

# Using Address Terms in showing Politeness with Reference to Their Translation from Arabic into English

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## Abstract

This paper aims to investigate the translation of address terms between Arabic and English. Those terms belong to different systems in both languages. Certain characteristics of an address term in one culture tend to be lost when translated into another. Therefore, politeness theory will be used in order to find out whether the politeness intended by using an address term is transferred into the target language or not. For this study, a number of address terms are selected from a novel, *Madiq Alley*. Those terms are delivered to a number of subjects in a questionnaire. The analysis points out the use of such systems and how each system applies different politeness strategies to show respect and deference. The findings indicate that some patterns of face-work are lost in the translation process and that the relational terms of address are more challenging to translate than the absolute ones.

**Keywords:** Politeness, Terms of Address, Translation, Face, Relational, Absolute

## 1. Introduction

This paper takes at its outset the hypothesis that the translation of terms of address is a challenging process and some aspects of politeness tend to be modified and simplified if not sacrificed. It focuses on terms of address in translation from Arabic into English. The novel “Ziqaq Al-Madaq” was written by a renowned Egyptian novelist, Najeeb Mahfouz in 1947. The novel was translated into English in 1975 as “Midaq Alley” by an English translator called Trevor Le Gassick who is an Arabic literature specialist. The novel represents life after the Second World War (WWII) in Cairo. Ziqaq Alley is the name of an actual street in Cairo. It centers around the life of a small community which went through considerable upheaval after WWII. The main character of the novel is a poor, beautiful, young woman who, with her community facing serious problems as a result of the war, seeks a better life elsewhere. The novel includes terms of address which will illustrate the focus of this study. As will be discussed below, terms of address have very influential cultural characteristics attached to them. Inappropriately conveying these features will result in a mistranslation of cultural elements that have a considerable value in a particular culture. Brown and Levinson’s theory will be used in the investigation of terms of address and the rendition of such terms in the above mentioned novel will be discussed and analyzed from both Arabic and English perspectives.

According to Braun (1988:7) social honorifics are ‘words and phrases used for addressing’. Terms or forms of address usually accompany a person to identify their status, class, rank or position in a particular community or society. The use of address forms expresses the functional part of language; for instance, ‘have a seat, Sir’. The use of the term ‘Sir’ here has a function and implies respect as well as politeness. The degree of formality, the social status and the relationship between the participants are always manifested in an interactional act. In order to test the assumption that the use of address terms to show politeness is difficult to translate and some cultural characteristics are lost, Brown and Levinson’s (1987) theory will be applied to data taken from the aforementioned novel and delivered in a questionnaire, supported by further works and insights in the field of politeness.

## 2. Theoretical Framework of Politeness Theory

Most discussions of address terms go under the umbrella of politeness. House (1998) defines politeness as a sociocultural phenomenon implying respect and consideration to other interlocutors in interpersonal interaction. It is a feature of language in use. With regard to politeness, Brown and Levinson (1987:61) assume that every person has a “face” which can be positive or negative. It is the self-image of a person, connected with such notions as embarrassment or humiliation, and can be maintained, enhanced or lost. Wardhaugh (2006:276) discusses the concept of face in social interactional communications as a way of presenting a positive or negative face. He says: “we present a face to others and to others’ faces. We are obliged to protect both our own face and the faces of others to the extent that each time we interact with others we play out a kind of mini-drama.” Here, the focus is the importance of keeping a positive face when addressing people. This also requires the choice of the most suitable form of address according to the social interaction and relationship in order to obtain approval of other interactants. In terms of politeness, positive face, argues Wardhaugh (2006:277), leads to solidarity and friendship whereas negative face leads to apology and indirectness.

Politeness in everyday conversation means to show respect, to be nice and to have a good manner with appropriate behaviour towards others in an interactional act. Politeness theory investigates the linguistic behaviour participants in communications use to express themselves and strategies they adopt to achieve their conversational goals.

Lakoff (1990:34) defines politeness as ‘a system of interpersonal relations designed to facilitate interaction by minimizing the potential conflict and confrontation inherent in all human interchange’. She proposes two basic interests or strategies in human communication; ‘be clear’ and ‘be polite’ (House 1998:56). ‘Be polite’ is a goal achieved through the politeness rules which are present in any communicative act. As cultures differ, so rules and emphasis on rules differs as well. A given culture may stress a particular rule more than another (Ellen 2001:3). These rules are:

- 1- Do not impose

The rule maintains formality through taking a distance. For example, the speaker may opt for the use of V (vous), French plural pronoun, in a language relying on such distinction.

- 2- Give options

Lakoff links this rule to deference, which means options given to the addressee by using hedges, tag questions or hesitancy.

- 3- Make the addressee feel good, be friendly

This rule assures informality and friendliness or as Lakoff calls it ‘camaraderie’. With regard to terms of address, the use of nicknames fits into this category or even the use of names alone (Lakoff 1975:64-70).

Lakoff’s model of politeness does not, on its own, provide a particularly useful explanation of terms of address. Although the rule ‘be friendly’ may lead to the use of nicknames to establish familiarity and informality, which was useful in the analysis of the questionnaire data, it cannot be applied directly to terms of address in general.

