
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Marriage Invitation Cards in Jordan: A Translational Analysis

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ABSTRACT

The present study investigates the socio-cultural problems that translators encounter in translating Jordanian wedding invitation cards from Arabic into English. The study proves that these cards have enough social and cultural details that reflect the Jordanian community. It also shows that the information in the cards differs from one time to another due to economic, social, and religious changes and emerging circumstances. It also uncovers that the contents of the cards are norms-like and have ideologies that are not easy to transfer into a completely different culture. In order to conduct the study, some examples that include social and cultural elements are selected, and these elements are translationally investigated. The paper shows that resolving these translation challenges can only be through providing enough discussion and enclosing sufficient social and cultural backgrounds about the wedding invitation cards.

KEYWORDS

Wedding invitation cards, translation challenges, social and cultural problems, source language, target language.

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1. Introduction

Jordanian society can be safely described as tribally structured. Individuals share with each other in all circumstances, and that is due to the inherited beliefs, customs, and traditions that call for intimate relations. In the case of a wedding, which is a happy occasion that shows gatherings, for example, it is customary and an ancient tradition for Jordanians to invite each other to celebrate the event. The cultural aspects of the inviters and invitees can be reflected by those involved in the ceremony. Sullivan (2018, 3) claims that a wedding observance of a certain culture is not new, and it can echo and display all social and cultural values of participants. Cultural manifestations of weddings create distinctness of the event and variations in the way it is performed. Therefore, wedding traditions are not the same in all societies, and they vary from one culture to another and from time to time.

A wedding invitation is a formal written letter that requests the recipient to attend the ceremony, participate or share in it, depending on the type and level of relationship between the inviters and the invitees. An oral invitation is impolite in Jordan and does not cope with the Jordanian culture, which necessitates that the invitation is written. A wedding invitation is important in the Jordanian community, and if relatives are not invited, disputes may erupt between them and the family of the groom. According to Momani and Al-Refaei (2010, 61):

A wedding invitation is an important part of the wedding because it is the first thing in the ceremony that guests will see before the wedding starts. It announces good news to family and friends and lets them know when the wedding will take place.

The invitation card is designed in a way that shows social consideration; this design can be clear in the format of the card and its content. To quote Momani and Al-Refaei (2010, 61):

Choosing the appropriate invitation card and style is not an easy decision. All brides and grooms would like to make their wedding invitations perfect and special and thus tend to be very careful when they choose their wedding invitation cards.

Different types and styles, and modes of invitation are used. The most common mode in Jordanian society is the written invitation.

The main theme of this study is to investigate the social and cultural challenges that a translator may encounter in translating Jordanian wedding invitation cards into English. The study tries to specify these challenges and point out how they form a real translation challenge. In order to investigate the socio-cultural challenges encountered in the translation of wedding invitation cards, some examples that represent different challenges are selected. The translation problematic portions are extracted from the selected cards and then analyzed socially, culturally, and translationally.

2. Literature Review

In investigating written invitation cards in Jordan, one should consider all their aspects. The society, the culture, the language used and its level, the style, the implicit and the explicit messages should be considerably probed. By doing so, the socio-cultural values can be explicated, illuminated, and reflected, and the discourse as a whole can be pointed out. Indeed, discourse occupies a major part of the invitation cards and their content. Kress (1989, 19) defines discourse as "the institutionalized modes of speaking and writing which give expression to particular attitudes toward areas of socio-cultural activity".

Jordanian wedding invitation cards are normed in the sense that they contain essential details. This essence of the cards gives them an ideological character that is inescapable and unavoidable in translation, thus creating real translation challenges. The views or opinions observed in the source text, therefore, might be acceptable by one society but might not be acceptable by another at a certain time (Lefevere & Bassnet 2001). Ideological considerations are deemed to win if competition is made with linguistic considerations (Lefevere 1992) as the former is ideologized, and they shape and influence the translator's strategy and decision (Hermans 1985:217) to manage the translation to achieve a reasonable reception in the target culture.

