

The Impact of Culture and Intercultural Competence on the Performance of Students in Translation

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ABSTRACT: The 21st century witnessed the emergence of Translation Studies, which include linguistics, comparative literature, sociology, semiotics, and communication. Translation Studies is also an interdisciplinary field that deals with the study of the theory, the description and application of translation, and cultural translation. Cultural Translation, which encompasses postcolonial translation studies, cultural gaps, and cultural manipulation, requires training the students of translation in the areas of social anthropology to help them achieve cultural and intercultural competence. Therefore, the purpose of the current quasi-experimental study was to provide the students with new translation training to help them understand the role of culture in translation. Examining the relationship between translation, linguistics, education, and social anthropology showed a shift in the purpose of translation from transferring information into a task of transmitting culture. Such a shift necessitates training the students to acquire socio-cultural skills by engaging them in discussions and dialogues about the culture of the original texts. The current study was an attempt to help students perceive the relationship between translation and culture to understand that some texts, specifically literary texts, do not only involve mastering two languages syntactically and semantically, but they also require communicative skills to analyze the social anthropological aspects of the texts, including culture, religion, and ideological and political issues. Therefore, this study applied the recent collaborative pedagogy for translation, which is based on improving social and cultural skills, for providing the students with the strategies for enhancing their professional practices within a social-constructivist educational environment. Moreover, emphasizing the concept of cultural turn in the work of polysystems in translation, the significance of this study lies in analyzing a number of theories to examine the relationship between translation, linguistics, and social anthropology and their impact on students' culture and intercultural competence.

KEYWORDS: collaborative pedagogy, cultural translation, linguistics, social anthropology, Translation Studies, translation theories

1. Introduction

Translation is connected with various fields of studies to describe the application of translation theory, especially in solving cultural issues. The current research was based on examining the relationship between translation and social anthropology. Understanding the cultural aspects of original texts is essential for bridging the gaps between different cultures to grasp the core message of the text and render such a message effectively. In this sense, translation is based on real life practices that require conveying different cultures while applying syntactic, semantics strategies as well as social approaches. Language Socialization (LS) is generally conceived as the socialization through which language is used socially in appropriate ways. Therefore, emphasis is placed on social skills since translators need to enhance their social capabilities to understand different cultures in various types of texts. The unit of translation is not only the language of a text in terms of words and sentences, but it is also the culture in which that text is developed. Understanding the culture of the text requires that students of translation examine the processes of encoding and decoding the message that comprises the task of translation. Such an examination should include the study of language as an act of socialization, i.e. the socialization through which the individual uses language in socio-cultural contexts. Language Socialization, as a part of linguistic anthropology, investigates how language creates new social relations in a cultural context when the individuals are socialized using the language to interact through the lenses of their diverse cultures. Social interactions help students not only to acquire language skills, but also to increase cultural awareness, which is necessary for cultural translation. Cultural Translation, which encompasses postcolonial translation studies, cultural metaphors, cultural gaps, and cultural manipulation, requires training the students of translation in the areas of social anthropology to help them achieve cultural and intercultural competence.

1.1. Problem Statement

The current research dealt with the problems of achieving the purpose of culturally-based translation. In their attempt to help students acquire translation skills, teachers of translation tend to focus merely on providing students with syntactic and semantic strategies to solve the problems of the source texts. Neglecting the cultural aspects of the text impacts the translation process as well as the quality of translation. Students complained that they were unable to deal with cultural problems because they did not have adequate training that embraced pragmatic approaches to translation. Previous research (Blakesley & Munday 2018; Ginter 2002; Lefevere 1999; Maitland 2017; Newmark 1988; Olalla-Soler 2015; Valerio 2013; Vermeer 1978; Reiss 1981) indicated that finding the equivalence in the target culture cannot be attained based solely on linguistic elements, but also on the function of the target text and its purpose for the readers. For instance, Maitland affirmed that cultural translation, in its non-linguistic and non-grammatical sense, offers a general process of communication between different cultural groups. Newmark (1988) emphasized that culture is derived from an anthropological perspective and that culture and language are interrelated concepts. Blum-Kulka (1986) defined translation as an act of communication, and that the process of translation cannot be restricted to two languages since translation also involves two cultures. However, while the functional approach to translation aims at expanding the possibilities of linking translation, especially cultural translation, to studies on cultures and civilizations, students lack training in acquiring communicative skills that can help them improve their culture and intercultural competence, which impacts their performance in a negative way. The problems of translating culturally-based texts are not restricted to achieving cultural equivalence through cultural-bound terms, but they also encompass such cultural issues as social identity, stereotypical images, cultural metaphors, gender discrimination, religious conflicts, social and political power, and social estrangements.

1.2. Purpose Statement

The purpose of the current quasi-experimental study was to provide the students with new translation training to help them understand the role of culture in translation. Such a training was fundamental for examining the impact of culture and intercultural competence on the performance of students in translation. Examining the relationship between translation and social anthropology pointed to a new purpose of translation, which is interpreting and transmitting different cultures. Hence, training the students to acquire socio-cultural skills by engaging them in discussions and dialogues about the culture of the original texts becomes inevitable. The linguistic-based approach, which is concerned with examining the correspondence between the source text language and target text language, is not adequate to produce correct translation. Previous research (Chesterman 1997; Katan 2009; Hewson & Martin 1991; Lefevere 1992; Snell-Hornby 1992; Vermeer 1978) described the translator as an “effective communicator”, a “cross-cultural specialist”, a “bi-cultural” expert, and a “cultural operator”. Such studies showed that translators become these experts when they increase their cultural awareness, and improve their cultural and intercultural competence. Therefore, the current study aimed to help students of translation to become competent translators by perceiving the relationship between translation and culture as a way of understanding culturally-bound texts. Culturally-based texts do not only involve mastering two languages, but they also require communicative skills to analyze the social anthropological aspects of the texts, including culture, religion, and ideological and political issues.

1.3. Significance of the Study

The current study applied the recent collaborative pedagogy for translation, which is based on improving social and cultural skills, for providing students of translation with the necessary strategies to enhance their professional practices within a social-constructivist educational classroom. The integration of culturally-oriented approaches to translation into social-constructivist teaching techniques, as implemented in the current study, fills some of the gaps in the literature. The present study also emphasized the concept of ‘cultural turn’ in the work of polysystems in translation, through examining the relationship between translation, linguistics, and social anthropology, as an attempt to emphasize the impact of language socialization on students’ cultural and intercultural competence. The

present study adopted a comparative method to reveal the differences of two approaches to translation, namely the linguistic-based approach and the culturally-based approach to demonstrate the effect of employing a functional, cultural-oriented approach to translation on students' performance. As such, the current study is expected to add a new insight into the view that translating culturally-bound texts, requires translators to have not only linguistic skills, but also cultural and intercultural competence.