In his book ‘Studies in the Way of Words’, Grice (1975) proposes the Cooperative Principle (CP) in relation to pragmatics. It rests on idea that people are intrinsically cooperative and in a default situation they aim to be as informative as they can in communication. It can be summarised in the following conversational maxims:

- 1- Quantity Maxim: to offer the required amount of information
- 2- Quality Maxim: to make the contribution offered true
- 3- Relation Maxim: to be relevant
- 4- Manner Maxim: to be unambiguous and clear

The two categories quantity and quality are interrelated so that the information to be provided should be as informative as is required and it should not be more informative than is required (Grice 1975:26). Therefore, the CP suggests that the contribution offered in a communication process should be to the point and not excessive. It also has to be genuine, satisfactory to the needs of interlocutors and without obscurity. The manner maxim is the one which explains Lakoff’s ‘be clear’ strategy. It could be argued that the four maxims have no direct relation to address terms and will not be helpful in the discussion of data but they were presented to make the point of the argument as solid as possible. On the other hand, Leech (1983:79) considers that the CP is needed but insufficient in defining and discussing politeness and he postulates the Politeness Principle (PP).

Thus, Leech (1983) posits the Politeness Principle as a complementary principle to the Grice’s CP. Leech (1983:9) explains that if one of the conversational maxims (quality maxim) was broken in an interactional event between participants by telling a lie, then the CP fails to account for the event. The PP works through six maxims which can be summarised as follows (Leech, 1983:132):

- Tact Maxim: (a) minimize cost to other, (b) maximize benefit to other.
- Generosity Maxim: (a) minimize benefit to self, (b) maximize cost to self.
- Approbation Maxim: (a) minimize dispraise of other, (b) maximize praise of other.
- Modesty Maxim: (a) minimize praise of self, (b) maximize dispraise of self.
- Agreement Maxim: (a) minimize disagreement between self and other, (b) maximize agreement between self and other.
- Sympathy Maxim: (a) minimize antipathy between self and other, (b) maximize sympathy between self and other.

Leech (ibid) differentiates between participants as self (the speaker) and other (the hearer or third party). According to Leech, the degree of importance of the maxims and sub-maxims vary, for instance, sub-maxims (a) tend to have much importance than sub-maxims (b).

### 3. Brown and Levinson’s Politeness

Brown and Levinson’s (1987) notion of politeness is structured around ‘face’. They talk about a model person (MP) who is considered to be fluent in a natural language. The MP is assumed to have a ‘face’; which can be interpreted as a ‘public self image’ which includes two categories (ibid: 62):

“negative face: the want of every ‘competent adult member’ that his actions be unimpeded by others.

positive face: the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least by some others.”

When a communication between interlocutors takes place, some verbal acts may represent a threat to the hearer's (H) self-image; that is called *face-threatening act* (FTA). For example, in Arabic, especially Libya, University professors are always addressed by the title (Dr.) and to call them by just their first or last names is considered to be impolite and a performance of FTA. On the other hand, if the addresser or speaker (S) uses the title term (Dr.) in addressing a University professor then the S lessens the threat to the other's face; that is what Brown and Levinson call *Face-saving act* (FSA). Yule (2010:135) explains that 'negative' does not mean 'bad' but it is the opposite of 'positive' and the need to be imposition-free and autonomous.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987:68-70), there are a number of strategies in performing FTAs. Depending on several factors (outlined below), S may choose either to commit or not to commit the FTA. If the former, then S may choose to go off record or on record. To go off record indicates that the meaning is negotiable; it is to give hints to the S's wants without doing it directly. On the other hand, going on record means either to perform the FTA without redressive action or with redressive action. Committing the FTA without redressive action is to perform the act in a clear, direct and unambiguous way. Or the S may choose to include redressive action, which means that two forms are available for S; either positive politeness or negative politeness. Positive politeness is to show solidarity and it is directed to the positive face of the addressee, H. It is to show that S's wants are the same as H's wants. Negative politeness, on the other hand, is to show deference and it is directed to H's negative face in a way that to satisfy (redress) and not to interfere in his/her freedom of action so that their wants are unimpeded.

In an interaction situation, there are acts that threaten S's negative face such as *expressing thanks* and other acts that threaten the S's positive face such as *apologizing*. Other acts threaten the H's negative-face and positive-face wants. However, the choice of FTA in a communication event is determined by three sociological variables between S and H:

- The social 'distance' (D)
- The relative 'power' (P)
- The absolute 'ranking' (R)

In brief, the weightiness of FTA is high when the D is great between S and H or H is considered more powerful than S and when the degree of imposition is high in a given culture. In this case, more communicative strategies are expected to be performed. And the weightiness of FTA is low when the D is low between the interlocutors and S is more powerful than H and the degree of imposition is low in the culture in question. In this case, a low number of communicative strategies will be adopted (Brown and Levinson, 1987:74-76).