Invitation cards form a genre in the sense that they encompass many social and cultural constituents. They share a type of communicative purpose with other texts. The language used in Jordanian invitation cards has been institutionalized for these cards' labels, as the same language can be almost observed in all parts of the country, regardless of geography, demography, or faith. Enough analysis of the genre, where invitation cards are an example, can show their features and their communicative purpose. According to Ruiying and Allison (2004, 265), "genre analysis explores discourse features in the broad context of the communicative event and attempts to provide the rationale of the discourse features in terms of authors' publicly retrievable intentions and institutional conventions." The genre to which the invitation cards belong can lead to an understanding of culture, as the accumulative content of the cards provides an ultimate understanding of that culture; such a "genre can have different cultures" as stated by Connor (2000, 25), and can be a "socio-psychological category defined by a structural arrangement of textual features" as emphasized by Bazerman (198, 79-101).

It should be stated here that the language of invitation cards has acquired a social familiarity, springing from its daily use, currency and frequency; the 'homely discourse' as first introduced or termed by Miller (1984) can best describe invitation cards as socially constructed, decoded and communally treated. In that very sense of the term, wedding invitation cards carry the same social values as those of 'obituaries', 'congratulations', 'bidding farewells', and 'thank-you notes'. They are daily performed and coined and consequently contribute to social communication, inspiring Johns (1997, 6) to define the homely discourse to which the invitation cards belong as "recognizable socially constructed text genres of everyday life".

Terms ascend from social and cultural values, where the semantic and pragmatic features of these terms share. Social terms can be culturally manipulated and exploited, and they contribute to the distinctness of communities, which leads to translation challenges that can be resolved by following different translation strategies. The social/cultural dimensions uncover the weakness of the translator, especially if the translator is not heavily acknowledged in the two cultures involved in the translation process. This is because "translating involves not just two languages, but a transfer from one culture to another" (Hervey and Higgins, 2007: 28).

The translator cannot free himself easily from the society that provides him with social and cultural norms. In translating from one language into another, the translator is called to bridge the cavity of these norms. He has a social function that is imposed and constructed by a certain society. Since these norms are idiosyncratic, they form social and cultural constraints which should be purely considered by translators for regularity and preference reasons (Munday, 2001). To explain further, Toury (2001, 55) defines norms as "the translation of general values or ideas shared by a community as to what is right and wrong, adequate and inadequate-into performance instructions appropriate for and applicable to particular situations, specifying what is prescribed and forbidden as well as what is tolerated and permitted in a certain behavioral dimension."

All texts are produced by human beings; therefore, they acquire native social and cultural features. The translator should enjoy enough social and cultural values and capabilities to ensure achieving an acceptable translation. This includes enough mastery of social and cultural backgrounds. The translator undergoes social and cultural pressures, which he cannot free himself easily from. According to Denghua (2010, 29):

The socio-cultural norms inevitably regulate the translator's translating activity, as the acceptability of the translated text is the primary concern of most translators. The translator, in the wider socio-cultural context, assumes a subjective role in the translation process. The descriptive nature of these norms provides a great possibility for the translator to exert his subjectivity, which can be realized by the translator's active manipulations of the source text. This point is well illustrated in the practical translation as the translator's behavior is constrained by a list of socio-cultural norms such as politics, ideology, ethics, morality and religion.

The translator is a mediator between a text producer and a text receiver; in other words, the translator is a receiver of a text and a producer of it. Therefore, he should have similar capabilities to the text's original writer, theoretically and practically. To quote Chomsky (1964:50):

A mature speaker can produce a new sentence of his language on the appropriate occasion, and other speakers can understand it immediately, though it is equally new to them. Most of our linguistic experience, both as speakers and hearers, is with new sentences.

Social activities in any community reflect that community's structure and culture, in all circumstances, in sad or happy occasions, as well as in bad or good times. Al-Quran et al. (2019:1) are quoted as saying:

Wedding ceremonies in all countries of the world are viewed as windows into their cultural traditions and customs. In Jordanian culture, wedding parties symbolize and celebrate the coming together of two future families. Such social events represent an important remembrance of ancestry and heritage.

In Jordan, weddings have their peculiarities, and they differ from one province to another. Al-Quran et al. (2019, 20) are quoted as saying:

A Jordanian wedding, unlike almost all traditional weddings in the west, may last for a week with evenings of loud traditional music, dancing *dabkeh* and large amounts of food served to guests and participants. Although over the recent years, many people are opting to move away from traditional wedding customs in favor of more modern wedding venues, like rented halls and hotels, the tradition still stands strong in both the *badia* and countryside. However, two to three nights ahead of the wedding party itself, which is usually on a Friday, the family of the groom celebrate the upcoming marriage with music, tea, Arabic coffee and dancing, especially the *dabkeh* accompanied by a variety.

