

## The Translation of Hedging in the Arabic Novel *Rijal fi Ashams* into English

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### Abstract

This study is focused on the translation of hedges from Arabic into English in Ghassan Kanafani's novel entitled *Rijal fi Ashams* (1962). The novel was translated into English by Hilary Kilpatrick in 1998 as *Men in the Sun*. The data was selected from all seven chapters of the novel in the original and translated version. The two main objectives of this study are to: (i) identify the translation procedures employed when translating the Arabic hedges into English and, (ii) examine the elements that come into play when translating the Arabic hedges into English. The translation procedures proposed by Vinay and Darbelnet are used to identify the type of procedures used by the translator in rendering the Arabic hedges into English. The findings of the study have shown that firstly, the translator tends to use oblique translation procedures in transferring most of the hedges from *Rijal fi Ashams*. The only direct translation procedure Kilpatrick uses is literal translation where several hedges in both languages have the same language function. Secondly, elements that influence the translation procedure include linguistic differences, the translator's preference and cultural differences between Arabic and English. It is cultural differences that clearly affect the degree of commitment expressed by some hedges in both languages.

**Keywords:** Arabic Novel *Rijal fi Ashams*, hedge, literary translation, English, Arabic.

### 1.1 Introduction

Hedges have existed as long as language itself, but the notion of a hedge is yet to be completely defined. Hedges have been systematically studied across various disciplines and genres for more than 45 years, but researchers' views are varied about this linguistic device. Several both narrow and broad definitions of hedges are available and there are several opinions as to what type of language elements function as hedges. Thus, there is no one comprehensive and precise taxonomy of hedges. However, most research on hedging attempt to understand this phenomenon by identifying its range of functions in a discourse.

The term 'hedges' was first used by Lakoff (1972, p.194) to mean words which make things more or less fuzzy. House and Kasper (1981) define hedges as words or phrases which

are written or uttered intentionally to protect one's public self-image. In other words, hedges are words or phrases that present the speaker a way of escape to avoid losing respect in front of an audience or critic. According to Hubler (1983), hedges are particularly used to increase the demand of the utterance, to be more tolerable to the discussor and thus raise the possibility of acceptance and decrease the chances of refusal. This may clarify the actual function of hedging as the position of the speaker trying to protect him/herself from probable denial from the listener/audience.

Coates (1987) highlights that hedging is a frequent phenomenon in daily conversation which aids in facilitating communication to show politeness or hide a lack of information. The concept of hedging also refers to certain words that one can use to avoid making promises or which can be used in an utterance to prevent the utterance from being considered as completely true or false. Crompton (1997) states that hedges maintain the degree of confidence of the writer in the proposal and display the extent of precision of the statement; the caution in relation to the degree of commitment helps to evade mistakes.

Hedges are linguistic forms such as 'I think', 'may be' and 'perhaps' which show the speaker's certainty or uncertainty about any subject under discussion (Coates, 2004, p. 88). Falahati (2006) and Vold (2006) concede that hedges are used not only to mitigate a statement made but also to persuade and affect the reader. Gunnarsson (2009) posits those hedges are forms of euphemism to deceive someone or to say something indirectly and to create distraction between speakers. Al Taweel, Saidat, et.al, (2011) explain that hedging is a rhetorical strategy where particular words are deliberately constructed in a specific way by a speaker/writer to signal a lack of full commitment. Coates (2004) points this out especially in political debates where hedging is very likely consciously used to reduce responsibility.

From the definitions above, it can be safely concluded that hedges are ambiguous expressions/phrases or words that aid a speaker to avoid giving a direct answer and they are strategies that the speaker can use to mitigate commitment or responsibility in order to protect him/herself and his/her face.