### 3.1 Positive Politeness

Positive politeness is intended for the addressee's positive face. The wants of S are desirable to H. Narloch (2005:7) states that the speaker is performing FSA as a way of promoting and emphasizing solidarity and closeness between S and H. He further states that both interactants have a common goal. As this action takes place, the use of address names such as nicknames is usually applied. Brown and Levinson (1987:103) illustrate that the shared wants and knowledge of participants that represent approval of and interest in each other's common goal are expressed through strategies. These positive politeness strategies are divided into three categories: claim common ground, convey that S and H are cooperators and fulfill H's wants (for some X).

### 3.2 Negative Politeness

Negative politeness is intended for the addressee's negative face. It affirms that H's actions are free and not hindered. Narloch (2005:7) states that the speaker leaves it open to the addressee to say 'no' by offering him (H) opportunities. The speaker does this by using modal verbs such as 'could', 'might' or 'sorry to bother...'. In doing so, the speaker minimizes or avoids imposition. Brown and Levinson (1987:130) outline ten negative politeness strategies which seem to be of high level of redress; more redressive than positive politeness.

Although Brown and Levinson claim universals in terms of politeness, Fudaka and Asado (2004:192) dispute its universality. Wierzbicka (1985) and Gu (1990) cited in Fudaka and Asado (2004:192) argue that the model depends on a European, Anglo-Saxon cultural background. Matsumoto (1989) and Ide (1989) also argue that the theory was not applicable to Japanese honorifics (hon). However, the notion of Brown and Levinson's face will be applied to some Arabic terms of address and honorifics in the data analysis section to test its applicability and usability. Moreover, and due to its broad and specific aspects of dealing with politeness, it is thought that it might be applicable and relevant in the Arabic address terms sphere. Thus, this model will be used in the data analysis as the main theme of the discussion.

Considering politeness in terms of translation, understanding the importance of the message and what it must convey from one language and culture to another is essential. In other words, it is crucial for the translator to recognize the motive that led the speaker to be polite. Conversely, what poses a considerable challenge to translators is the pragmatic principle known as the 'Irony Principle' (Leech 1983:142). It is the principle that allows the addresser in an interpersonal interaction to be impolite although he seems to be polite. Failing to comprehend such a gesture from the addresser will definitely result in improper rendition of the intended message.

## 4. Types of Address Terms

Levinson (1983:90) notes that terms of address can be divided into two types: *relational* and *absolute*. The relational aspect includes relations between

- Speaker and referent (e.g. referent honorifics)  
Such honorifics include the T/V distinctions of pronouns where the speaker conveys the respect only by referring to the target.
- Speaker and addressee (e.g. addressee honorifics)  
Addressee honorifics include respect titles where the speaker can convey respect without necessarily referring to the target.
- Speaker and bystander (e.g. audience honorifics)  
The audience and bystander honorifics are where the speaker refers to a person who is not participating in the talk but may overhear the talk.
- Speaker and setting (e.g. formality levels)  
The setting or the social activity may influence the use of address terms i.e. the speaker would be able to use informal social honorifics in formal situations Levinson (ibid:90-91).

Absolute aspects of address terms indicate that some summons terms are reserved to the speaker and others to the hearer. For example, *your honour* and *Mr. President* are address terms can only be directed to persons who occupy such a post (Levinson, ibid: 91). In some languages like Arabic, some terms can be directed to women but not men. Terms which are feminine or masculine-oriented are also said to be absolute. For instance, the term ‘teacher’ will have a suffix that differentiates a male from a female.

To further elaborate on these two kinds, if the Arabic term “أستاذ” (Professor) is used to address someone who is really a professor and the addressee has the right to be called by this title, then he is under the ‘absolute’ category.

Relational address terms, on the other hand, are explained by Volkel (2010:196) as honorifics that “indicate the difference in status or rank between speaker, addressee, other participants or over hearer, etc. ... [since] they encode relations that are important in a speech event”. Revisiting the above “أستاذ” (Professor) example in a relational sense, the term “أستاذ” (Professor) can be used by any member of the society, say, shopkeeper, porter, chef to address any other member of the society, especially a stranger, so show respect in one way, or ironically in another. Thus, from the translation perspective, relational address forms are more challenging than the absolute ones for their use depends on the situation in which the speaker and addressee are involved. Besides, it is not always the lexical meaning of the term which is intended but rather the implicit meaning.

Rendering the appropriate cultural form of address into another language - especially the relational ones - is a significant challenge for translators and particularly interpreters as they are under considerable time pressure in addition to the difficulty of deciding how to address the other party correctly as articulated by the original speaker. This research is intended to show the difficulty of translating terms of address and transferring politeness where cultures intervene.

### 5. Translating Terms of Address

According to Methven (2006) the translator should opt for pragmatic translation when working on terms of address. His argument is based on the lexical gap between languages. Therefore, the semantic fields of address terms vary, and it is likely that there will be one term in a language equivalent to two or more terms in another. For example the second person pronoun ‘you’ in English is equivalent to four in Arabic. The kinship address term ‘uncle’ in English has several usage in Arabic which are not applicable in English. Beside its use to family members, the term ‘uncle’ can also be used to address non-family members in Arabic such as old people or sometimes strangers. Methven (2006) maintains that the cultural connotations of a term should be focused on rather than the direct equivalent of it. What he means by that is that for the translator to be in the safest place is to provide a pragmatic translation.