3. Discussion

Jordan is an Arab country that preserves or maintains some of its Arab traditions and customs in all aspects of life. A wedding ceremony is an example that reflects Jordanian culture, as shown in the wedding invitation cards. Following are examples that show the socio-cultural dimensions of Jordanians, where the way or the style of the invitation is difficult to convey or deliver in translation.

3.1. Example 1

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 "ومن آياته ان خلق لكم من انفسكم ازواجا لتسكنوا اليها وجعل بينكم مودة ورحمة ان في ذلك لايات لقوم يتفكرون"
 السيد السيد
 علي راشد موسى الشрман ناصر سلطي موسى الشрман
 (ابو راشد) (ابو انس)
 يتشرفان بدعوتكم احضور حفل زفاف
 ولده
 رفيقة العمر و انس

The invitation card starts with the Qur'anic verse 21 of chapter 30, which is translated as "And among His signs is that He created for you mates from among yourselves that ye may dwell in tranquility with them and He has put love and mercy between your hearts: verily in that are signs for those who reflect (Ali 2001:1013); the verse handles marriage in the Islamic culture. The inclusion of the verse in the card aims at causing blessing and good future life for the couple, where love and mercy are expected to be the whole life long. Translating the top part of the card into English would not convey the socio-cultural connotations of the verse in the source text because readers of the receptive culture have the belief that blessing, mercy, and love between couples have nothing to do with faith. Therefore, the socio-cultural values of the source text are lost in translation, and only supporting details can compensate for the loss.

In the Arab culture, to which the Jordanian culture belongs, marriage is normally made between cousins. In the example above, marriage has been contracted between cousins; male cousins have the priority and the right to marry their female cousins, which has been a norm over history. Translating this cliché into English results in a great socio-cultural loss because westerners do not believe in such a customary way of marriage. The translation would seem awkward and odd; that is why enough details are needed to support the translation. The inviters who are normally the parents or the close relatives of the couple are shown in the card, and

their surnames (Abu Anas and Abu Rashid, respectively, Anas's father and Rashid's father), starting with the father of the groom and then the father of the bride. This procedure is noticed in the Jordanian culture, and translating it into English would inevitably lead to a translation loss at the socio-cultural level.

Jordanians are known as conservatives. Mentioning the name of females is considered taboo or a sort of shame. In the card under discussion, the name of the groom (Anas) is shown and included. However, the name of the bride is not shown, and her name is replaced by رفيقة العمر (lit. the comrade of the whole life). In Jordanian culture, this is acceptable as it goes with the Jordanian traditions. Translating this part of the card is problematic in the receptive culture. The translation would look strange and unacceptable, and the socio-cultural implications are lost in translation due to social and cultural differences. Sometimes, there is a night party for the groom's friends only because males and females are not allowed to be together. They sing and dance together, and the singer chants social songs. In the end, they have their late dinner. The party related to male friends cannot be reflected in translation completely because in the west, both invitees, males and females, can dance and celebrate together; thus, such socio-cultural values of the invitation card cannot be relayed in the target language.

3.2. Example 2

افراح ال السيد وال حشيش
العروسان
يدعوانكم بالتزام منازلكم والدعاء لهما
بالبركة بمناسبة زفافهما في ظل ازمة كورونا
اسيل فريد حشيش شادي هاني السيد
يوم الثلاثاء
الموافق 2020/10/6
سامحوني فرحتي لا تكتمل
الا بوجودكم لكن الظروف صعبه

In 2019, the coronavirus spread all over the world. That resulted in many social, economic, health, and educational changes. It also extended to include social norms and customs such as weddings, condolences and normal gatherings and visitations. To curb the spread of the pandemic and alleviate its danger, the government in Jordan issued many defense laws, and people were called to stay indoors and only move outside in an emergency. The wedding invitation card under discussion asks or calls the invitees to stay at home and pray for blessing and wellbeing to the newly married couple. This invitation is illustrated as follows:

يدعوانكم بالتزام منازلكم والدعاء لهما بالبركة بمناسبة زفافهما في ظل ازمة كورونا (lit. They call you to stay at home and pray for them for blessing in their wedding in corona crisis).

