are recited, people should listen to them very carefully. However, the other near-synonym in the word 'istami' is less strong than the word 'ansit.

Shafeeq translated 'ansit as *listen attentively*, and istami' as *listen*. He differentiated between the near-synonyms, and realized that 'ansit is stronger than istami'. Nevertheless, the

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researcher should first present the definitions and the interpretations of both words in dictionaries to identify their nuances. According to Lisan Alarab(1993), 'anṣit and istami' vary along the denotational dimension, and 'anṣit has a higher degree than istami', because the one concentrates more for a particular purpose. In addition, Alssa'di (1998) indicates that 'anṣit means to leave everything around you and prepare yourself for listening only. Also, in Almuheet Dictionary (2005) the word 'anṣit means keep silent or quiet and listen.

When translators want to render the pair of near-synonyms into English, they need to consider their nuances to find the most appropriate equivalent. In American Heritage Dictionary, there is the word *hearken*, but it is obsolete, archaic and old fashioned form. In the Bible, prophets and saints are always telling people to *hearken* to their words, while the form *hark* is still used today according to (vocabulary.com). But *Hark* is used in literary texts, so it may seem inappropriate to use it in a social text. *listen attentively*, which is Shafeeq's suggestion, is appropriate and acceptable. While 'listen' is to make an effort to hear something such as *listen to the radio*, or to concentrate on hearing something. *Listen* is less formal than *hark*, so it could be an equivalent for *istami*'.(Collins English Dictionary)

Regarding the word 'anṣit, Shafeeq concentrated on its distinguishing feature. He translated it into an adverb *attentively* associated with the verb *listen*. He achieved the denotative equivalence, because it is mentioned earlier that it is a matter of degree between this pair of near-synonyms. He achieved the connotative equivalence by adding the word *attentively* to differentiate it from the word *listen*. He did not convey the same effect of the source text on the target-text reader as required in the formal equivalence. He gave them a clear explanation of the word 'anṣit, while 'anṣit for the source-text reader implies a sense that the reader should deduce. As for the text-normative equivalence *listen attentively* is suitable and consistent with the social text. He was able to achieve the four different equivalences in rendering *istami*' into *listen*. In addition, he succeeded to achieve the denotative, the connotative, and the text-normative equivalences in translating 'anṣit into *listen attentively*.

4.1.3 The analysis of the third synonymous pair

The 3rd example:

5- العلم اطلب

6- ابحث عن المعرفة

The translation:

5- seek out knowledge

6- seek out enlightenment

The underlined words in these two sentences, *al'ilm* and *alma'rifah*, are a pair of near-synonyms. Ibn Qayiem (1996) differentiates *al'ilm* as the recognition of the features and characteristics of a particular thing, while *alma'rifah* is the familiarity with someone or something in general. *Alma'rifah* is preceded by ignorance, while *al'ilm* is not. *Al'ilm* is the recognition of a particular field, and having detailed information about it. *Alma'rifah* is the background and experience of someone. Furthermore, It could refer to the awareness of something in general such as having basic information about a specific field.(Omar, 2008)

Shafeeq translated *al'ilm* as *knowledge*, and *alma'rifah* as *enlightenment*; the first near-synonym, *al'ilm*, he achieved the four types of equivalence. Moreover, the second near-synonym, *alma'rifah*, he chose the word *enlightenment* which is defined in Alkawrid Dictionary as the “state of being enlightened spiritually”, so it could be an appropriate equivalent for *alma'rifah*. Therefore, he did achieve the four types of equivalence.

In Collins English Dictionary and American Heritage Dictionary there is the word *knowledge* which means “awareness, familiarity or understanding acquired from experience or study”. There is also the word *science* which is the “systematic study of a particular phenomenon based on observation, experiment and measurement”. *Knowledge* can stand for the word *al'ilm*, while *science* is not accurate in this context because science relates to specific majors such the science of astronomy. Since *knowledge* is the equivalent for *al'ilm*, then there should be more general word for *alma'rifah*. In Word net Thesaurus, *enlightenment* is "education that results in understanding and the spread of knowledge". In the American Heritage dictionary, *enlightenment* is The condition of being informed. Therefore, *enlightenment* is more comprehensive and general, so it could be an equivalent for *alma'rifah*, and *knowledge* is more specific, so it could stand for *al'ilm*.