Put simply, pragmatic translation is to translate by opting for the closest equivalence to the source text (ST) and ensuring the equivalence of illocutionary force; however, a semantic loss is believed to take place (Methven 2006). Hasan (1997:240) states “the main purpose of pragmatic translation is accurate communication of information”. In so doing, some semantic content is to be sacrificed in order to maintain the pragmatic effect intended by the speaker.

Xiao-ying (2007), on the other hand, suggests the cognitive model for translating terms of address. Unlike Bassiouney (2009) and Wardhaugh (2006) who look at terms of address from a sociolinguistic point of view, Xiao-ying discusses the topic from a cultural difference perspective. He argues that the wider the difference the more difficult the translation of address terms. He cites BAO Hui-nan’s (2002) discussion of translating cultural differences which is summarized in five points. His method of dealing with the topic from a cultural and cognitive perspective can be attributed to his data which are literary works. He associates the translation of terms of address which are carried on the literary works with what he calls ‘experiential view’. He claims that the person’s experience of the world is usually reflected in the translation. The cognitive model is connected with the shared experience of the outside world and the more experience of the other culture the translator possesses, the more accurate the translation.

### 6. Data and Methodology

This section discusses data selection and provides a justification for the choice of data. It gives a brief account of the novel and the number of address terms applied in it. As it can be seen not all address terms and honorifics in the novel were chosen but merely those which outline the aims of the study. The methodology also discusses the techniques and procedures in the light of the theoretical framework set in the previous sections.

### 6.1 Data Selection

The selection of corpus data was made to be in harmony with the politeness theory. Kennedy (1998: 70) stresses that "the optimal design of a corpus is highly dependent on the purpose for which it is intended to be used". The corpus data is an actual translation of a fictional novel called *Midaq Alley*. Thus, it was based on the relevance, variety and richness of address terms in the chosen novel. In other words, the forms of address in the novel are quite pertinent to the topic and they constitute a range of various types of honorifics. Moreover, it contains plenty of address terms and honorifics which will serve the purpose of illustrating the problem in question. These address terms are neither the most difficult nor the easiest to translate. The choice of novel can be attributed to the shortage of Arabic literature translated into English.

The universality claim of Brown and Levinson's politeness theory will be tested on Arabic terms of address. It will also investigate whether or not the same FTAs in Arabic are sacrificed in the process of translation. Put differently, it was hypothesized that face-saving or face-threatening aspects of terms of address (hereafter referred to as face-work) are likely to be lost or mis-transferred in the process of translation. This study will investigate this loss with regard to address terms and will also shed light on the difficulty of translating them while maintaining the same act whether it is a face-saving or face-losing one.

#### 6.1.1 Midaq Alley

The novel "Ziqaq Al-Madaq" was written by a renowned Egyptian novelist, Najeeb Mahfouz in 1947. The novel was translated into English in 1975 as "Midaq Alley" by an English translator called Trevor Le Gassick who is an Arabic literature specialist. The novel represents life after the Second World War (WWII) in Cairo. Ziqaq Alley is the name of an actual street in Cairo. It centers around the life of that small community which went through considerable upheaval after WWII and continues to suffer the effects of that conflict. The main character of the novel is a poor, beautiful, young woman who seeks to escape from this situation and find a better life elsewhere. The novel includes some terms of address which will serve the purpose of this study. Each character in the novel will axiomatically have an address term. However, not all address terms used in the novel are presented in this paper. The chosen terms were hypothesized to pose a challenge to translators.

### 6.2 Procedures for Analysis

The analysis approach of this paper is qualitative as it is based on description. The sampling process best serves the purpose of the study. Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) maintain that this type of sampling is "widely used in qualitatively oriented research projects". The sample of this paper is argued to be representative of the difficulty that translators encounter in translating address forms. Thus, a number of address terms were selected in their context from the novel, those terms represent a particular aspect of face-work. In other words, these terms may convey an implicit or explicit function under their literal meanings. A term might be used to show respect, power, distance, intimacy, etc. However, in the process of translation the intended meaning which prompted X to use such a term may be lost in the target text. Six address terms were selected for analysis using Brown and Levinson's politeness model. The terms are also divided into two categories; absolute and relational.

Those six terms were delivered to several participants in a questionnaire (translation task) in order to translate them from Arabic into English. The participants were males and females with a high level of English. Some are working as translators, others have MSc and PhD qualifications in translation. However, some of the participants are PhD students in majors other than translation. The results of the translation task will be compared with the translated version of the novel. Having collected the data, they will be carefully analyzed using the Brown and Levinson's taxonomy of positive and negative faces. It will attempt to identify whether or not the face act is conveyed in the translation.

### 6.3 Subjects

A translation task was delivered in a form of questionnaire to eighteen participants to demonstrate the problem in question. All participants are native speakers of Arabic, three of them are PhD students in UK universities studying a major which is neither translation nor linguistics. Four of the students specialize not in translation but in linguistics and the other eleven are MSc or PhD translation students, or trained translators who study and work in the UK. However, twelve of the participants who responded to the task and most of them are those of translation field. The subjects were chosen from three categories - linguistics, translation, and other specialisations - to see how they dealt with translating the address terms. Due to time restrictions and some other obstacles, the task was delivered online and the use of dictionaries was allowed, as this was thought to contribute to the production of varied and accurate translations.