The socio-cultural problem in this example is clear, and it is religiously shaped by asking the invitees to pray or supplicate for them. Translating this request into English does not reflect the socio-cultural and religious values because the western community is secular, and the translation will be a completely different culture that would look socially and culturally distinct and strange. The social relationship between Jordanians is strong, and therefore they like to share and participate in each other's occasions. That is why the groom, at the lower part of the card, feels sorry for not inviting relatives to attend the ceremony by saying سامحوني فرحتي لا تكتمل (lit. forgive me; my happy occasion cannot be complete without you, but the situation is difficult), confirming that he is not really happy due to absence of relatives and friends.

Based on this, the translator cannot grasp the sociocultural implications of the content shown in the source invitation card because not simple for various social, cultural, and religious reasons. The gathering at the Jordanian wedding is normally large, which is not the case in western culture. Therefore, this social value is lost in translation. In addition, the religious sense which is noticed in praying for blessing would seem odd in the target culture, which is another translation loss. This translation loss cannot be compensated by adding enough details. In addition, Jordanians are very considerate and do not harm the feelings of others, and asking friends to stay at home looks difficult, and that is why they plead with others to forgive them and accept their apologies for declining the invitation. This socio-cultural sense cannot be reflected and felt likewise in a completely different culture, where people are more rationale and understanding.

3.3. Example 3

افراح آل العزام وآل العلي

ابناء المرحوم الحاج عدنان محمود العزام والسيد جمال عبدالحافظ العلي

يتشرفون بدعوتكم لحضور حفل زفاف شقيقهم (محمد) وكريمته أماني يوم الخميس الموافق 2015/11/26 في قاعات قصر النخيل /اربد/شرق مجمع عمان الجديد. يمنع اطلاق العيارات النارية في السهرة امام ديوان عشيرة العزام

The Jordanian social structure is tribally and family-based, and thus, reference is made to family names in almost all circumstances. The invitation card under discussion is a case in point, where it is summited by افراح آل العزام وآل العلي (lit. the joys of the family of Al-Azzam and the family of Al-Ali). The fact that the groom belongs to the Al-Azzam family made it necessary that the family be mentioned first and then followed by the family of the bride. Translating this social norm into English deprives it of its social and cultural values, a fact that requires enough social details to be provided in the receptive language.

The family members in Jordan are known as strongly linked, and that can be observed in all situations and occasions, such as those of death and marriage. The relationship between the parents and son does not end in the death of the father or mother, and this is noticed in the invitation card for weddings. In the current example, أبناء المرحوم عدنان محمود العزام (lit. the sons of the deceased, the pilgrim Adnan Mahmoud Al-Azzam) shows that the sons of the deceased replace him in charge of getting their brother married to a suitable wife. The Arabic المرحوم (lit. deceased) shows that the sons seek mercy for their father in all situations. Translating المرحوم in the card into English as *deceased* does not reflect the social relationships between members of the Jordanian family as such relationships do not exist similarities between the family members in the target language. Also, the Arabic title حاج (lit. pilgrim) is functional in the original text due to religious reasons, a case that is not appreciated equally in English as a receptive language. Consequently, the social and cultural implications cannot be preserved in English, which is a real translation loss.

The place of holding or making the party صالات النخيل (lit. Palm trees' halls) shows the social power and the financial status of the groom. Renting the hotel for the party shows that the groom is rich and likes to show prestige; sometimes, the bride may put it a condition to accept the groom as a husband. In Jordan, people exaggerate at weddings, and they brag about more payments at all levels, such as wedding expenses. In hotels, the party ends with a big dinner which is very costly. Translating the content of the current example into English does not reflect the exaggeration of Jordanians in the expenses and the size of the dinner and hotel hosting the invitees, which is a real socio-cultural loss. This loss can be compensated by giving enough details about the expenses, bragging, costs, among many other things.

Probing the current card reveals that a note is provided at the bottom concerning shooting or firing. The note states that firing or shooting is not allowed, and this has not come as a result of firing consequences that could have led to death or casualties. Including such a warning not indicates that live bullets are fired in weddings; such a social and cultural norm cannot be accepted in western culture, and the literal translation would not uncover the source text's cultural values.