1.4. Theoretical Framework

André Lefevere's (1992) theory of translation as a "rewriting and manipulation" of the original text constitutes the theoretical framework of the current study. Lefevere argued that because all rewritings reflect certain ideologies and poetics, they manipulate the purpose of the texts to meet the requirements of different readerships. Lefevere theorized translation as a form of "rewriting" that translators can produce based on a set of ideological constraints within the target language cultural system. Lefevere stated, "translation is the most obviously recognizable type of rewriting, and potentially the most influential because it is able to project the image of an author and/or a (series of) work (s) in another culture" (p. 9). According to Lefevere, 'culture' is the unit of translation. Consequently, Lefevere's cultural approach to translation was a part of the "cultural turn" in translation studies. Together with Bassnett (2014), Lefevere contributed in developing the intercultural and multicultural trend in the postcolonial era. The studies of Lefevere and Bassnett (2016) emphasized the role of translation in the development of politics, culture, and society, as well as in enhancing communication among nations. The importance of Lefevere's theory is that it does not limit translation to the linguistic approach, but expands the translator's task from the linguistic level to a more holistic social context.

Thus, the development of cultural studies embraced new perspectives including postcolonialism, orientalism and feminism. Lefevere views translation as a task with special purposes that are defined by certain political forces. Such forces help in developing translation as a means of cultural enrichment. In this respect, Lefevere pointed out that "rewriting" can play an important role in introducing new genres and new devices that can form the power of culture. In other words, "rewriting" can provide "innovative devices" or can also "repress innovation", based on the type of manipulation the translator undertakes. Using Lefevere's words, "rewritings are inspired by ideological or poetical motivations" (p. 7). The task of "rewriting" in translation encompasses adaptation and criticism. Lefevere asserted that translation must be studied in connection with patronage, ideology, and poetics. Lefevere also affirmed that poetics can be defined as what literature should be allowed to be, while ideology can be defined as what society should be allowed to be; therefore, ideology can control the main strategies that translators use, and can provide appropriate solutions to translation problems (p. 14). Moreover, patronage is "something like the powers (persons, institutions) that can further or hinder the reading, writing, and rewriting of literature" (p. 15). Lefevere also argued that the Universe of Discourse can be considered as "certain objects, customs, and beliefs that are unacceptable in translators' own culture (p. 87). So, translators need to find the balance between the universe of discourse which is acceptable to the author of the original text, and the universe of discourse which is acceptable to the translator's audience. Based on Lefevere's views, translation involves a complex number of decisions that translators need to make. Lefevere proposed seven methods for translating poetry, which include phonemic translation, literal translation, metrical translation, poetry-to-prose translation, rhymed translation, blank verse translation, and interpretation.

As an example of "rewriting", Lefevere mentioned Edward Fitzgerald's translation of the Persian poet Omar Khayyam. Reflecting on Khayyam's poem "Quatrains", 'cultural turn' in Translation Studies brings about a new awareness that the process of translation does not only involve a transference between two languages, but it is also concerned with a communication among cultures. For example, the Egyptian poet Ahmed Ramy (1892 -1981) rewrote Khayyam's poem in Arabic using the traditional Arabic poetry rules of rhymes and meters. Ramy did not perform 'through translation', i.e. Arabic translation from Fitzgerald's English translation. Instead, Ramy studied the Persian language for five years to read the original poem and rewrite it in Arabic. Ramy's "rewriting" can be considered an innovative task that shows the translator's ability to

reproduce Khayyam's mystical ideas in the culture of the Arabic language. While Ramy did not study Lefevere's theory, one can trace the manipulative methods in relation to the translation of Khayyam's poem, namely addition, omission, and rewriting, which can be used as an evidence that Lefevere offered the translators an applicable method to achieve the "rewriting" task. As Lefevere explained, the "rewriting" task involves linguistic exchange as well as cultural manipulation of the texts. Therefore, the relationship between the various processes of translation should reflect the essential principles that are related to the identity of the culture.

2. Literature Review

The literature review presented herein is based on analyzing four main concerns relevant to the current study research questions. The four concerns are: the differences between linguistic-oriented approaches and cultural-oriented approaches; the relationship between translation and social anthropology; cultural turn and Arab cultural issues; and culture and intercultural competence.

2.1 Linguistic-Oriented Approaches vs. Cultural-oriented Approaches

While the linguistic-oriented approaches to translation focus on emphasizing the linguistic equivalence to maintain the meaning of the original texts, the cultural-oriented approaches to translation are centered in expanding the process of translation beyond the text. The linguistic approaches to translation are based on applying the studies of structural linguistics such as that of Jakobson (1959), Catford (1965), Nida (1964, 2001) Newmark (1981, 1988), Koller (1979, 1995), Vinay and Darbelnet (1985), van Leuven-Zwart (1989), and Reiss (1971). Such studies are mainly involved with transferring the meaning by identifying and solving the translation problems using grammatical shifts, discourse analysis, semantics, stylistics, and pragmatics. For example, Jakobson's studies influenced the development of intralingual, interlingual, and intersemiotic translations. Vinay and Darbelnet developed seven procedures for translation, which include word-for-word, calque, and borrowing for direct (literal) translation, and transposition, modulation, equivalence, and adaptation for oblique (free) translation. Catford proposed a translation theory based on contrastive analysis to apply grammatical shifts, and category shifts to examine the relationship between textual equivalence and formal correspondence. van Leuven-Zwart suggested a model of shift analysis to build a discourse framework at micro and macro levels to achieve the 'transeme', i.e. a comprehensible textual unit by which the translation differs from the original text with regard to syntactic, semantic, stylistic and pragmatic aspects (pp. 153-155). Nida distinguished between formal correspondence and dynamic equivalence to emphasize the target language audience. Reiss developed a text typology model based on the informative, the expressive, the operative, and the audomediational textual functions. Newmark used the classification of text categories to develop a dual theory of semantic and communicative translation. Baker (1992) added another layer for the translation process through analyzing three pragmatic concepts, namely, coherence which relates to the audience's understanding of the source text author; presupposition where the receiver of the message is assumed to have some prior knowledge; and the implicature where the meaning is implied rather than clearly stated. Moreover, Holz-Manttari (1984) placed emphasis on some practical issues in translation through the translational action theory which embraces the Source Text (ST) and the Target Text users and producers.