4.1.4 The analysis of the fourth synonymous pair

The 4th example:

- 7- إن اختلاف ألواننا وألواننا وألسنتنا ومواهنا وقدراتنا آية من آياتِ الباري فلا **تَجَدُّ** آياته.
8- الله سبحانه وتعالى لم **يُنْكِرْهُ** أحدًا إلا فرعون.

The translation:

7- Our varied colors, languages, talents and abilities are signs from our Creator, the Almighty, All-Glorious, so do not **disbelieve** in them.

8- The Creator's existence has not been **denied** by anyone except Fir'aun.

Yajhad and *yunkir* are near-synonyms. Ibn jenni (2006) and Alaskari(1997) state that *yajhad* is to refuse to accept something that is apparent. While *yunkir* in Lisan Alarab(1993) is to deny the truth or to reject to acknowledge something. Aljawhary mentions that *yunkir* is also to reject something known or unknown.(1987) Therefore, the two near-synonyms vary along the connotative dimension. *Yajhad* is used with concrete and apparent matters; however, *yunkir* is used with abstract things, so the different colors, languages and talents are apparent and visible for us, while the existence of Allah is invisible.

In Collins English dictionary, there is the word *deny* means to “reject an idea, accusation or something as false”, or “refuse to accept or believe”. In English, *deny* could be used for apparent or invisible matters, for example; “*the baron denied his wicked son*”, and “*deny the existence of evil spirits*”.(American Heritage dictionary) Consequently, *deny* could stand for both *yajhad* and *yunkir*. While *disbelieve* in Collin English Dictionary is to “reject to accept as truthful”. A person can say *deny the existence of evil spirits* or *disbelieve the existence of evil spirits*. However, it is correct to say *the baron denied his wicked son* but not vice versa.

Shafeeq translated *yajhad* as *disbelieve*, and it is previously mentioned *disbelieve* is used for abstract ideas. He translated *yunkir* as deny which is a good equivalent. If he translated them conversely, he would succeed to meet all the requirements of the four types of equivalence. However, he succeeded in translating the second near-synonym *yunkir*, but he did not succeed in translating *yajhad* accurately. After clarifying the nuances in the dictionaries, *yajhad* in this sentence could be translated as deny, and *yunkir* could be translated into both deny or disbelieve.

4. 1. 5 The analysis of the fifth synonymous pair

The 5th example:

9- هذا الكتاب يُعنى بمعالجة الجانب المأساوي من حياة البشرية جانب القلق والغم والإحباط.

10- إنَّ ممَّا يجلب الهمَّ كثرة الديون.

The translation:

9- Do not be sad is an important book for all. It is full of practical advice on how to repel **despair**.

10- The one who is inundated in debt is always **troubled**.

Although the words ‘*alhamm* and *alghamm*’ are a pair of near-synonyms, some scholars consider them as identical near-synonyms. Nevertheless, *Lisan Alarab* (1993) and *Mukhtar Alssahah* (1999) define *alghamm* as a state of sorrow, depression and trouble. It is derived from clouds which conceal the moon to create complete darkness. *Alhamm* is defined in *Alssahah* (1987) and *Maqayiees Allughah Dictionary*(1979) as a state of sorrow, a feeling of worry, and facing difficulties. Ibn Qayiem (2008) distinguishes *alhamm* from *alghamm*, and indicates that *alhamm* occurs before being in trouble, so it is related to future issues, while *alghamm* occurs while you are in trouble; it is related to present problems. *Alghamm* and *alhamm* both share sorrow but they do not share the feeling of worry.

Shafeeq translated *alghamm* into *despair*, which means a “complete loss of hope” in Collins English Dictionary. *Despair* is not even a near-synonym for *alghamm*. In addition, he translated *alhamm* into *troubled*, and *troubled* does not carry the sense of sorrow. Therefore, shafeeq did not focus on the near-synonyms in these two sentences. Consequently, he did not succeed to achieve the four types of equivalence.