3.4. Example 4

ال اللوح

محفوفة بالزهر والورد الندي

يا حاضر العرس اليك تحيتي

صل على خير الانام محمد

عند الدخول ادا اردت مسرتي

في صالة ابو ضرار الطابق الارضي

Poetry can be defined as a form of literature that uses aesthetic and often rhythmic qualities of language, such as phonesthetics, sound symbolism, and meter. The poetry is used in Jordanian wedding cards to show the importance of the occasion and attract the reader's attention. The groom's family is indebted to the invitees for coming to the party, participating, and sharing happiness and joy.

Translating the two verses above into English as "Oh, my greeting is to you, who are attending the party, surrounded by roses and dewy flowers; and when entering the (wedding hall), pray on Mohammed, the best of mankind, if you want to please me" would seem odd and strange in the receptive language as they do not have wedding cards similar to those designed by Jordanians, and the invitation may be made via email, over the phone, or even as a text message, which is totally unacceptable in the Jordanian culture. The religious implications and associations shown on the card are also very difficult to preserve in the target culture that enjoys a different faith. Therefore, the religious sense entailed in "pray on Mohammed, the best of mankind" cannot be reflected in the target language.

Jordanians boast about renting wedding party halls, and they feel proud to mention the name of the hall in the cards. Abu Thirar's hall, in this example, is known as luxurious, and for that reason, among many, the hall is mentioned in the card. Translating the content of the card, including the transliteration of the hall, results in many social, religious, cultural and economic problems that

cannot be compensated by the mere translation of the card and can only be solved by giving explanatory details about the Jordanian community in this particular theme.

3.5. Example 5

الحاج	الدكتور
يوسف حسين حسن العلمي وعقيلته	علي محمد خالد شطناوي وعقيلته
	يتشرفون بدعوتكم لحضور حفل زفاف
كريمتهم	ولدهم المهندس
صفاء	محمد

People feel proud of the positions they hold. Nicknames are important in the Jordanian community. For example, if the father of the groom or the bride is an engineer or a doctor, others like to have marriage relations with him. In case fathers do not enjoy such titles, people think of other titles that give enough credit to them, such as *حاج* or *شيخ* (respectively, pilgrim and sheikh) that carry religious implications and connotations. Thus, the title (*حاج*) can be used if the father does not have any social status resulting from a profession or career.

Translating the title of the groom's and the bride's fathers, in this example, into English results in a clear social and cultural loss. What is noticeable in the western culture is that people do not pay attention to the prestige derived from titles; university professors, for example, are called by their first names and do not feel uncomfortable or unhappy if compared with their Jordanian equivalents or counterparts. In the present example, the father of the groom is a doctor, while the father of the bride is *hajj* (pilgrim). Translating the content of the invitation card into English with these titles would look odd, strange and awkward. Thus, the prestige derived from the titles provided in the Jordanian card is deemed to be unappreciated by target language readers. The same also applies to the groom, who is titled an engineer, while giving the bride *كريمة* (lit. noble) as a title is also odd and awkward in the English culture.

Recently, wives in Jordan began to get more rights on marriage occasions, and that is why reference is made to them in the invitation, together with their husbands. The Arabic *عقيلته his wife* is clearly shown in the card to show some appreciation and respect. The literal translation of the card would not reflect this newly-created tradition that women started to gain over the last few decades. Loss, then, is inevitable because this masculine culture does not exist in the western. The fact that the large wedding gathering is a necessity in Jordanian celebrations cannot be observed in the target culture, where the party is limited, and the participants are few, which is another translation loss.

3.6. Example 6

الحاج محمد عقله فايز و الحاج أحمد عبد المجيد والحاج محمود عبدالمجيد
يتشرفون بدعوتكم لحضور حفلة زفاف ولديه واصف و محمود كريمتهما وذلك في تمام الساعة الثانية من بعد ظهر يوم الجمعة لتناول طعام
الغداء في منزل والد العريسين الكائن في بلدة ججين وفي مضافات (الدكتور ادريس والحاج محمد مثقال والحاج ضيف الله عقله والاستاذ قاسم
ابراهيم عقله)

Jordanians are known as hospitable and in favor of using titles on happy occasions, where hospitality and prestigious titles become very clear. As mentioned in the previous examples, certain titles are recommended in the Jordanian community. In the present example, the fathers of the groom and the pride are all titled as *حاج* (lit. pilgrim) to show respect and appreciation, especially for the parents who do not have a job title, such as an engineer or doctor. Rendering the content of the card into English collides with many social and cultural challenges, as shown below:

Pilgrim Mohammed Uqla Fayez, and pilgrim Ahmed Abdulmajeed, and pilgrim Mahmoud Abdulmajeed are honored to invite you to attend the wedding ceremony of their sons Wasef and Mahmoud and their noble daughters, on Friday afternoon, for lunch in the house of the two grooms located in Jijiin and in the hosting rooms of (Dr Idrees, pilgrim Mohammed Mithqal, and pilgrim Deif Allah Uqlah, and the teacher Qasim Ibrahim Uqlah

Investigating the translation of the original text into English, one can say that the translated text seems odd or awkward for many social and cultural reasons. While the title *حاج* (lit. pilgrim) is functional in the Arabic invitation card and shows respect and appreciation and gives a religious sense, none of such cultural dimensions can be reflected likewise in English due to clear contrasting differences at the social and cultural levels.

Hosting the invitees in the groom's house is a necessity and reflects the social culture of hospitable Jordanians. The invited people are requested to be at the groom's house on Friday at two o'clock in the afternoon. Friday is a blessed day, and people gather together after the Friday prayer. It should be pointed out that the food provided to the attendees is abundant, and Jordanians

exaggerate the amount of food which is normally *mansaf* (a Jordanian traditional dish made of meat, rice and yoghurt) which people eat by hand. The sociocultural problem lies in the fact that the provision of too much food is favored in Jordan and shows the aristocracy of Jordanians while it seems unfavorable and a form squandering in the western culture, which is a real translation loss.

What characterizes Jordanians is the cooperation on such occasions. Homes of all relatives are open to guests, and the dishes are distributed in the hosting rooms of those people. This sense of cooperation which displays the strong relationships between Jordanians, cannot be delivered in the western culture due to sociocultural differences, which is a potential loss which can be compensated by the provision of social and cultural details.

3.7. Example 7

“وَالآنَ قَدْ اخْتَرْتُ وَقَدَّسْتُ هَذَا الْبَيْتَ لِيَكُونَ اسْمِي فِيهِ إِلَى الْأَبَدِ، وَتَكُونُ عَيْتَايَ وَقَلْبِي هُنَاكَ كُلَّ الْأَيَّامِ”

سفر أخبار الأيام الثاني 7: 16)

السيد غالب سويلم المشربش وعائلته & السيد وليد سليمان المساعدة وعائلته

يتشرفون بدعوتكم لحضور حفل إكليل ولديهما

ثائر + ساندي

في تمام الساعة الخامسة من مساء يوم الجمعة الموافق 2021/10/29

تعلن أجراس كنيسة العذراء الناصرية اللاتينية في الصويفية عن بدء مراسم زواجهم المبارك

“أَيُّهَا الآبُ الْقُدُّوسُ، احْفَظْهُمْ فِي اسْمِكَ الَّذِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّي،

لِيَكُونُوا وَاحِدًا كَمَا تَحْنُ” (إنجيل يوحنا 17: 11)

Jordan is a Muslim-majority country with a Christian minority, estimated at about 6% of the total population. Christians in Jordan live in great harmony with their fellow Jordanian Muslims, and they enjoy the same right and duties before the law. Although the Jordanian constitution stipulates that Islam is the state religion, the country's laws largely equalize the rights and duties of Jordanians of different religions and ethnicities. Jordan has a long history of coexistence and tolerance among religions.

Christians are exceptionally integrated into Jordanian society, and there is a state of brotherhood that binds Jordanian citizens, whether they are Muslims or Christians, to similar customs and traditions, including the customs and ceremonies of marriage. The current example is a wedding invitation card for two Christian families. The invitation card starts with a Bible verse (2 Chronicles), which is translated as

“For now have I chosen and made this house holy, that my name may be there forever, and my eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually” (Smith & Van Dyke, 1865). The verse addresses marriage in Christian culture. Like invitation cards of Muslims, the inclusion of the verse in this Christian families' wedding card seeks to bless the couple and ensure their happiness in the future. It deals with the marital home that will bring the spouses together and which the Lord (Jesus) chose for them, blessed, and pledged to preserve and care for it forever.