The functionalist linguistic-oriented theories focus on equivalence, and translation purpose. Nord's (1991, 1997) theory of ST analysis is based on discourse and register analysis to examine how language conveys meaning in a social context. Vermeer (1984) proposed a new theory of translation based on translation as a purposeful activity, when the process of translation is determined by the function of the product. Vermeer (1984) emphasized the role of the translator as a creator of the Target Text (TT) to achieve the purpose (skopos) of the translation. Vermeer (2000) pointed out that the skopos "... expands the possibilities of translation strategies, and releases the translator from the corset of an enforced – and hence often meaningless – literalness; and it incorporates and enlarges the accountability of the translator" (p. 237). In this regard, research (Nord 1997; Reiss & Vermeer 1984; Vermeer 1978) indicated that cultural errors are often due to the translators' insufficient awareness of the TT's skopos. Therefore, Vermeer (2000) examined

skopos in relation to ‘intertextuality’ and ‘intratextuality’, stressing that TT should conform to the standard of ‘intratextuality coherence’ because establishing a strong connection between the text and readership is essential for achieving cultural transfer. Further studies on translation as a functional-oriented product were developed through House’s (1997) *Translation Quality Assessment model*, in which House expanded Halliday’s (1994) ideas of ‘field’, ‘tenor’, and ‘mode’ to assess the quality of translation by comparing all the linguistic and social variables between ST and TT to employ either overt or covert translation. Furthermore, Hatim and Mason (1990) emphasized the task of the translator as a ‘communicator’. Mason (2000) also discussed the connection between translation and institutional cultures.

The functional approach to translation helped in developing the field of Translation Studies, linking translation to studies on cultures and civilizations. Many scholars studied translation as the process of intercultural communication between two languages. Bassnett and Lefevere (2016) viewed translation as a ‘cultural turn’. Snell-Hornby (1992) described the translator as a ‘cross-cultural specialist’. Research (Chesterman (1997; Even-Zohar 2003; Venuti 2017) described translation as a task of transmitting culture. Chesterman (1997) argued that translating culturally-based texts requires understanding diverse cultures so that translators become proficient in interpreting cultural clues and communicating cultural concepts. Chesterman’s (1997) research on semiotics and communication enhanced the field of Translation Studies, highlighting the identification of norms of translation. Chesterman (2000) elaborated on the concept of ‘memes’ related to Translation Studies, emphasizing that a ‘meme’ is “an element of a culture that may be considered to be passed on by nongenetic means, especially imitation.” (p.5). Moreover, Toury (1995) views norms as social entities that require understanding translation as a task of manipulating the text to communicate its meaning. While Chesterman (1993) discussed “the product or *expectancy* norms, the *process* or *professional* norms, and the *communication norm*, and the *ethical norm* to establish an appropriate relation between ST and TT, Toury (1995) described norms as the “general values or ideas shared by a community – as to what is right and wrong, adequate and inadequate” (p. 55). Influenced by Even-Zohar’s (1978, 1981) research, Toury (1980) argues that translation is driven by the target culture, therefore, the translators are constrained linguistically, and socially by their norms. Such norms guide the translators in making appropriate decisions to solve the translation problems. In this respect, Venuti (1995) questioned the linguistic-oriented models, and proposed two translation strategies that translators can apply to make the text conform to the culture of the target language. The two strategies proposed by Venuti (1995) are domestication and foreignization. Domestication is the strategy of making the text conform to the culture of the language being translated to while foreignization is the strategy of retaining information from the source text. As such, Venuti argued that every translator should explore the translation process through the lenses of culture. Venuti opposed the strategies that reduce foreign culture, thus, placed more emphasis on cultural-oriented approaches to translation.

2.2 *The Relationship Between Translation and Social Anthropology*

From the 1950s to the 1970s, the translation of cultures has been increasingly connected to the tasks of social anthropologists. Lienhardt (1966) referred to translation as negotiating different modes of thought, thus perceiving translation as cultural understanding rather than a purely linguistic task. While Language Socialization (LS) is recognized as the socialization through appropriate language use in the society (Schieffelin & Ochs 1984), translation can be viewed as a social phenomenon, and a cultural practice (Hermans, 1999). Therefore, Cultural Translation is studied through cultural anthropology. In this sense, the translator can be considered an anthropological communicator of cultures. The relationship between translation and social anthropology is evident since the translators deal with complex cultural issues in the texts, including orientalism, feminism, postcolonial and postmodernist discourse, and globalization. These domains are related to Translation Studies, and dealing with these issues indicates that the untranslatability of some texts does not arise from language limits, but also from cultural barriers. For example, translating texts that deal with the Aboriginal, American Indians, African, and Arab cultures, necessitates understanding these distant cultures. In this respect, Bhabha

(1994) pointed out, “Translation is the performative nature of cultural communication” (p. 228). In a previous research, Goodenough (1970) argued that culture required understanding social activities. Hermans (2001) noted that anthropologists face many challenges when interpreting cultures, especially in the process of reconceptualizing the representation modes through translation. Agar (2011) argued that while the tension between outsider and insider descriptions of language and culture is a leitmotif of anthropology, translation can “illuminate the relationship between local specifics and human universals” (pp. 38-47). Bachmann-Medick (2006) used the term ‘translation turn’ to stress the relationship between translation and social and cultural studies. Bachmann-Medick (2006) argued that cultural translation involved not only cultural understanding, but also suggested a harmonious relationship among different cultures, when translation becomes a metaphor for change, and a concept of generating close relations among different cultures. Snell-Hornby (2009) identified different meanings of the word ‘turn’, which include a change of direction, a bend in a road, and the development of new tendency. In this regard, Bachmann-Medick (2017), argued that all ‘turns’ display a triadic structure, which includes a cross-disciplinary exploration of new common fields of inquiry, a metaphorization of the new object of inquiry, and a transformation into an analytical category. In this respect, Even-Zohar (1981) defines translation within the polysystem as a potential force for renewal of social transformation processes.

Hence, cultural translation can act as a metaphor that embraces holistic views. Bassnett (2004, 69-70) stated, “The notion of translation has become the metaphor for all kinds of processes of transformation, rewriting, encoding and decoding as well as a force for cross-disciplinary exchanges within humanities and between the humanities and the natural sciences.” Therefore, Cultural Translation stresses the relevance of social, cultural, and political contexts in the task of translation. As Bassnett explained, translating cultures is not about a text communicating itself, but about learning to live another form of life, speak another language, and meet different people. Translation in this sense is an attempt to reproduce the coherence of an alien discourse in the translator’s language. Hence, lies the relationship between translation and social anthropology since the reproduction process depends on the resources of the translators’ language, and the interest of the translators in their readership, to conduct ethnographic analyses.