Collins English Dictionary defines *gloom* as “partial or total darkness”, and also a “state of depression”. Moreover, *gloom* may come as a verb means to conceal or to cover. Random House Kernerman Webster's College Dictionary and Oxford dictionary describe *distress* as extreme anxiety and sorrow. Also, it could refer to health or financial problems. *Gloom* is a suitable equivalent for *alghamm*, because they share the same senses, and both of them are associated with darkness. *Alhamm* is stronger than worry, therefore; *distress* can stand for *alhamm*, because they share the state of anxiety and sorrow. *Gloom* and *distress* meet all the requirements of the denotative, the connotative, the formal, and the text-normative equivalences.

DISCUSSION

This section concentrates on discussing the professional translator (Shafeeq's) and the students' renditions of synonymous pairs, from the researcher's point of view. The selected translations are to be compared with each other and with the original Arabic synonymous pair to find out if the students and Shafeeq succeeded to recognize the nuances of the synonymous pairs and render them appropriately. In addition, the comparison is done to discover the difficulties that might face the translators.

The translation of the synonymous pairs by Shafeeq (2005) and the students are presented in the tables below. Table (1. a) illustrates inappropriate renditions of these near-synonyms by Shafeeq. Table (1. b) summarizes the results by giving the percentages of students' inappropriate renditions of synonymous pairs. The second table shows the researcher's suggested translations of these near-synonyms in light of their context.

Table 1(a): Shafeeq's inappropriate renditions for the synonymous pairs.

No.	Synonymous pair	Shafeeq's translation
1	(almaradh) المرض (assaqam) السقم	Sickness
2	(yajhad) يجحد (yunkir) يُنكر	Disbelieve Deny
3	(alghamm) الغم (alhamm) الهم	Despair trouble

Table 1. a shows that Shafeeq did not give appropriate translations for three synonymous pairs out of five. He was able to give the accurate equivalents for some near-synonyms, such as *sickness* for *almaradh* and, although he failed to identify and translate the nuances of these synonymous pair. Shafeeq succeeded to translate 'anṣit as *listen attentively* and *istami*' as *listen*. Also, he succeeded to translate *al'ilm* as *knowledge* and *alma'rifah* as *enlightenment*, which are appropriate translations

Table 1. b Percentages of inappropriate renditions for the synonymous pairs.

No.	Near-Synonym	Percentage
1.	(almaradh) المرض	100%
2.	(assaqam) السقم	
3.	(`ansit) أنصت	95%
4.	(istami`) استمع	
5.	(al`ilm) العلم	100%
6.	(alma`rifah) المعرفة	
7.	(yajhad) يجحد	52.5%
8.	(yunkir) يُنكر	
9.	(alghamm) الغم	97.5%
10.	(alhamm) الهم	

Table1. b shows that most students could not translate the synonymous pairs appropriately. In the first synonymous pair, 25% of the students translated *almaradh* accurately, and 30% translated *almaradh* as *disease*. In American Heritage Dictionary, *disease* is an “abnormal condition of a part of the body”, it refers to a specific known reason. Therefore, *sickness* is more comprehensive and appropriate for *almaradh*. However, they all failed to differentiate between the near-synonyms. Some of them considered the synonymous pair as identical synonyms. Others tried to differentiate between them, and they translated *assaqam* as *illness*. As mentioned previously, *illness* could be considered an appropriate equivalent if the adjective *long* is added, to be *long illness*.

Unfortunately, all the students did not succeed to distinguish the nuances between *`ansit* and *istami`*. Although, 97.5% of the students were able to translate *istami`* as *listen*, only 5% translated the synonymous pair accurately. Most of the students translated *`ansit* and *istami`* as *listen*. Regarding *al`ilm*, 52.5% of the students rendered it appropriately. They chose *knowledge* as an equivalent for *al`ilm*. Furthermore, 47.5% of the students recognized that there are nuances between the synonymous pair; however, they failed to discover these nuances in order to give appropriate equivalents. 17.5% of them translated *al`ilm* as *education*, which differs from *al`ilm*. In American Heritage Dictionary, *education* is “the knowledge or skill obtained or developed by a learning process”, so there is an organized process to get knowledge. As for *alma`rifah* 97.5% of the students translated it as also *knowledge*.