Since the target culture is English, and the readers of the target culture are almost Christians, it is no strange that translating the opening verse of the card is not much problematic socially and culturally. Readers would not find it difficult to comprehend the social and cultural dimensions of the verse, topping the card. The inclusion of the biblical verse is understood as a supplication for the couple to have a blessed life in the future. The card, having the biblical script, also reflects the connection between Christians living in the target culture and those living in Eastern culture, like those in Jordan. This link has thus facilitated translation and has resulted in minimizing the social and cultural challenges of translating Jordanian wedding cards into English.

The invitation card also ends with another Biblical verse (John 17:11) لِيَكُونُوا وَاحِدًا كَمَا تَحْنُ أَيُّهَا الآبُ الْقُدُّوسُ، احْفَظْهُمْ فِي اسْمِكَ الَّذِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّي، which is translated as “Holy Father, keep them through your name which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are” (Smith & Van Dyke, 1865). It includes supplication to the Lord to protect the newlyweds. This indicates the importance of religious implications, as is the case in invitation cards for Muslims.

In such a case, it would not be a difficult task for the translator to convey the meaning of the Bible verses that are written at the top and bottom of the card in English because readers of the receptive culture have the same religious beliefs and views. Accordingly, the socio-cultural values of the source text will be understood by the target language readers, and there is no need for any further details to support the translation.

There is another aspect of the wedding ceremony that is unique to Christians from the rest of Jordanian society. It is the place of celebration where the invitees will be gathered, which is the church. This aspect also facilitates the translator's task in conveying this tradition when translating the contents of the card, given that this tradition refers to religious reasons and is common among this category of Jordanians and Western people. Therefore, the translation of this part will be easily understood by the target language readers.

Except for the religious manifestations mentioned above, the shape and content of all Jordanians' wedding invitation cards are similar in terms of arrangement and names. The names of the groom's father and his family appear first, followed by the names of the bride's father and her family, both of which are preceded by the word (lit. Mister). Thus, this similarity, as in the previous examples, will constitute an obstacle to the translator's task, and rendering the content of the card into English collides with many social and cultural challenges.

3.8. Example 8

السيدة فاطمة محمود شطناوي
تتشرف بدعوتكن لحضور حفل وداع كريمتها
أمني
بمناسبة زفافها الى السيد خالد أحمد عباس الجوارنه
وذلك بمشيئة الله تعالى من الساعة السادسة حتى الثامنة من مساء يوم الجمعة
الموافق 2011/5/6 في منزل والدها الكائن في بلدة حواره

At night before the wedding ceremony, relatives, friends, and neighbors are invited (usually by the bride's mother) to attend a farewell party for the bride, usually arranged at her home. The invitation is directed by the bride's mother to female friends, relatives and neighbors. The female invitees bid the bride the last farewell to her new house as this could be the last time to see each other, especially if she is married to someone living in a far region. The party begins in the evening of this last night and includes some well-known Jordanian folk songs and dances for this occasion.

It is also called "bride's *henna*", which was previously a party in which some women dye the bride's hands in the presence of her relatives and friends, but this custom has disappeared nowadays. On *henna* night, joy and sorrow are felt together; happiness for the marriage and sadness for the departure. In the past, the *henna* night used to be celebrated with different rituals; but now, it looks like a bachelorette party where the bride-to-be celebrates together with her friends. Having many details like trousseau and *henna*, a wedding night differs from one community to another, even in the same culture depending on social and economic situations. The party is often held in the house of the bride's father, as indicated in the invitation card, but in some cases, it takes place in a hall for more prestige.

The following rendition illustrates the various social and cultural obstacles that arise while translating the card's content into English:

Mrs. Fatima Mahmoud Shatnawi
is honored to invite you to attend the farewell party of her noble daughter
Amani
On the occasion of her wedding ceremony to Mr. Khaled Ahmed Abbas Al-Jawarneh
This will be, God willing, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Friday
May 6, 2011, at the house of her father in the town of Hawara

In the above example, the invitation card begins with the name of the bride's mother. Different from many examples above, where the fathers of the couples or their elder brothers are in charge of invitation, the bride's mother in this example is given the charge of inviting female invitees. The difference here is that the inviter and the invitees are females because this type of party is for women only, and males are not allowed to participate or attend. It is also noted that the name of the bride is mentioned before the name of the groom, in contrast to the rest of the invitation cards, due to the nature of the party that is specific to the bride. The fact that males are not invited to the farewell party of the bride would look odd or strange when translating this invitation card into English, where men and women are invited in the same manner. This social and cultural restriction results in a social difference in practice and can lead to come social misconceptions in translation that cannot be avoided by providing the target language text with the social norms of the source text.