2.3 Cultural Turn and Arab Cultural Issues

Cultural turn is the metaphor adopted by Cultural to refer to the analysis of translation in cultural, political, and ideological contexts. ‘Cultural turn’, was presented by the research on Polysystems and translation norms by Even-Zohar (1978), and by Toury (1980). Lefevere’s (1992) theory was evolved out of the polysystems and the Manipulation School. Bassnett and Lefevere (2004) adopted ‘cultural turn’ to emphasize the socio-political foundations of translation. Furthermore, Venuti (1995) discussed the powers that controlled translation, including governments, political parties, and politically motivated institutions which determined the decisions of promoting or censoring certain translations, beliefs, or an entire culture. Spivak (2007) indicated that cultural studies, specifically, post-colonialism focused on issues of translation, and that the colonizers’ ideologies affected the way texts were translated. Simon (1996) noted how Cultural Studies helped in understanding the complexities of certain issues such as gender. Simon argued that a language with its biased images of gender dominance affected women’s ideologies. Simon claimed that feminist translators applied linguistic and non-linguistic strategies to highlight the feminist in the translated texts. In this respect, Hatim and Mason (1997) argued that ideology embraces assumptions, beliefs, and value systems, which are shared collectively by different social groups.

Since cultures differ from one society to another, people use cultural contexts to express their hopes and frustrations. Some of the concerns that exist in Arab cultures include images of stereotypes that represent the Arab as being inferior to the Western man. Edward Said (1979) argued that the West considers the East not only backward, but also unaware of its history and culture. Said studied the Orient based on the political imperialism of Europe in the East. Said also argued that the idea of the Oriental is a myth in the European thought, which was developed after the 18th century. Said and Milligan (1997) noted that the Oriental stereotypes were developed as a

result of the assertion of an imperial right to impose moral, and commercial rejuvenation upon the East. These stereotypes continued to exist in the present time, and they affect a proper communication between the Western cultures and the Arab cultures.

2.4. Culture and Intercultural Competence

The concept of competence is used increasingly when discussing linguistics and translation. In linguistics, Chomsky (1965) explained competence in terms of the use of intrinsic abilities to learn a language. Hymes (1972) opposed Chomsky's argument about "grammatical competence," and developed a semiotic description of context and language use. Halliday (1994) emphasized the use of language as a communicative tool. According to Brumfit (1984), the communicative approach in language is concerned with using the language as a communication system. Therefore, Brumfit, and Hymes introduced the term *communicative competence* to refute Chomsky's notion of competence. Baker (1992) argued that a competent translator must have knowledge about the semantics and lexical rules of the source language. Baker also argued that a competent translator can develop strategies for dealing with non-equivalence semantic field.

On the other hand, culture and intercultural competence refer to the awareness that develops out of experience of culture. The translator can improve competence by increasing the awareness of the differences between cultures. Bassnett (2014) stated that translation is not just the transfer of texts from one language into another, but it is the process of negotiation between texts and between cultures. To improve the translator's competence, Newmark (1988) proposed two methods for translating cultural words after categorizing cultural words into Ecology (flora, fauna, hills, winds, plains); material culture (food, clothes, houses and towns, transport); social culture (work and leisure); organizations customs (activities, procedures, political, administrative, religious, and artistic concepts); and gestures and habits (local specifics). Newmark's first method of translation is transference which gives 'local color', i.e. keeping cultural names and concepts. The second method is componential analysis which excludes the culture and highlights the message of the text. However, Chesterman's (1997) developed his research on semiotics and communication to emphasize that the heuristic value of semiotics lies in studying different sign systems from a single point of view as well as explaining the sign as it occurs in different situations. Chesterman (2009) explored the extent to which the key semiotic features of similarity, difference, and mediation, are fundamental to translation. Chesterman (1997) highlighted the identification of norms of translation. Chesterman (1997) views norms as social entities that require understanding translation as a task of manipulating the text to communicate its full meaning. Moreover, Bassnett and Lefevre (2016) argued that cultural and intercultural competence impact the translator's performance. Furthermore, Tymoczko (2003) argued that competent translators are needed in any interlingual and intercultural settings because they mediate between two linguistic, cultural groups. Tymoczko differentiated between transference, which refers to physical or symbolic transfer, and transculturation, which involves translating beyond the transfer of verbal materials, which include transmitting ideas about religion, government, music, and visual arts.

3. Research Method

The current research followed a quasi-experimental design to examine the impact of culture and intercultural competence on the performance of students in translation. The sample of the study consisted of 100 undergraduate female students, selected randomly from the students who enrolled at the College of Languages and Translation at Al-Imam University, Saudi Arabia. The majority of the students, with the percentage of 95% were within the age category of 19 to 21 years old while 10% were within the age category of 22-23 years old. All 100% of the students studied English at preparatory and secondary schools for 6 years prior to their college study; in addition to one preparatory year at college level. The percentage of the participants who used bilingual dictionaries for completing the translation assignments was 98% while 2% depended on guessing or inferring the meaning of difficult words.

3.1 Instrumentation and Data Collection

An initial assessment was conducted, using a Likert scale questionnaire with 21 items to identify the participants' translation problems. A pilot study was conducted for achieving validity. The study instruments also included a translation pre-test and post-test, and a translation assessment validated rubric. The experiment of the study involved engaging the participants in analyzing, discussing, translating, and editing 16 English and Arabic texts for 8 weeks. The participants were divided into two groups: a controlled group and an experimental group. Each group consisted of 25 students who were enrolled in the undergraduate program of Level 5 to study literary and cultural translation during the summer course of 2018. This course required students to study 6 hours per week, in addition to another 6 hours at home to complete their home assignments. A Google Group was used to support the students' learning.

The literary English and Arabic texts for the participants' course were selected from different short stories, novels, and poetry. The cultural-based texts covered different cultural topics, including cultural festivals. The English literary texts included a number of selected passages from *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen, *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens, *The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* by James Joyce, and "Sailing to Byzantium" by W. B. Yeats. The Arabic literary texts included selected passages from the Egyptian novel *Khan al-Khalili* by Naguib Mahfouz', *Qandeel Om Hashem* by Yahya Haqqi, and selected poems by Al Bohtori, and Andalusian poetry. The English cultural-based texts included topics on Chinese New Year Festival, French cuisine, Latin American dance, Eskimo's habitat, and Japanese weddings. The Arabic culturally-based texts embraced topics on Al Janaderia Saudi festival, Saudi weddings, Arab cuisine, north African food, and Gulf clothes. Both the controlled and the experimental groups were assigned the same texts. However, the approach of teaching the two groups was different. The participants in the controlled group focused on examining and translating the texts only linguistically while the participants in the experimental group were asked to examine the cultural aspects of the texts prior to the process of translation. The linguistic-based approach of teaching was centered in analyzing each text syntactically and semantically when the participants relied mainly on using English and Arabic dictionaries to solve the translation problems.