### 6.4 Results

The translation of the subjects of the address terms that presented in the translation task is tabled in the list below. The subjects used different spellings for the same term but these terms were standardised in order to not confuse the reader.

Table 1. Questionnaire result

No.	Arabic terms of address	Subjects' renditions
1	ياسى السيد	Mr., Mr. Saed, oh virile/ masculine/ mannish
2	درويش أفندي	Master, Sir, Master, my Sir, dear Mr., Si El-Sayyid Darwish, Darwish Affendi, Mr. Darwish, Sir Darwish, Mr., Mister Darwish

3	الست حميدة هانم	Lady Hamida, madam Hamida, Mrs Hamida hanem, and Revered Mrs. Hamida, Ms. Hamida, Miss Hamida, Ms Madam Lady Hamida, Respected Mrs. Hamida
4	بأبيلة	Miss, Mistress/Ms, Abla, teacher, aunt
5	ياست أم حسين	Ms Um Hussain, Um Hussain, Mrs. Um Hussain, you Lady Um hussain, oh please Hussain's mum, oh Ms Um (mother of) Hussain
6	الشيخ درويش	Sheikh, the Sheikh, Sheikh Darwish

## 7. Patterns of Politeness Shifts in Using Honorifics: Analysis of the Data

This section discusses and analyses the findings of the questionnaire and compare them with the translations of Le Gassick. The analysis and discussion is based on Brown and Levinson theory of face acts. The selected address terms are divided into two categories; relational and absolute.

### 7.1 Relational Address Terms

#### 7.1.1 السيد "يا سي اساييد" translated into "Mr. Alwan"

Target Text	Source Text	Literal Translation
However, she merely, said, "You are thinking of going as far as that, <u>Mr. Alwan</u> ?"	ولكنها قالت بشي من الارتياب: لهذا الحد يا سي السيد! فقال الرجل باهتمام جدي:	But she said with little suspicion: To that extent .....?!
"I've been waiting for you to call for a long time and I was about to send someone to look for you. What's your opinion?"	قد انتظرتك طويلا، وكنت على وشك أن أرسل في طلبك. فما رأيك؟	The man said with serious interest: I've been waiting for you for ages, and was about to send someone to call you. So what do you think?

Alwan is from a relatively rich family within the alley community. Most of the alley inhabitants are from poor families. This status elevates him and grants him a respected position. Umm Hamida (mother of Hamid), a match-maker and of a low status in the alley community, replies using compound honorifics to show exaggerated respect. Although D between them is close and P is low, she tends to use a term to save her face, FSA which indicates the opposite.

To elaborate more on the term itself, The Arabic social honorific "سي السيد" is a compound phrase. It consists of two terms of address which function as one. However, this double-marked way showing respect is very difficult to translate. To deconstruct the compound phrase, it has two words; "سي" and "السيد". The word "سي" is the diminutive form of "السيد" and means 'Lord'. In Arabic, irrespective of the term "سي", the term "السيد" can be used to address someone without mentioning his first or surname.

Le Gassick and 5 participants render this as "Mr." which does not reflect the intended level of respect and politeness. Moreover, it threatens the face of H. Actually in English, as mentioned above, 'Mr.' can be used to address anyone without job or position restriction. Parkinson (1985:157) argues that in translating "Mr." into "السيد" – (Sayyid) in Arabic is offensive to addressee. It is offensive because the term "السيد" has a very high value and status in Arabic and to refer to someone of such high status with "Mr." is not advisable. Thus, it can be argued that a FSA was translated into a FTA. This is merely to show how far one might go unintentionally. Two participants translated them as 'sir' and 'my sir' and the term was also rendered into 'master', 'my dear' and 'virile, masculine, mannish master'. Neither 'my dear' nor 'master' reflect the face act which exists in the term "سي السيد". 'my dear' is an endearment term which maximizes intimacy. On the other hand, the term 'sir' is the equivalent of "السيد" and might reflect some of the respect intended in this cultural address term.

#### 7.1.2 درويش أفندي "Darwish Effendi" translated into "Darwish Effendi and, in other contexts, he must wear a suit."

Target Text	Source Text	Literal Translation
Fate, however, was quicker than the supervisor, for he insisted on seeing the Deputy Minister himself. <u>Darwish Effendi</u> as he was then still known, entered the Deputy Minister's office looking very serious and respectful, greeted him in a man-to-man fashion, and addressed him in a manner filled with confidence and self assurance:	... ولكن المقدر كان اسرع من حزم المدير، فطلب الرجل يوما مقابلة وكيل الوزارة، ودخل درويش "أفندي" – كما كان وقتذاك – حجرة الوكيل في تودة ووقار، وحياء تحية الند للند، وبات قائلا بثقة وبيقين:	But the destined was quicker than the determination of the boss, one day the man asked to meet the Minister deputy, and <u>Darwish.....</u> entered – as it was known – to the room of the deputy in calm and respect, and saluted him in a man-to-man greeting, and said in confidence and assurance:

Darwish is another impoverished man in the alley. He has been through a lot of troubles throughout his life. His living condition is of low status and he faces many problems at work. One day he decides to meet the minister's deputy to discuss some issues with him. However, the writer of the novel uses the term "effendi" with Darwish.