As for *yajhad* and *yunkir*, 47.5% failed to translate *yajhad*. 10% of them translated *yajhad* into *disbelieve* like Shafeeq’s translation, which is not accurate. In addition, 10% of them translated *yajhad* into *ignore*. *Ignore* in Collins English Dictionary means to “refuse to recognize

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someone or something”, not to refuse to believe or accept a truthful. Nevertheless, the students did better in translating *yunkir*. 70% of the students were able to translate *yunkir*, 57.5% translated *yunkir* as *deny* and 12.5% translated it into *disbelieve*, which both are acceptable. The result of translating this synonymous pair, *yajhad* and *yunkir*, is the best for the students.

The students faced difficulties in translating the synonymous pair, *alghamm* and *alhamm*. 37.5% translated *alghamm* as *grief*. In Random House Kernerman Webster's College Dictionary, *grief* is a sharp sorrow that may result of loss, it is stronger than *alghamm*. Also, 25% of the students chose *worry* as an equivalent for *alhamm*; however, *worry* is weaker than *alhamm*. Also, 12.5% translated *alhamm* as *anxiety*. The word *anxiety* carries the meaning of worry about something in the future, but *alhamm* also refers to acute anxiety and suffering. Therefore, *distress* could be better than *worry* and *anxiety*, since it carries these senses.

Table1. a shows that Shafeeq did not succeed to recognize three of the nuances of the synonymous pairs, in order to select the most appropriate equivalents. However, he rendered '*ansit* and *istami*', and *al'ilm* and *alma'rifah* into appropriate equivalents. Table1. b illustrates that the students also were not able to identify four of the nuances of the synonymous pairs, consequently they failed to translate them accurately. However, 47.5%, which is almost half of the students, were able to distinguish the nuances of the synonymous pair, *yajhad* and *yunkir*, and translate them correctly. Therefore, it is possible to say that the professional translator's competence is slightly better than the MA translation students, but that does not indicate that there is a huge gap between MA students and the professional translator in translating near-synonyms.

To sum up, the results of both shafeeq's and the students' renditions confirm that translators face difficulties in translating near-synonyms from Arabic into English, even they were allowed to use dictionaries. Also, it confirms Edmonds' opinion (1998) that that it is a hard job to find the same exact equivalent while translating from one language into another. First, some translators cannot even notice that there is a slight difference between the near-synonyms, so they translate them directly as identical synonyms without even checking dictionaries. Second, some translators are able to notice that there are nuances between the near-synonyms, but they cannot identify them accurately, which lead to inappropriate translation for the near-synonyms. Third, some translators are not aware of the importance of translating near-synonyms, as some of these near-synonyms could affect the meaning of the sentence. Fourth, it is not effective way for translators to look up the meaning of the near-synonym in bilingual dictionaries only, because bilingual dictionaries list all the synonyms, but they usually do not identify the differences between them. Fifth, translating near-synonyms may need time to find appropriate equivalents, which makes translators prefer saving time than having very accurate translation.

Therefore, translators need to check Arabic monolingual dictionaries to understand and identify the nuances of near-synonyms. As Alsowaidi (2011) stresses that the translators should be aware of the direct connotative shades of meaning, so translators may use dictionaries to realize the nuances. Old dictionaries, such as Lisan Alarab and Almuheet, are very useful and

accurate; however, it is not very easy to use these dictionaries, because translators have to deduce the nuances from the explanation and description. Besides, some books related to the same field could be useful to explain the nuances of near-synonyms. Moreover, translators must be faithful as much as possible to produce an accurate translation, and the more you concentrate on the small details of the text, the more accurate and appropriate translation you produce. In addition, translating near-synonyms as the same words could lead to loss or gain of meaning (Shiyab, 2007). When the translators do not differentiate and translate near-synonyms appropriately, that does not mean their translation is completely wrong, but it is not an accurate translation. However, sometimes the whole meaning of a sentence depends on differentiating the nuances of near-synonyms such as the first two sentences in this research which contain *almaradh* and *assaqam*. Therefore, if the translators do not render them appropriately, they will fail to convey the meaning of the sentences.