The cultural-based teaching approach was employed through a collaborative setting, using five classroom activities which included (a) discussions on western and eastern cultures; (b) watching videos on different cultural traditions; (c) studying the differences between Arab cultural festivals and international cultural festivals; (d) reading research on cultural metaphors; and (e) using social media to gain some experience of Western tradition and customs. A pre-test and a post-test were administered prior and after the quasi-experiment to record students' performance based on their grades. This quantitative correlational method aimed at examining the statistical relationship between cultural competence and students' performance in translation.

The pre-test and post-test required translating two passages from English into Arabic and vice versa, and each passage consisted of 400 words. The English passage was selected from the short story "The Last leaf" by O'Henry, and the Arabic passage was about Saudi traditional clothes. All the participants were allowed to use hard copies dictionaries. A validated rubric was used to grade the experiment tests. The rubric criteria aimed at measuring linguistic and culture skills. The linguistic skills included, the use of correct grammar, building up appropriate sentence structure, adhering to semantic rules, choosing appropriate lexical items, and achieving equivalence transfer. The culture skills included, using cross-culture knowledge, interpreting culture metaphors, understanding cultural clues, and achieving cultural transfer. Each scale of the rubric criteria carried 10 points. In addition, 20 points were assigned for applying Lefevre's translation strategies as stated in his theory. The correlation coefficient was measured to find out the differences between the pre-test and post-test results. The software SPSS was used for the questionnaire data analysis. The rubric results were used to compare the participants' performance before and after the treatment.

3.2 Research Questions

1) What is the statistically significant difference between the experimental group translation scores before and after the training sessions of using the cultural-based approach? 2) What is the process of using the cultural-based approach in the translation classrooms? 3) What are the impacts of culture and cultural competence on students' translation performance?

3.3 Research Hypothesis

There is a statistically significant relationship between culture and intercultural competence and students' performance in cultural translation. The *Null Hypothesis*: There is no statistically significant relationship between culture and intercultural competence and students' performance in cultural translation.

3.4. Data Analysis Results

Data analysis showed the presence of difficulties that students faced in understanding and interpreting culture, specifically cultural metaphors and symbols. The results of the pre-test and post-test showed a difference of 86% between the controlled group and the experimental group in their overall performance. The primary data analysis also showed lack of cross-culture interaction when the participants in the controlled group translated literary and culturally-based texts. The results also indicated that weakness in language socialization hindered understanding the anthropological cultural aspects of the texts. The analysis of the pre-test and post-test results showed statistically significant relationships between language communicative skills in the participants' performance in literary and culturally-based translation. The results also indicated that the challenges that the participants faced in translation included semantic and syntactical problems, understanding cultural terms, interpreting cultural metaphors, understanding cross-cultures issues, cultural identity, stereotypes issues, problems related to postcolonial and postmodernism issues. Table 1 displays the percentages of these problems.

Table 1. Participants' Problems of Translating Cultural Texts

Problems	Control Group		Experimental Group	
	n	%	N	%
Cultural Metaphors	22	88	11	44
Cultural Terminology	21	84	10	40
Semantic Problems	12	48	12	48
Syntactical Problems	6	24	7	28
Literary Devices	17	68	10	40
Cross-cultural Understanding	21	84	9	36
Cultural Identity	22	88	18	75
Stereotypes Issues	23	92	22	88
Culture Bias	22	88	18	75
Postmodernism Issues (nationalism/religion/politics/ideologies)	23	92	19	76
Postcolonial Issues (racial conflicts/social paradoxes)	17	68	15	60

Table 1 shows that the participants faced some challenges in interpreting cultural metaphors and symbols. The results indicated that 88% of the controlled group participants faced challenges in understanding and translating the cultural metaphors while in the experimental group the semantic competence was reported as the most challenging factor with the percentage of 48%. While the problems of translating cultural terms reached 84% in the controlled group and 40% in the experimental group, the problem of translating literary devices reached 68% in the controlled group and 40% in the experimental group. The percentage of understanding cross-cultural differences was 85% in the controlled group and 36% in the experimental group. The problems of cultural bias, postmodernism issues, and postcolonial issues pointed respectively to 88%, 92%, and 68% in the controlled group, and 75%, 76%, and 60% in the experimental group.

Primarily, the participants' problems were identified before conducting the study, through responding to the questionnaire, and the results showed that 83% of respondents had intermediate language level in the controlled group, while the experimental group had 84%. Furthermore, the advanced language skills were almost equal in the two groups with 71% for the controlled group compared to 70% for the experimental group. Data analysis results indicated that language was not a point of concern for translating literary and culturally-based text, as culture acted as the main barrier. The results of the questionnaire showed that 82% of the participants in the controlled group and 68% of the participants in experimental group faced culture problems that hindered their abilities to complete the translation assignments. Figure 1 displays the comparison of means and standard deviations of the controlled group and the experimental group based on the questionnaire 21 item results.