According to an on-line dictionary (dictionary.com) the term "effendi" in Arabic "أفندي" is a respect term of Turkish origin and used to address someone who has a higher position or rank, especially in government circles. It is mainly used in police and army spheres nowadays, but can also be used for describing someone wearing western clothes, especially a close-fitting, flat-topped, brimless hat which is called a 'tarboosh'. It could be seen in the next paragraph that this may be what led Le Gassick to the strange and rather inappropriate translation apart from "Effendi". However, clothing description is the intended meaning in the data and to bring Jucker and Taavitsainen's (2003:4) views to the discussion, they explain that terms of address are "culturally dependent and change in the course of time as old criteria become obsolete and come to be replaced by new criteria". Therefore, the term "أفندي" may be applicable to officers nowadays.

Le Gassick's translation of the term is completely misleading, it reads "he must wear a suit or he wore a suit". The term is used when D and P are high in order to soften the imposition. As far as language is concerned, this is not a social honorific but a sentence. What led to this rendition may be the concept of a non-European wearing European clothes. However, the indication of such a statement should not lie in the clothes themselves, but rather with the idea of someone being polite and looking like a gentleman with a certain standard of literacy, i.e. a person with a good and respected position in society rather than referring to his clothes. Seven of the participants rendered the term as 'Sir' and 'Mr.', one participant left it out and two others opted for just the first name which also does not convey the FTA in the source text. 'Effendi' as two participant transliterated it may be appropriate as to assign it back to its Ottoman origin.

#### 7.1.3 الست حميدة هانم "alset Hamida hanem" translated into "Mrs Hamida Alwan"

Target Text	Source Text	Literal Translation
Hamida, who was braiding her hair, burst into laughter and said with exaggerated pride, "In the care of Mrs. Saniya Afify, and <u>Mrs. Hamida Alwan!</u> "	قهقهت حميدة وقد بدأت تضفر شعرها، وقالت بكبرياء مصطنع: تحت رحمة الست سنية عفيفي، والست حميدة هانم ... طبعاً ..	Hamida giggled and started to braid her hair and said in artificial pride: Under the mercy of .....Saniya and ....Hamida .....
"Of course ... of course, you street orphan, you daughter of an unknown father."	طبعاً يا القبطية الطور، يا بنتا المجهول ...	Of course .. of course you street-found girl, you daughter of unknown.

Hamid is overjoyed and thrilled at the moment the affluent Alwan asked for her hand. She is having a joyful chat with her mother and teasing her, saying that she would be a wife of wealthy man in the alley. Her mother, who had endured a tough life, told her daughter she would not stay under the mercy of Saniya, the landlady, but would enjoy the wealth of Alwan as her daughter. Then Hamida dreaming of being high-class replied with irony that her mother would be under the mercy of Saniya and herself (giving herself two very respectful and high honorifics, "الست" and "هانم").

Both are terms which exhibit respect and superiority. They are usually used when D and P are high to which means more communicative strategies will be used. However, in this context, the terms are used ironically and Hamida refers to herself using these terms to make fun of her mother. Therefore, it can be said that they are intended for the positive face of H (Hamida's mother) and her wants are unimpeded. Le Gassick's rendition is focused on just one term not two; he left one out. And to translate it into "Mrs. Hamida Alwan" does not convey the ironic sense it bears. Unlike the participants in this study, Le Gassick has full access to the novel, and that is why he rendered it as *Mrs. Hamida Alwan* since Alwan is the one who intends to marry her. Four participants translated the term as 'Mrs.' which indicates a married woman and two rendered it into 'Ms.' and one into 'Miss', which indicates an unmarried woman. This suggests that the term "الست" in Arabic can be used for both single and married woman. On the other hand, the term "هانم" was translated to 'Lady', 'Madam', 'Revered', 'Respected' and the transliteration form 'Hamen'. Both 'revered' and 'respected' exhibit the superiority and respect in the source text.

#### 7.1.4 يا أبله "ya abela" translated into "mademoiselle"

Target Text	Source Text	Literal Translation
"Good morning ... this is my friend Titi."	- صباح الخير.. هذه صديقتي تيتي...	Good morning .. this is my friend Titi ...
The two girls nodded their heads, the young man replied in a thin effeminate voice, "Welcome, <u>mademoiselle</u> ."	وحنّت الفتاتان رسيهما تحية، ثم قال الفتى بصوت منكسر مخنث: - أهلاً يا أبله ..	The two girls bowed their heads as greeting, then the boy said in a broken and effeminate voice: Welcome <u>teacher</u>

In a dancing school to which Hamida goes, abandoning the alley and starting dancing lessons. This scenario is her first lesson, escorted by Faraj, the man who brought her to the school, she meets the trainer in the school who then calls her “welcome teacher”. This situation is very formal one and the trainer, as it goes, will initiate the meeting with a respectful term, he has to show respect, politeness and friendliness.