Table 2. Model translations

No.	Synonymous pair	Model translations
1.	(almaradh) المرض	Sickness
	(assaqam) السقم	Ailment – Long illness
2.	(`ansit) أنصت	Listen attentively
	(istami) استمع	Listen
3.	(al`ilm) العلم	Knowledge
	(alma`rifah) المعرفة	Enlightenment
4.	(yajhad) يجحد	Deny
	(yunkir) يُنكِر	Deny – Disbelieve
5.	(alghamm) الغم	Gloom(iness)
	(alhamm) الهم	Distress

The model translations for these ten near-synonyms are based on following the equivalence relations theory. The hierarchal arrangement of the five types of equivalence was useful and effective to enable the researcher to find the most appropriate equivalents for the synonymous pairs. In addition, the denotative and connotative dimensions set by (DiMarco et al., 1993) enable translators to precisely identify the nuances. This hierarchal arrangement could be helpful for translators too, to use it to ease the process of translating near-synonyms. This arrangement starts with the small details of the text. It starts with the denotative equivalence,

which is the main meaning of a word in dictionaries. Then, the translator could start working on nuances which differentiate near-synonyms from each other. When the translator gives priority to the denotative and connotative equivalences, he will eventually achieve the rest of the equivalences. Then, the translator could compare the target-language word to the original one, if it has the same style, and this is called the formal equivalence. Then, he can decide whether the selected translation is related to the same field or not. Sometimes the translator is not able to achieve all these equivalences, therefore; he should try to achieve at least the first two equivalences while translating near-synonyms in the social field. In case the previous equivalences are not effective or appropriate for the target-text reader, then the translator can move to the pragmatic equivalence. This arrangement could help translators to ease the process of translating near-synonyms, especially when the translators use Arabic and English monolingual dictionary rather than bilingual one, because monolingual dictionaries clarify the nuances precisely more than bilingual dictionaries.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion of the Study

This study of the translatability of Arabic near-synonyms into English has been conducted on the social field, because some studies have been conducted on the literary and Islamic fields. This research aimed at tracing the difficulties that encounter translators while translating Arabic near-synonyms into English in the social field. Before starting searching the topic, the research presented the previous studies that are related to the topic. It started with clarifying the synonymy concept from both the English and Arabic linguists' perspectives. Also, the research handled the literature that dealt with the translation and synonymy.

With reference to the 10 examples, extracted from the Arabic book '*La Tahzan*' for Al-Qarni (2003), one of these examples is a quotation for Baqqie bin Mukhallad, along with its English translation by Faisal Mohammad Shafeeq. Shafeeq was chosen, because his translation is the most sold. In addition, forty of MA translation students were chosen randomly to translate the same previous examples. The research preferred to chose only MA translation students, in order to have a fair comparison between them and the professional translator, rather than choosing B.A Translation students.

Shafeeq's translation has been analyzed, by following the hierarchical arrangement of the equivalence relations theory, which is set by the researcher, with the aid of the denotational and the connotative dimensions for DiMarco, Hirst, and Stede(1993) and with the use of dictionary usage notes. The research set a specific arrangement for the five types of equivalence to ease the process of translating near-synonyms in the social field. The analysis of Shafeeq's translation showed that he was not able to translate appropriately three synonymous pairs out of five. In addition, the results of the students' translations illustrated that 95% of the students failed to provide accurate equivalents for four synonymous pairs out of five. Therefore, when Shafeeq's translation results were compared with MA students' translations, the researcher has found that Shafeeq's translation is slightly better than MA students' translation.