Hedges have been studied in language used in various fields like medicine, chemistry, economics, and politics (Hyland 1996, 2000; de Figueiredo-Silva 2001; Falahati 2006; Clemen 2002; Cameron 2003; Recski 2005; Šinkūnienė 2008; Buitkienė 2008;). Hedges have been studied in rhetorical sections of a text, for example, in introductions (Hyland 1996; Salager-Meyer 1997; Falahati, 2006) and in the context of politeness in scientific articles (Myers 1989), politeness in media writing (Wibowo and Yusoff 2014) and, politeness patterns in relation to gender (Holmes, 1995; Falahati, 2006; Makejeva 2017).

## 1.2 The Translation Procedures of Vinay and Darbelnet

Vinay and Darbelnet (1958/2000) state that because of the structural and metalinguistic parallelisms that occur between any two languages, a translator needs to use a range of procedures to get across the source language message effectively into the target language.

Vinay and Darbelnet divide their translation procedures into direct procedures which include: (a) borrowing (b) calque and (c) literal translation, and oblique translational procedures which comprise: (a) transposition, (b) modulation (c) equivalence and (d) adaptation. Below are the definitions of these procedures:

1. Borrowing is the transference of a certain word for example, a cultural concept from the source language into the target language.
2. Calque is when you transfer an expression or phrase from the source language literally into the target language.
3. Literal translation is considered as word for word grammatical translation.
4. Transposition involves all kinds of grammatical shifts for example, the change of the word class or passive to active voice etc., without changing the meaning in the source text.
5. Modulation denotes rendering a source text idea from a different point of view in the target text.
6. Equivalence is the reformulation of a source language phrase or expression in the target language with specific reference to titles of movies/books, clichés, idioms and onomatopoeic sounds.
7. Adaptation is when cultural references in the source language are substituted by equivalent references which are more appropriate in the culture of the target language.

### 1.3 Data

The data used in this study on hedging is taken from a Palestinian novel entitled *Rijal fi Ashams* which was written in 1962 by the well-known author Ghassan Kanafani (1936-1972) and published in 1963. Kanafani's novel which was written in Arabic was translated into English in 1998 by Hilary Kilpatrick as *Men in the Sun* and published in 1999. The novel is a piece of resistance literature which depicts some of the real-life experiences of the author as a Palestinian refugee. Kanafani's works are influential in shaping modern Arab literature and he continues to be regarded as a major writer in Palestinian literature.

Both the Arabic novel and its English translation consist of seven chapters. The story revolves around the individual tales of four men who journey together hidden in a lorry by an army man. The four men have one united purpose that is to escape from the sufferings in Palestine and to find a fresh start to their lives in Kuwait.

### 1.4 Hyland's Typology (1998)

In order to identify hedging expressions in the original Arabic novel and its English translation, the taxonomy proposed by Hyland (1998) is used. Hyland (2005) perceives hedges as a form of metadiscourse directing readers on how to evaluate propositions. He also sees them as devices employed by writers to introduce a proposal as an opinion rather than a fact (Hyland, 1998).

There are two major reasons for using Hyland's taxonomy over those proposed by other scholars. Firstly, unlike other taxonomies, Hyland's emphasizes on parts of speech which function as hedges. Secondly, his taxonomy is more organized and thus, it is easier to

distinguish the different type of hedges, which makes it more practical than other taxonomies. The present study therefore uses Hyland’s taxonomy for the categorization of hedges. Hyland’s (1998: 103–155) study on formal aspects of hedging consists of the following hedging types/categories:

1. Lexical verbs with an epistemic meaning: this type includes verbs expressing what Hyland (1998: 120) refers to as epistemic judgement, that is, verbs of assumption (e.g. *suggest, believe*) and deduction (e.g. *conclude, infer*) as well as verbs conveying evidentiary justification which express the degree of the author’s commitment (e.g. *seem, appear* (1998: 125);
2. Modal verbs used epistemically e.g., *may, might, must, should*;
3. Modal adverbs for instance, *probably, possibly, potentially, apparently* including so-called down toners e.g., *quite, fairly*;
4. Modal adjectives e.g., *possible, potential, likely, unlikely, apparent* and nouns e.g. *possibility*.