The term “أبلة” meaning female “teacher” is used relationally in order to give a positive and valued status to the addressee. H’s positive face was not threatened and it is predicted that more communicative strategies will be applied as D and P are high between them. S, though powerful than H, is applying the negative politeness strategy; give deference. Such use will defuse the ‘potential face-threatening acts’ (Brown and Levinson 1987:178). In this situation, H who is Hamids will give S, the dance-trainer, a positive face as the term used satisfies her want which is superior treatment, i.e. she was treated as a superior. Le Gassick borrows a term of French origin, *mademoiselle*, in an attempt to convey the FTA. The term, however, does not bear the value of using “أبلة” in Arabic. Two of the participants do not translate the term. Some of them used ‘miss’ which is also different from the ST as it indicates that H is single, while in Arabic the term could be used for both a married or unmarried woman. Another two of the participants attempted to transliterate it but the strategy is, on the one hand, ambiguous to the reader and on the other, does not display the politeness and respect to H. The literal translation of the term ‘teacher’ was also applied by participants but the relational use of the term distinguishes it from the absolute type and then refutes it as the addressee is not a real teacher.

## 7.2 Absolute Address Terms

### 7.2.1 “yaset um Husain” translated into “Mrs.Kirsha”

Target Text	Source Text	Literal Translation
Saying in his angelic voice, “Go home, <u>Mrs. Kirsha</u> . Go home, put your trust in God, and take Mr. Hussainy’s advice.”	فقال لها بصوته الرفيع الملائكي: عودي إلى بيتك ياسيت أم حسين. عودي ووحدي الله. واسمعي كلام السيد رضوان.	Then he said to her in a thin and angelic voice: Go back to your home ...mother of Hussain. Go back home and believe in God. And listen to the words of ....Radwan.

Hussain’s mother who has been yelling at and beating the gentlemen in the cafe is now being convinced to calm down and return home by Uncle Kamil and Radwan. The address term used is “أم حسين” meaning “mother of Hussain”.

According to Parkinson (1985), this term is culturally-specific, indicating respect and appreciation to those who are being addressed with such honorific. Its use softens the negative face of the H by minimizing the imposition using the be-conventionally-indirect strategy. In this context, Hussain’s mother is being addressed with two respect terms; “أم” meaning “mother” and “ست”. However, Le Gassick translates them as “Mrs.” and the participants into “Ms”, “Mrs” and “Lady” which also indicate respect but do not convey the implicit cultural values, characteristics and significance that the terms in the ST have. Most of the participants transliterated the term ‘mother’ into ‘um’ while two participants tried to explain its meaning.

### 7.2.2 “alsheikh Darwish” translated into “Sheikh Darwish”

Target Text	Source Text	Literal Translation
One day <u>Sheikh Darwish</u> saw Uncle Kamil joking with the old barber and, gazing up toward the roof of the cafe, he recited loudly, “Man is named only to be forgotten and there’s never a hear that doesn’t change.”	ويوما رأى الشيخ درويش عم كامل وهو بمآزح الحلاق العجوز، فهتف وهو يرفع رأسه إلى سقف القهوة. وما سمي الإنسان إلا لنسيه ولا القلب إلا أنه يتقلب	One day Sheikh Darwish saw Uncle Kamalwhile he was picking on the elderly barber, then he chanted raising his head to the ceiling of the cafe, a man was named so for his forgetting and the heart was named so for its changing.

The term “شيخ” is the male version of a Muslim preacher or an old man and its English equivalence may be “clergyman”. A person referred to with such a term possesses a high status in society and his opinions are usually respected and his advice is usually taken. The term has the same face characteristics in that it threatens the positive face of H if dismissed. Like almost all participants, Le Gassick glosses such cultural-bound terms as ‘Sheikh’, as this term has started to creep in into the English language with its connotations.

## 8. Discussion

The way people use address terms and honorifics to interact is idiosyncratically different and culturally discrepant. It has emerged that the cultural variations regarding address terms pose a considerable challenge to translators, let alone interpreters, and differ across cultures in order to reach the pragmatic effect. A telling example is what is known in



Arabic as 'teknonyms' which are often used in the Arab world. They are usually given to the parents, but on occasion to married or unmarried members of a particular society. According to Parkinson (1985:58), teknonyms are terms such as 'abu' meaning 'father' or 'umm' meaning 'mother'. If someone has a child called 'Ahmed', then the father is 'abu Ahmed' (father of Ahmed) and the mother is 'umm Ahmed' (mother of Ahmed). They show respect to addressee and that they are deeply-rooted in Arabic culture. With the passage of time, however, their usage has become markedly lessened among high class communities.