The results of analyzing both Shafeeq's and the students' translations confirmed that translators face obstacles in translating Arabic near-synonyms into English. The most prominent obstacles are, some translators do not notice the nuances of near-synonyms, and some of them are able to notice the nuances of near-synonyms, but they do not succeed in finding their appropriate equivalents. Moreover, some translators prefer saving time rather than translating near-synonyms accurately.

The research provided model translations for the previous ten examples. Also, the research emphasized that following the arrangement of the five types of equivalence facilitates the process of translating near-synonyms. Besides, the study confirmed that it is more effective and useful to use Arabic and English monolingual dictionaries than bilingual dictionaries. The research also clarified the importance of translating near-synonyms accurately, because sometimes the meaning of a sentence could depend on the meaning of these near-synonyms.

Recommendations for Further Studies

The translatability of synonyms is an attention-grabbing topic. Some researchers conducted researches on different forms of synonyms, and in different fields. However, there are a lot of aspects that have not been studied yet. In addition, this study has shown that translators face difficulties in dealing with near-synonyms.

Therefore, the researcher recommends other researchers to investigate more in this area. Here are some suggested topics that might inspire researchers to investigate, such as the translatability of near-synonyms into Arabic in the political field, as some journalists translate the news from foreign newspapers, this topic could be very interesting and very important to be tackled. The same topic could be conducted on the medical field from English into Arabic and vice versa. Also, researchers could depend on the results which proved the difficulties translators face to find or create solutions to overcome this problem.

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Translation Task (Appendix)

Translate the following sentences into English and make sure to translate the underlined words please:

1- لا تحزن : فَإِنَّ الْمَرَضَ يَزُولُ.

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2- أيامُ السَّقْمِ لا صِحَّةَ فيها .

3- أنصتِ لكلام الله

4- خصَّص وقتاً من اليوم أو الليل ، تفتحُ فيه المذيع أو مسجلاً , واستمع إلى القارئ الذي يعجبك .

5- اطلب العلم .

6- ابحث عن المعرفة .

7- إن اختلاف ألواننا وألسنتنا ومواهبنا وقدراتنا آيةٌ من آياتِ الباري فلا تَجِدْ آياته .

8- الله سبحانه وتعالى لم يُنكِرْهُ أحدٌ إلا فرعونُ .

9- هذا الكتاب يُعنى بمعالجة الجانبِ المأساوي من حياة البشرية جانب القلق والغم والإحباط .

10- إنَّ مما يجلبُ الهمَّ كثرةُ الديون .

If you have any questions regarding this exercise, please contact us via dalmohammadi@gmail.com

Thank you for your cooperating

Findings (Appendix)**Table 1. a. Shafeeq's inappropriate renditions for the synonymous pairs.**

No.	Synonymous pair	Shafeeq's translation
1	(almaradh) المرض (assaqam) السَّقَم	Sickness
2	(yajḥad) يجحد (yunkir) يُنكِر	Disbelieve Deny
3	(alghamm) الغَمّ (alhamm) الهمّ	Despair Trouble

Table 1. b Percentages of inappropriate renditions for the synonymous pairs.

No.	Near-Synonym	Percentage
1.	(almaradh) المرض	100%
2.	(assaqam) السَّقَم	
3.	أنصت ('anṣit)	95%
4.	استمع ('istami)	
5.	(al 'ilm) العلم	100%
6.	(alma 'rifah) المعرفة	
7.	(yajḥad) يجحد	52.5%
8.	(yunkir) يُنكِر	
9.	(alghamm) الغَمّ	97.5%
10.	(alhamm) الهمّ	

Table 2: Model translations

No.	Synonymous pair	Model translations
1.	(almaradh) المرض (assaqam) السقم	Sickness Ailment – Long illness
2.	(`ansit) أنصت (istami) استمع	Listen attentively Listen
3.	(al`ilm) العلم (alma`rifah) المعرفة	Knowledge Enlightenment
4.	(yajhad) يجحد (yunkir) يُنكِر	Deny Deny – Disbelieve
5.	(alghamm) الغم (alhamm) الهمّ	Gloom(iness) Distress