### 1.5 Data Analysis and Findings

This paper reports part of a larger study where the data comprised 43 hedge forms from a total of 79 hedges garnered from 67 sentences from 7 chapters of both the Arabic novel, *Rijal fi Ashams* and its English translation. The study only selected 43 hedges for its analysis as the other 36 samples are repetitions of the same type of hedge. The 43 hedges were first categorized using Hyland’s taxonomy of hedges which are divided into lexical verbs; modal verbs; modal adverbs; modal adjectives and modal nouns. There were no hedges that were identified in the form of modal adjectives and modal nouns from the data. The table below shows the number of hedges found under each of the three other categories and the percentage of hedges analysed in the study this paper is based on.

**Table 1: Hedges identified in the ST and TT**

| Hyland’s Typology of Hedges | Hedges analyzed | Total no. of hedges identified in each category | Percentage of hedges analyzed |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Lexical verbs               | 9               | 15  | 60%                           |
| Modal verbs                 | 29              | 57  | 50.9%                         |
| Modal adverbs               | 5               | 7   | 71.4%                         |
| Total                       | 43              | 79  | 54.4%                         |

The procedures used in translating the 43 Arabic hedges into English were based on Vinay's and Darblenet's (1958/2000) list of translation procedures. The analysis on the procedures showed up the following results:

**Table 1: Frequency of translation procedures used to convey the Arabic hedges into English**

| Translation Procedures | No. of Hedges translated using the procedure | Percentage   |
|------------------------|--|--------------|
| Equivalence            | <b>24</b>                                    | <b>55.8%</b> |
| Transposition          | 5  | 11.6%        |
| Adaptation             | 1  | 2.3%         |
| Modulation             | 2  | 4.6%         |
| Literal                | <b>11</b>                                    | <b>25.5%</b> |
| Total                  | 43   | 100%         |

It is clear from the above findings that Kilpatrick used the equivalence procedure (55.8%) the most when transferring the hedges in Arabic into English. This was followed by literal translations (25.5%).

This paper will present 8 representative samples of hedges which comprise 2 lexical verbs, 3 modal verbs and 3 modal adverbs. The discussion in this paper will focus on first, describing the type of translation procedure used for each hedge and second, the factors that influence the choice of the translation procedures. Each sample discussed in this paper will include the source text (ST), a transliteration of the Arabic ST, a back translation (BT) of the ST, and the target text (TT).

### 1.5.1 Lexical Verbs

Lexical verbs are considered as the main verb or full verb and all verbs are lexical verbs except helping/auxiliary verbs. Linguistically, lexical verbs are classified as open class verbs and convey semantic meaning or an epistemic meaning which can convey deductions like *conclude*, *infer* and epistemic judgements for e.g., *think*, *suggest*, as well as verbs used in reporting findings which reflect the author's commitment towards the findings for e.g. verbs of perception like *look*, *appear*, *seem*.

#### **Sample 1**

**ST:** يبدو انه لن يستطيع اختراق الحجاب الكثيف من خيبة الامل الذي ارتفع دونه ودون ذلك الشعور الملتف علي نفسه في مكان ما في رأسه.

**Transliteration:** yabdo anaho lan yastati'a ikhtiraq alhijab alkathief men khaibat alamal alathi artaf'a doonh wadoon thalik alsho'oor almoltaf a'la nafseh fi makan ma fi ra'seh.

**Back translation:** It seems that he would not be able to penetrate the thick veil of disappointment that separated him from that distinct feeling which existed, unexpressed, somewhere in his mind.

**TT:** It seemed he would not be able to penetrate the thick veil of disappointment that separated him from that distinct feeling which existed, unexpressed, somewhere in his mind.

In the above example, the hedge in the ST is **يبدو انه لن يستطيع** (**yabdo anaho lan yastati'a, it seems that he would not be able to**) and it expresses an epistemic meaning which refers to prediction and expectation of what will happen in the future depending on the speaker's intuition and level of experience concerning the matter. The use of **يبدو انه لن يستطيع** is to announce to the reader that this is the author's judgment, and this may or may not happen in the future and at the same time it gives him the space to be free from any criticism. The speaker is thus not taking full responsibility for his words. '**It seemed he would not be able**' in the TT likewise conveys the same intent which is predicting and expecting.