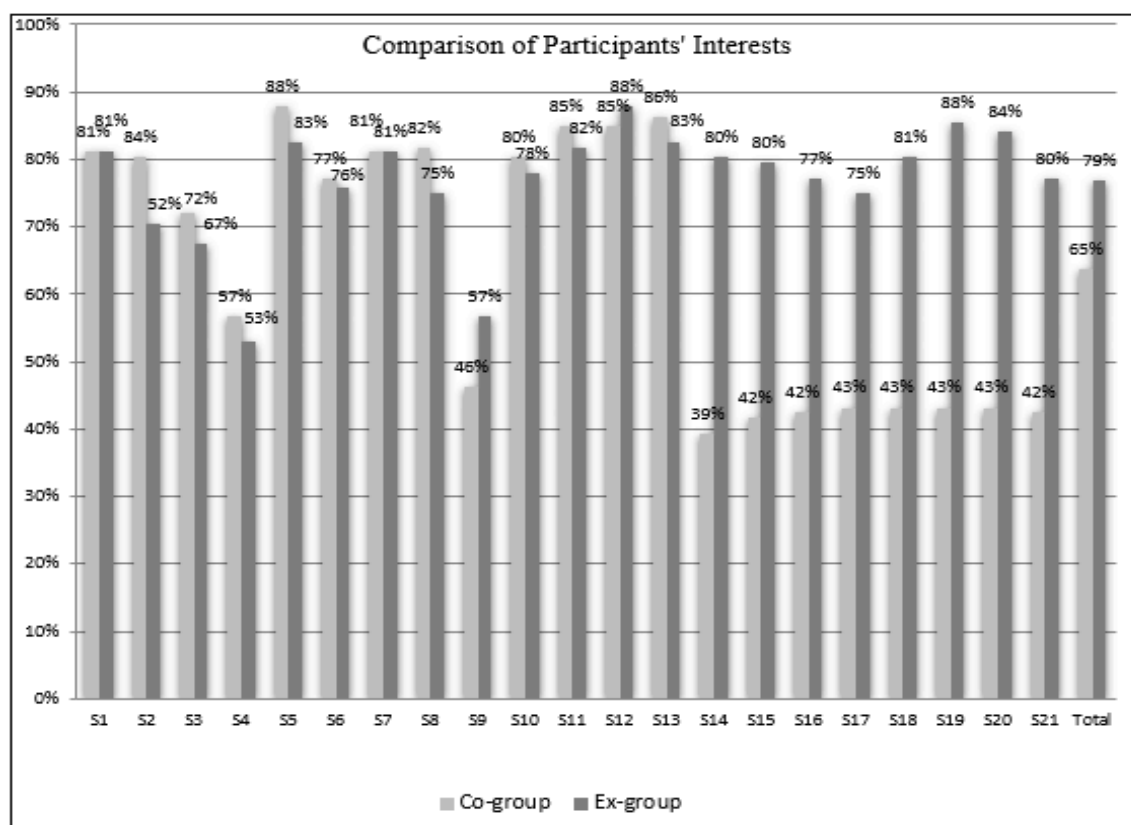


Figure 1. Comparison of results between controlled and experimental groups

As displayed in Figure 1, the analysis of data indicated a distinct difference between the controlled group and the experimental group, responding to the questionnaire items 14-21 which involved questions on the importance of understanding different cultures, the impact of filling cultural gaps on the translation process, the difficulties of translating cultural metaphors, and the strategy for achieving cultural transfer. While 80% of the respondents in the experimental group believed that understanding culture affected the

process of translation, only 37% of the respondents in the controlled group agreed. Regarding the impact of filling cultural gaps on the translation tasks, 80% of the respondents in the experimental strongly agreed to only 41% of the respondents in the controlled group. Further, 77% of the respondents in the experimental group agreed that translators faced difficulties in translating cultural metaphors while 42% of the respondents in the controlled group agreed to this same item. Moreover, 88% of respondents in the experimental group strongly agreed that the strategy for achieving cultural transfer was important while only 44% of the respondents in the controlled group agreed. The questionnaire items 1-13 investigated issues on the syntactical, semantic, and lexical problems of translation. While 81% of both the controlled and the experimental groups agreed that correct grammatical use was an important factor in producing successful translation, 87% of the respondents in the controlled group believed that using correct grammar was more important than understanding culture. Such results implied that translation was flawed due to lack of culture skills. Efficient translations showed that culture competence rather than the fluency of language alone helped students to achieve the purpose of translation. This in turn led to believe that language is not the actual barrier of translating literary or culturally-bound texts, and that variables related to culture and intercultural competence are strongly related to proficiency in translation. Regarding the application of Lefevere's theory, Table 2 shows the results.

Table 2. Participants' Grades Before and After Applying Lefevere's Theory

Participant (P) n	Grades of English Literary Text Trans. /10	Grades of Arabic Literary Text Trans. /10	Total Grade /20	Participant (P) n	Grades of English Literary Text Trans. /10	Grades of Arabic Literary Text Trans. /10	Total Grade /20	% Improvement
P1	5	4	9	P9	9	8	17	40%
P2	6	5	11	P12	9	8	17	30%
P3	5	4	9	P9	9	8	17	40%
P4	5	4	9	P14	9	9	18	45%
P5	5	5	10	P21	8	8	16	30%
P6	4	4	8	P6	7	7	14	30%
P7	4	3	7	P7	9	9	18	55%
P8	5	5	10	P22	8	9	17	35%
P9	5	4	9	P9	9	8	17	40%
P10	5	5	10	P22	8	9	17	35%
P11	7	4	11	P11	8	8	16	25%
P12	6	5	11	P12	9	8	17	30%
P13	6	5	11	P13	9	6	15	20%
P14	5	4	9	P14	8	7	15	30%
P15	6	4	10	P15	9	8	17	35%
P16	8	6	14	P16	9	9	18	20%
P17	7	5	12	P17	9	8	17	25%
P18	6	4	10	P18	9	9	18	40%
P19	5	4	9	P19	8	9	16	35%
P20	6	5	11	P20	7	7	14	15%
P21	5	5	10	P21	8	8	16	30%
P22	5	5	10	P22	8	9	17	35%
P23	6	5	11	P23	8	7	15	20%
P24	5	4	9	P24	9	9	18	45%
P25	6	4	10	P25	9	9	18	40%

Table 2 shows that that the highest grade in translating the English texts before applying Lefevere's theory is 8 out of 10 and the lowest grade is 4 out of 10 while the highest grade in translating the Arabic texts is 6 out of 10, and the lowest is 3 out of 10. The highest grade in translating the English texts after

applying Lefevere's theory is 9 out of 10 and the lowest grade is 7 out of 10 while the highest grade in translating the Arabic texts is 9 out of 10 and the lowest grade is 6 out of 10. The percentages of the participants' improvement ranged between 45% and 15%.

The qualitative analysis revealed that while the participants in the controlled group focused on identifying the linguistic problems of the source texts, the participants in the experimental group were involved in defining the cultural concepts of the texts. In the controlled group, the participants paid more attention to language problems rather than cultural aspects; thus, they were engaged in examining the artistic features of the language texts, grammar structure, grammar rules, syntax variance, semantics, neologisms, and vague terminology so that they could produce acceptable translations based on using a variety of language structures. For example, translating the passage from Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, they were examining different semantic choices from amongst various synonyms in the following passage: "A long dispute followed this declaration; but Mrs. Bennet was firm: it soon led to another; and Mrs. Bennet found with amazement and horror, that her husband would not advance a guinea to buy clothes for his daughter. He protested that she should receive from him no mark of affection whatsoever, on the occasion of her marriage. Mrs. Bennet could hardly comprehend it."