However, It has appeared that the translation of forms of address is a recurring problem from Arabic into English. In Arabic, forms of address are sometimes labeled to mark a social stratum of a particular community. For instance, most of the terms used in the questionnaire indicate respect, formality and superiority, but the relationship between these interactants is informal and friendly. In other words, in Brown and Levinson's terminology, D and P is relatively low and the address form used in such stratum which is an Egyptian one is high. Therefore, it can be argued that the D and P variables cannot be applied in some Arabic use of address terms. On the other hand, addressing somebody, in English, as Mr. Jones is not the same as addressing them as John, where Mr. Jones is the surname and John is the first name, as most of the questionnaire participants opted for 'Mr.' in their renditions. Farghal and Shaker (1994:240) argue that the tendency to use Mr. Jones is almost connected to power; where the addressee is considered to be of a higher position than the speaker, whereas the tendency to use John is connected to solidarity. To further elucidate this point, Wardhaugh (2006:268) points out that the use of titles alone without the personal name is the "least intimate form of address". An example of this would be to address people by their occupational title, such as 'Doctor', 'Waiter' or 'Professor' and/or by their rank such as 'Colonel' or 'President'. However, in English, to avoid such confusion and difficulty or embarrassment, one can opt for Sir: Good morning Sir or Hello Sir, etc. Therefore, it can be said that address terms of power may reflect respect and solidarity or it may reflect intimacy. It is the social relationships among interlocutors and also customs and habits in society which may determine the use of such honorificised forms of address.

Having said that, the face-threatening act seems to be sacrificed in almost all the examples mentioned above. However, politeness is not always lost but the face act could be shifted and politeness is modified or simplified. Brown and Levinson's politeness theory with its strategies cannot be applied completely to address terms. What is applicable are the strategies relevant to the use of addressing people such as using terms to, for instance, minimize imposition and be direct etc. Address terms were discussed and analyzed in the light of those relevant strategies. The term "معلم" (master), for example, carries within itself the suggestion of superiority and power and sense that the views of a person carrying this title are to be listened to and not to be rejected. To make it clearer, it is a superior-inferior relationship as the speaker is conventionally inferior to the addressee. However, Le Gassick (1975) has applied three strategies in rendering the term throughout the novel. He calls the title holder either "Mr. Karish", "Café Owner" or just "Kirsha". It can be said that the use of neither "Mr." nor "Café Owner" convey the FSA or S's wants (intention) of using it. There may be particular reasons for using a certain form of address, but the overall view results in inconsistent renderings in this case.

The social and interactional use of address terms in Arabic is completely different from English ones and that to render, for instance, "سي السيد" into "Mr." could be regarded as 'out of place' in conveying the intended message. As a solution to this, some participants recommended a use of a glossary explaining the use of address terms and accounting for those of Turkish origin such as 'Bey' and 'Pasha'. As a matter of fact, what poses a considerable challenge to translators is the pragmatic principle known as the 'Irony Principle' (Leech 1983:142). It is the principle that allows the addresser in an interpersonal interaction to be impolite although he seems to be polite. Failing to comprehend such a gesture from the addresser will definitely result in improper rendition of the intended message. Irony is a violation of Grice's Quality maxim which is to offer true information. According to Hatim (1997:192), irony is "saying one thing literally and meaning the opposite figuratively." (see 7.1.3). However, irony is considered a challenging concept in translation, let alone interpreting

It was also found that relational terms of address are more challenging and laborious. Those relational terms are mostly used figuratively and in turn make it very difficult to render the cultural connotations that accompany the term. For instance, the address term "أبلة" meaning "teacher" is used to show politeness and the real person is neither a 'teacher' nor involved in any pedagogical work. On the other hand, absolute address terms, though limited in the novel, seem to be dealt with satisfactorily and they are not as complicated as the relational ones.

In the ST, negative politeness is frequently used to save face. However, this is used in situations where the FTA is low. This contradicts Brown and Levinson's view. For example, the match-maker, Hamida's mother, uses a highly negative politeness embodied in the use of address term to interact with Alwan, although the FTA is low (see 7.1.1). This is calculated with the D and P variables between them.

In the questionnaire, most of the participants opted for the term 'Mr.' for almost all the male characters. Therefore, it can be inferred that where there is a translation difficulty for the address form, then participants tend to opt for the general term 'Mr'. However, Shehab (2004) argues that such title terms cannot be replaced with a high respect address term and if such replacement takes place then they will be inappropriately rendered and will reflect a lower position if not offence to the addressee.

## 9. Conclusion

It was demonstrated that terms of address appear somehow burdensome or problematic in translation. Not only that, but they tend to be sacrificed as was hypothesized, when they are carried over to the target language. However, and due to their cultural connotations, their degree of difficulty differs significantly, the most noticeable ones being absolute and relational terms of address.

Absolute and relational types of translation should be kept in mind when translating Arabic address forms. Translators should also notice the difference between these two types and pay particular attention to the relational one by thinking carefully about the cultural context as well as the purposes of their use. The above examples illustrate the difficulty of translating social honorifics and how challenging the cultural aspect might be. However, delving into pragmatics and the culture of a particular language would bring about a great resource that a translator may turn to and, in turn, would be of great help in translating terms of address. Several Arabic address forms have been investigated in this study to make translators aware of the challenge and to emphasize the problem.

Therefore, it could be helpful to bear in mind what Xiao-ying (2007) calls the 'experiential view' that the translator should possess a considerable experience in the target culture and focus on the pragmatic meaning rather than the literal or equivalent meaning of the address terms.

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