The sample here is a compound with multiple hedges which means the presence of more than one hedge within the same utterance, and this is referred to as a "harmonic combination" (Halliday 1970: 331, Coates 1983: 45). The first hedge in the ST is a present simple 'يبدو' which refers to an uncertainty but in the second hedge 'لن يستطيع' which consists of a particle 'لن' + a present simple 'يستطيع', the construction refers to something which may or may not happen in the future. In Arabic, when the particle **لن** precedes a present simple verb, it indicates a future tense. Like the ST, the TT too has two hedges: the first, is '**seemed**' which is considered as a lexical verb and '**would not be able**' which is classified as a modal verb, and both of these hedges refer to uncertainty and carry an epistemic meaning.

When we analyze the entire utterance, it is clear that Kilpatrick has also used a literal translation to allow the target audience to fully understand what is intended by the original text. In the TT phrase '**It seemed he would not be able**', Kilpatrick has used a past verb '**seemed**' to render the present simple 'يبدو'. This is a grammatical transposition. The translator has likewise used another grammatical transposition to translate '**would not be able**' because it refers to the past but the hedge in the ST 'لن يستطيع' is in the present simple tense, so the translator has changed the tense to match the first hedge which was translated as '**seemed**'. In this example, culture does not affect the translation but due to a difference in the tense system between Arabic and English, grammatical transpositions have taken place in the overall literal rendition in the TT.

### **Sample 2**

**ST:** **يبدو لي انك فلسطيني أنت الذي سيتولي تهرينا؟**

**Transliteration:** **yabdo li annaka** falastini aanta alathi syatwlaa tahrubina.

**Back translation:** **You seem to me** to be a Palestinian. Are you the one who's undertaking to smuggle us?

**TT:** You seem to me to be a Palestinian. Are you the one who's undertaking to smuggle us?

In Sample 2, 'يبدو لي أنك' (*yabdo li annaka*, seems to me) is used as a hedge in the ST to express guessing or expecting something based on some information or certain signs. It is used in the Arabic language to avoid responsibility about what is said and also to be polite and gentle when making a judgment. The hedge here consists of a present simple 'يبدو' + pronoun 'لي' (*li*, mine) + another pronoun 'أنك' (*annaka*, you). This structure is usually used to make judgments or predictions based on clues noticed by the user of the hedge. In such a hedge, the certainty and the commitment are at the lowest degree because it merely depends on a subjective judgment. The use of the translated hedge 'you seem to me' is similar to the hedge in the ST, and both the ST and TT refer to the lack of full commitment in the words uttered. This utterance gives the speaker the opportunity to retract his judgment if it is necessary or when he realizes that it is a false prediction. Both the ST and TT hedges are in the present simple tense. The two hedges in both versions share the same meaning, function and even structure. It is therefore easy for the translator to translate the original hedge lexically and grammatically: the translator has used a word for word or literal procedure to carry across the expression of a low commitment in the speaker's words.

### 1.5.2. Modal verbs

Modal verbs are represented in the following auxiliary verbs: *may, should, could, might, will, can, would, shall* and *must*. According to Hofmann (1966), modals can be divided into two categories according to the meanings they express which are root or epistemic meanings. Root meanings modify the surface structure of the subject which could be used to express ability, obligation and violation. By contrast, epistemic meanings of modal verbs can show the speaker's attitude, state of knowledge, belief, and opinion about the proposition.