The semantic choices the participants made were selected by adequacy to the original context. For instance, the word 'dispute' has four meanings in Arabic: a dispute that occurs between two equally, strong parties, and expands over a long period of time; a slight disagreement or different points of view; an objection or a protest; and disapproval of paying. The English word 'dispute' in the passage refers to a domestic row between a wife and her husband, and it is not just a slight disagreement or different points of view as the situation is intense since the husband has made up his mind and is making a declaration that requires quick interference and riotous objection on the part of the wife; so, the appropriate meaning is 'disapproval of paying'. However, the participants in the experimental group were more aware of the cultural references in the texts. For example, in their analysis of personification in the novel *Khan Al-Kalili*, they did not merely provide an equivalent meaning, but they described the cultural context of the passage as follows: "He now began to read voraciously and quickly. He felt on edge and no longer enjoyed reading anything useful or serious; it gave a kind of mental indigestion. He may have learned all sorts of different things but he was master of none of them. His brain was not used to indulging ideas in and of themselves, He relied on books to do the thinking for him" (p.18). In another example, the participants kept some Arabic words in the English translation to maintain the Arab culture flavor as in the following example, which is a translation of *Tarjuman al-Ashwaq*, Muhyyeddin by Ibn Arabi (1165-1240 CE): "A garden among the flames! My heart can take on any form: A meadow for gazelles, A cloister for monks, For the idols, sacred ground, Ka'ba for the circling pilgrim, The tables of the Torah, The scrolls of the Quran. My creed is Love; Wherever its caravan turns along the way, that is my belief, and that is My faith." Whereas in translating 'Sailing to Byzantium' by Yeats, the participants in the controlled group focused on transferring the linguistic meaning, and could not grasp the philosophical concepts expressed through the relationship between such words as 'old' and 'young', 'birds' and 'salmon', 'country', 'trees', and 'seas' as in these lines "That is no country for old men. The young, In one another's arms, birds in the trees,—Those dying generations—at their song, The salmon-falls, the mackerel-crowded seas". Such results show that the principles of the linguistic-bound translations are based on fidelity, i.e. accurate translation that is faithful to the original text.

Translating the cultural-based texts, the controlled group participants continued to lay emphasis on the linguistic aspects of the texts while the experimental group participants applied Lefevere's theory to understand the social and cultural contexts of each text. For example, the participants could not translate the expression 'wooden face' from this passage in *Oliver Twist*: "He walked with frozen feet, with a wooden face, Oliver glanced up the street." There is no equivalence in Arabic for 'wooden face', so the participants were engaged in groups to give the meaning based on a study of European cultures, and they concluded that in English it means 'inexpressive face' while in Portuguese, they say a person has a 'wooden face' meaning 'how dare you'. Another example in the use of cultural metaphors such as the use of the poppy flower in this line "He walked smartly down the lane until his red coat was no bigger than a poppy", from *Akenfield* by Ronald Blythe. While the controlled group participants translated the word 'poppy' by giving the name of the flower in Arabic, the experimental group participants were

engaged in a discussion about cultural symbols, and concluded that the ‘poppy’ flower is a symbol of sleep, peace, and death. The participant learned that in the cultures of Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand, and Malta, the poppies are worn to commemorate those who died in war. Translating texts on Chinese and Japanese cultures, the participants were able to acquire cross-culture experience through classroom debates, and social media engagement. For example, they learned that the New Year celebration in China follows the lunar calendar, and that the Pingxi Sky Lantern Festival in the mountains in the northeastern Taipei County began in the region when the Han settled there. They also learned that the traditional French culture places a high priority on the enjoyment of food and fashion, dating back to the reign of Louis XIV, and that the major food of French cuisine is cheeses, French bread, and crepes. The participants were also interested in learning about the cultures of South America, which represent diverse cultural traditions, including the European cultures brought by the Spaniards, the Portuguese, the French, the Italians. They became interested in learning about the African cultures. Working in collaborative groups, the participants in the experimental group made a cook book to collect the recipes of some Latin American foods such as tortillas, tamales, and salsas. They also learned that the ‘kimono’ is a traditional dress in Japan while the ‘Jelbab’ is a traditional dress in the Arab culture. They also learned that in the Japanese culture, the ‘Iris flowers’ represent the power to protect the body from diseases and evil while the ‘Basil flowers’ are used in Arab cultures for physical and psychological healing. The participants encountered challenges to fill the cultural gaps of the habits of festivals and special occasions. For example, during the Japanese ceremony, the two families of the bride and the groom face each other and sip nine cups of bitter ‘Sake’, announcing the unity of the bride and groom. In Arab culture, families drink ‘sharbat’ (sweet non-alcoholic drinks made of fruit and flowers essence), wishing happiness for the newly married couple.

Moreover, filling the culture gap in the process of translation required the participants to watch videos on the shamanistic traditions of the Eskimo and their igloo traditional shelters in order to achieve equivalent effect in the target text. Therefore, translating cultural-based texts that deal with the month of Ramadan in the Arab world, the Saudi tradition of marriage and weddings, the Saudi folklore, and the Gulf region clothes required using Lefevre’s strategy of ‘explanatory note’. Translating words used for food such as ‘kabsa’, ‘jarish’, ‘masabeeb’, ‘gorsan’, ‘areka’, or words used for clothes such as ‘ghotra’, ‘shemagh’, ‘beshet’, ‘meshleh’, ‘thoob’, ‘abaya’, ‘borko’a’, ‘Isdal’, ‘tarha’, and ‘Jilbab’ requires cultural explanation because using transliteration alone does not provide the meaning of the words nor the cultural concepts that the words represent. The following passage is an example: “Althawb, ghuthtrah and iqal are the traditional outfit of men in the Arab Gulf countries. The thawb is a long-sleeved loose white garment. As for the ghuthtrah, it is a square piece of cloth placed on the head with or without iqal. There are two types of ghuthtrah, namely, the white and the red, which is also called shemagh – a kind of ghuthtra that is dotted in red. The iqal itself is a black band fixed on the ghetrah and shemagh”. Arab foods include kabsa (a mixture of rice and meat), ‘jarish’ (made of wheat and milk), ‘masabeeb’ (similar to pan cakes), ‘and metabak (similar to tortilla).

Data analysis results also showed the following: (a) while applying the translation theory, of the 50 participants of the two groups, only twenty-four participants analyzed the culture metaphors in the source text ; (b) twenty-five participants applied Lefevre’s strategy of ‘explanatory note’; (c) Twenty-six participants used literal translation when they faced difficulties in understanding culture; (d) twenty-one participants applied the strategies of structure-shifts, which are grammatical alterations between the structure of the source text and that of the target text; (e) ; twenty participants used class-shifts such as translating the verb with a noun; (f) Nineteen participants used the omission strategy while translating cultural contents; (g) Eighteen participants used the addition strategy while translating cultural contents; and (h) twenty participants interpreted cultural metaphors correctly. Additionally, the results indicated an explicit variation of the translation problems and the solutions that the participants of the controlled and experimental groups faced.

4. Discussions and Recommendations

Regarding the research questions, data analysis indicated that the hypothesis that ‘there is a statistically significant relationship between culture and intercultural competence and students’ performance in

cultural translation’ was positive; thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. The results also showed a statistical significant difference between the experimental group translation scores before and after the training sessions of using the cultural-based approach, pointing to a difference of 86% between the controlled group and the experimental group. Reflecting on such results shows that the communicative skills allowed students to use their cognitive and metacognitive abilities to discuss and analyze the texts prior to the task of translation.