#### **Sample 3**

**ST:** "إذا هاجموكم ايقظوني قد اكون ذا نفع"

**Transliteration:** "Itha hajamook iqithoni kad akoon tha nifh"

**Back translation:** "If they attack you wake me up perhaps I will help you.

**TT:** "If they attack you, wake me; I maybe of some use".

In the above example, the hedging device in the Arabic language 'قد اكون' (*kad akoon*, may be) consists of two words that is 'kad' and 'akoon'. 'Kad' is a particle which does not have a precise meaning and cannot stand alone without a verb and depends on the kind of verb that comes after it. When 'kad' is followed by a past simple verb it indicates certainty, but when it is followed by a present simple verb it indicates uncertainty and there is no full commitment in the words uttered. The function of the structure 'kad akoon' (**maybe**) in a present simple construction conveys an implicit promise to give a helping hand but there is no full commitment to the promise made. The listener/reader hearing/reading such a promise will not expect full responsibility from the speaker/writer. The hedge in the TT '**maybe**' has the same function as 'kad akoon' and nearly the same meaning.

Kilpatrick uses equivalence to translate the Arabic hedge phrase ‘**kad akoon**’ to maintain a similar function and effect on the target audience. The structure, however, is completely different because there is no particle like ‘**kad**’ in English and there is no category called modal verbs in Arabic. As such, the translator uses the literal procedure to translate the overall context, which is made evident by the back translation, but the hedge itself is translated with an equivalent in English. The Arabic hedge, ‘**kad + present simple verb**’ indicates uncertainty, but at the same time it promises relatively more commitment than the English hedge ‘**maybe**’. Here, the cultural differences between Arabic and English affect the degree of commitment expressed by ‘**kad akoon**’ and ‘**maybe**’.

#### **Sample 4**

**ST:** سيكون بوسعنا ان نعلم قيس. نعم... وقد نشترى عرق زيتون او اثنين... طبعاً... وربما نبني غرفة في مكان ما اجل. اذا وصلت.. اذا وصلت

**Transliteration:** saiakoon bosa'ina ann noalem Qais, wakad nashtary irq zaitoon awo ithnin warobama nabny ghorfa fi makan ma ajal itha wasalt, itha wasalt.

**Back translation:** We will have the ability in the future to teach Qais. Yes, and we may buy one or two olive shoots. Of course, we perhaps will have the opportunity to build a room somewhere if I arrive, if I arrive.

**TT:** We'll be able to send Qais. Yes, and perhaps buy one or two olive shoots. Of course, may be we'll be able to build a shack somewhere certainly if I arrive, if I arrive.

In Sample 4, we can find triple hedging in the ST while the TT has quadruple hedging. The three hedges in the ST are ‘سيكون بوسعنا’, ‘قد نشترى’ and ‘ربما نبني’ and the four in the TT are **we will be able**, **perhaps**, **may be** and **will be able to**. In the first hedge ‘سيكون بوسعنا’ (**saiakoon bosa'ina**, **we will have the ability**) the verb that denotes the future in Arabic is the letter ‘س’ (**sa**) which means ‘will’ in the TT and it is attached to present verb, ‘يكون’. This construction in the ST means that the speaker will have the chance to do something in the near future but he is not sure about this because anything may happen in the future and no one can be certain about it. In contrast, in English, the verb that indicates the future (‘will’) is independent of the present verb but provides nearly the same meaning and function, so both hedges in the ST and TT evoke the same effect on the readers despite having completely different structures.

In the second hedge, ‘وقد نشترى’ (**kad nashtary**, **may buy**) consists of the particle **kad** and a present simple which begins with the letter ‘ن’ ‘**na**’; the present simple denotes the future if we add ‘**na**’ at the initial position. This structure does not exist in the TT, so the translator has used the hedge ‘**perhaps**’ which aids in retaining the intent. The translator has thus employed an equivalent hedge in the TT to convey this ST hedge.

In the third hedge ‘ربما’ (**robama**, **perhaps**), the translator has used the literal procedure. This ST hedge implies that the possibility of the action happening is slim and this



can be understood from the back translation. In contrast, ‘maybe’ in the TT expresses a fairly good chance of the thing happening. The translator being aware of this cultural difference between Arabic and English adds an extra fourth hedge to provide a better understanding of the whole context.

While the first hedge in Arabic is close enough in form and function to the English hedge, the second Arabic hedge is completely different in form but has a close equivalent in English that carries a near synonymous meaning. As for the third hedge in Arabic, it is different from the English one owing to different levels of commitment expressed and this owing to a cultural factor. When hedges in the source and target language do not share the same degree of tentativeness because of culture, the translator may need to add a hedge to get across a more accurate understanding of the level of commitment and certainty intended by the source author as seen in this sample.

### Sample 5

**ST:** بوسعك ان تاخذ مكاني بعد ان تستريح قليلا... قد استطيع ان اساعدك علي عبور مركز الحدود العراق... ستصل هناك في الثانية بعد منتصف الليل وسيكون المسؤولون نياما.

**Transliteration:** bewsa’ka ann takhoth makani ba’da ann tasstarih kalila... kad astatia’ ann aosa’edika ala upoor markaz alhodood al Iraqi... satasil honak fi althaniah ba’da muntasaf allil wa sayakoon almasooloona niama.

**Back translation:** you will have the ability to take my place after you take a little rest.

**I may be able to** help you to cross the Iraqi’s frontier. **You will arrive** there at twelve o’clock after midnight, and the officials **will be asleep**.

**TT:** You can take my place when you’ve had little rest, **I may be able to** help you cross the Iraqi frontier.....and the officials **will be** asleep.

In Sample 5, we see a reversed situation from Sample 4 as the ST shows the use of three hedges while in TT, only two hedges are used. The first hedge in the ST ‘قد استطيع’ (**kad asttia**’, **may be able to**) consists of the particle **kad** + **present simple** as seen in Samples 3 and 4. Due to linguistic differences between Arabic and English (which were earlier mentioned in the discussions on the last two samples), the translator cannot retain the same structure but is able to replicate the function of the first hedge in the ST by finding an equivalent match in the target language.

As for the second hedge in the ST ‘ستصل’ the translator has decided to omit it very possibly to avoid awkwardness in the construction due to a cultural difference. The back translation of the ST makes it evident that target reader comprehensibility has been prioritized at this juncture. In the last hedge ‘وسيكون’ (**sayakoon, will be**) the letter **sa** expresses a future tense but in this example the future tense is used as a letter attached to the present simple, ‘س يكون’ (س + يكون) whereas in the TT structure the modal verb ‘will’ is separate from the verb. This is a linguistic difference which the translator easily solves with a grammatical shift or transposition. To reiterate, the translator has used equivalence to transfer the first hedge, omission for the second hedge and transposition for the third hedge in order to get across the source author’s intent.

### 1.5.3 Modal Adverbs

Modal adverbs are the expressions or particles that reflect the mood or attitude of the speaker and it used to increase or decrease the degree of certainty and the level of commitment. For example, modal adverbs like *perhaps*, *probably*, *definitely* and *likely* can be used to express different degrees of confidence or levels of responsibility in particular situations and signal if something will happen or not.

#### **Sample 6**

**ST:** هل مشيت كثيرا؟ لست ادري ربما اربع ساعات.

**Transliteration:** hal mashaita katheeran ? lasto adree robama arba' saa'at.

**Back translation:** Have you walked a lot? I don't know perhaps four hours.

**TT:** Have you walked a lot? I don't know. Four hours perhaps.

In Sample 6, the hedge in the SL 'ربما' (**robama, may be**) consists of two fragments ر ب and ما (roba and ma) which make up one word which means 'may be' or 'perhaps.' It used in an Arabic utterance when one wishes to evade certainty in order to escape from responsibility. In other words, the function of 'ربما' is to mitigate and to give oneself the chance to retreat from what one has said or written. The translated hedge in the target language is **perhaps** which is considered as a modal adverb. In English, 'perhaps' is used to show that something is possible or that you are not certain about something; it can also be used when one does not wish to be too definite or assertive in the expression of an opinion. Clearly, both the hedges fully share the same meaning and function and imply a nearly similar degree of responsibility and commitment. As such, the translator has used a literal procedure to translate the hedge. The only difference is the position of hedge. In the ST, it is in the middle of the sentence but in the TT, the hedge is at the end. This is merely a preference of the translator as 'perhaps' in English could come in the front, mid or end position. The equivalent **robama** in Arabic, likewise, can be used in all three positions.