The results of the study indicated that constructivist approach to teaching is important for examining the social settings of source texts, and can help in identifying the cultural metaphors that are instrumental in understanding the meaning of the texts. The socio-constructivist approach stems from a collaborative view of society vis-a-vis the way teachers need to guide translation students to develop their skills as ‘cultural communicators’. In this regard research (Baker 2005; Chesterman 1997; Kiraly 2014; Colina & Venuti as cited in Venuti 2017; Lefevere 1992; Yin-hua 2011) concluded that using translation cultural-based strategies had an impact on students’ performance. Lefevere (1992) argued that translation is not a mere linguistic process, but a rewriting process, which is guided by the ideology of the target language society.

Applying Lefevere’s theory, students can learn how to achieve the balance between the universe of discourse, which is acceptable to ST author, and the universe of discourse, which can be acceptable to translators’ readers. In this respect, Chesterman (1997) affirmed that translators need to acquire both linguistic and cultural skills. Linguistic skills help students to analyze the ST and the TT at various language levels while the social skills help students to deal with the norms in translation cultural transfer. Such a blend of linguistic-based and cultural- based approaches, allow the students to implement an interpretivists’ analytical approach to identify the symbolic, phenomenological, and ethnological foundations of social interactions. Yin-hua (2011) stressed that the role of the translator is to achieve the purpose of the ST in another culture in an acceptable and comprehensible way for the TT readers. While the translators encounter the complexities of cross-cultural differences, the issue of ‘cultural difference’ is still problematic. Williams (2013) recommends some tools that teachers can use to help students understand different cultures which include the Describe, Interpret, Evaluate (DIE) practice, the Ladder of Inference model, the Reviewing Critical Event Approach, and LENS experiential learning strategies. Based on the current research findings, Figure 2 display a suggested model that can be used to enhance students’ culture and cultural competence.

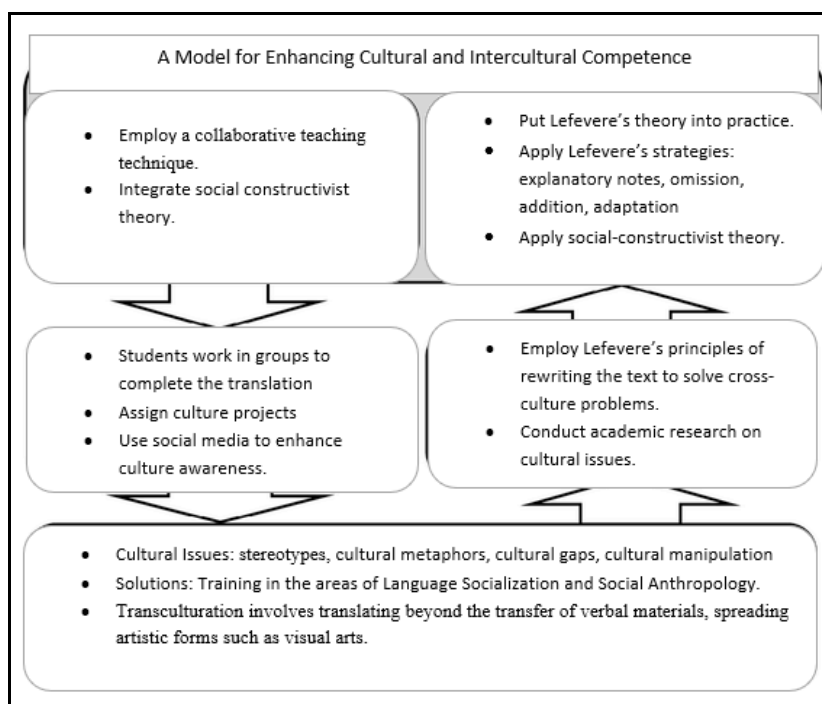


Figure 2. A model for enhancing culture and intercultural competence

Consequently, the current study recommends using a collaborative teaching technique to help the translation students become competent in translating culturally-based texts. Collaborative teaching techniques refer to teaching techniques that are based on providing collaborative activities for the students, and these techniques involve the production of authentic classroom when teachers incorporate in their teaching teamwork, cooperative class circles, group research assignments, group focused discussions, and team translation projects. Research on translation pedagogy (Kiraly, 2014; Gonzalez-Davies, as cited in Venuti, 2017) indicated that using translation strategies should be based on integrating translation theories into a constructivist social teaching techniques. In this regard, Venuti (2017) argued that “the concepts [of the new programs in translation] tend to be derived from varieties of linguistics, from literary and cultural studies, education, and from sociology; the skills are often taught in relation to specific genres or text types, ...and according to language pairs.... The variety of course offerings depends on the expertise of the instructors who staff the program” (p. 1). Moreover, Gonzalez-Davies (as cited in Venuti, 2017) supported the collaborative pedagogy for translation, guided by cognitive theories that are adopted to develop cognitive teaching methodologies, when “the classroom becomes a working environment in which students, guided by the teacher, work together, forming a community of practice that shares responsibility for the outcomes” (p. 71), and that “The primary objective of fostering collaboration is to reconcile theory and practice through the interaction of individual and group work that favors the acquisition of translation skills” (p. 71). Translator’s competence emerges through working together by means of collaboration. Tan (2008) stated, “Translator education goes hand in hand with this growth of translator/translation specialist competence and social development (through collaborative pedagogies) competence development and teaching practice are centered around the development of the students cognitively (pp. 589-608). Therefore, the second recommendation is to provide professional training programs for teachers to employ the collaborative techniques in the classrooms. Thirdly, enhancing cultural awareness necessitates equipping the classrooms with modern technology that allows students to watch videos on different cultures, be engaged in online socio-cultural activities, and gain knowledge through conducting academic research on cultural diversity.

5. Conclusion

The current study examined the relationship between translation, linguistics, and social anthropology. The results of the study showed that although textual and inferential analysis is an important component of understanding the source texts before performing the translation task, increasing cultural awareness is necessary to ensure accurate and adequate translation. Social interactions help students not only to acquire language skills but also cultural awareness that is necessary for cultural translation. Cultural Translation, which encompasses postcolonial translation studies, cultural gaps, and cultural manipulation, requires training the students of translation in the areas of social anthropology to help them achieve cultural and intercultural competence. Therefore, the purpose of the current study was to provide the students with new translation training to help them understand the role of culture in translation. The present study concluded that translator education through collaborative pedagogies must prepare students to become competent translators who are able to interpret and transmit different cultures.

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