#### **Sample 7**

**ST:** قل له ان يترك الباب مفتوحا عله يبرد.

**Transliteration:** qol laho ann yatrok albab maftohan **allaho** yabrod.

**Back translation:** Tell him to leave the oven door open I hope it will cool down.

**TT:** Tell him to leave the oven door open and perhaps it will cool down.

In the above example, the hedge in the ST 'عله' (**allaho, I hope**) is one of the expressions which is used to show wishful thinking. In general, it expresses a hope that something will happen in the future but in the above context, it can also be used to show possibility. The translator evidently considers this hedge as an expression which reflects possibility instead of hope and as such, translates **allaho** as **perhaps** which is an equivalent term to the Arabic hedge in English.

#### **Sample 8**

**ST:** كان الجو رائعا و هادئا وكانت السماء مازالت تبدو زرقاء تحوم فيها حمامات سود علي علو منخفض

**Transliteration:** kana alljawo raea'a wa hadiaa wa kanat alsamaa mazalat tabdoo zaqaa tahoomo fiha hamamat sood a'la a'loo monkhafid.

**Back translation:** The weather was beautiful and calm and the sky seems to be blue, with black pigeons hovering low in it.

**TT:** The weather was beautiful and calm and the sky still blue, with black pigeons hovering low in it.

In this final example, the situation is different from the earlier examples because the ST has a hedge 'تبدو' (**tabdoo, seems**) but in the English version there is none. The ST hedge here functions within a descriptive context. The atmosphere and the weather are described to be fine, but the writer also implies an uncertainty as to whether all is indeed fine with the use of **tabdoo/seems**. The translator does not seem to fully understand the tone of uncertainty evoked by the source author here and she therefore omits it. Here is a case of an Arabic hedge which is possibly tricky for the translator because in the culture of the native English speaker like Kilpatrick, a description of weather is referred to in very certain terms at a specific point in time. If the sky is blue at the point when a native English speaker is looking at it, then it is blue and cannot be seemingly so as the expression in the Arabic context suggests. This possibly points to a cultural difference between the two languages which the English translator overcomes via omission to avoid any confusion in the target reader's mind.

## Conclusion

While there are hedges in Arabic and English that function in exactly the same way and are structurally similar, there are also hedges in the Arabic linguistic system which are clearly somewhat different in the degree of certainty, possibility or commitment expressed when compared with their near equivalent hedge partners in English. This study revealed that Kilpatrick, the translator, has mostly employed equivalences (for 24 hedges or 55.8%) when transferring the Arabic hedges. Equivalences were used in instances where a hedge in Arabic did not exist in the same form or when the degree of commitment expressed in an Arabic hedge was slightly different from an English one due to cultural differences. This was seen in Sample 3 with the hedge '**kad akoon**' which does not exist in English, and which was substituted with the equivalent '**may**'. In Sample 4, equivalence is again used with the hedge **kad** + a present simple verb which starts with '**na**' as this morphological structure is non-existent in English and, so the translator resorts to using '**perhaps**' which is another near equivalent hedge. The second most frequently used translation procedure was literal translation. This procedure was used with 11 hedges (25.5%) and it was possible to translate literally as hedges like '**yabdo anaho lan yastati'a/it seems that he would not be able to**' discussed in Sample 1 exist verbatim in English and carry the same intent or degree of certainty, possibility or commitment. In some literal renderings of hedges from Arabic to English, shifts or transpositions had to be made to produce structures that were grammatical in the target language. This happened in 5 instances (11.6%) of the total 43 hedges analysed. Finally, two other translation procedures that were used are modulation (for 2 hedges, 4.6%) and adaptation (for 1 hedge, 2.3%). Both of these show that very few hedges in Arabic needed to be expressed in a distinctly different

form or point of view in English. In other words, the hedges used in Arabic taken from this data were not markedly different from their counterparts in English.

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