To retrieve, this tradition does not exist in the Western culture and is therefore unknown to the target language reader, thus leading to a translation loss. This requires the translator to support his translation with more details about this type of party and why the content of the card is limited to the invitation of females only.

3. 9. Example 9

يسر جمعية العفاف الخيرية
أن تدعوكم لحضور حفل الزفاف الجماعي الحادي والثلاثون والذي يشارك فيه (34) عريسا وعروسة
من مختلف مناطق المملكة
الذي ستنظمه الجمعية يوم الجمعة الموافق 2022/7/22 وذلك ابتداءً من الساعة الخامسة
في مقر الجمعية الكائن في
عمان- طبربور- منطقة طارق- شارع عنتره بن شداد- قرب مسجد الفردوس

With the rise of living costs and change of lifestyle in Jordan, the rates of spinsterhood and celibacy increased. Thus, the idea of holding communal weddings began as a practical way to overcome the rising cost of marriage, which has become beyond the capacity and ability of young people who are about to get married.

Some charitable organizations or foundations sometimes organize this type of party and cover all the expenses of the ceremony, in addition to offering a range of donations and gifts to the spouses participating in these parties. Also, these organizations or foundations send invitation cards -like the example above- to the relatives of the couples to attend the party. Invitation cards for this type of wedding ceremony are often sent through the public media due to the large number of attendees, who are not limited to particular relatives but also include those who like to attend from different regions and tribes, in an aim to encourage this type of holding the wedding ceremony.

Investigating the example above, the contents of the present invitation card are different from its predecessors in form and content since the inviters, in this case, are not the parents or close relatives of the couples. Consequently, no names are shown on the card. The following translation of the card reveals the difficulty of reflecting the socio-cultural and religious values because Western society is not familiar with this kind of mass or communal wedding. The translation will look socially and culturally distinct and strange, as shown below:

Al-Afaf Charitable Organization is pleased to invite you to attend the 31st mass wedding, in which (34) brides and grooms participate from different regions of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. It will be organized by the organization on Friday, 22/7/2022, starting from five o'clock, at the headquarters of the association located in:

Amman-Tabarbour-Tareq area-Antarah bin Shaddad Street- near Al-Firdaws Mosque

The name of the organization is العفاف *chastity* carries many social, cultural and religious connotations. Jordan is a Muslim country, and Islam calls for marriage for those who are eligible in order to avoid any type of illegal intercourse. The Prophet calls those who are eligible to get married or to fast, as fasting helps in preventing any illegal sexual contact. For these social, religious, economic and cultural reasons, mass or communal marriages are organized in different regions.

Translating the current invitation card into a different language and culture, like English, is deemed to result in many translation challenges. Chastity, or purity, which is a virtue related to temperance, is highly respected and considered in all communities, especially the conservative ones. A chaste refrain from sexual activity is considered immoral, and any sexual activity, according to their state of life. The name العفاف *chastity* of the organization or foundation holds many social, cultural, economic and religious connotations. Illegal sexual relations are not permitted in conservative communities like Jordanians and are religiously prohibited. Thus, the organization supports this idea of legal marriage and also donates to it to encourage young people to get married. The literal translation of the card will result in a loss at many levels; socially, the translation would not reflect the strong ties between the different social groups in Jordan; religiously, the translation will not show the real value of chastity as a virtue that Islam strongly calls for; economically, the economic conditions that young people are going through in Jordan cannot be relayed or preserved in the mere translation of the card. Therefore, enough social, cultural, religious and economic details are needed to ensure the reflection of these connotative meanings in the receptive culture.

4. Conclusion

The study aimed at investigating the social and cultural problems that translators encounter when translating Jordanian marriage invitations card from Arabic into English. It has shown that the social and cultural values included in these cards are very difficult to attain in English as a target language that belongs to an extremely different culture. The study has shown that Arabic and English cultures are different from each other at many levels, and this has complicated the translation of the Jordanian marriage invitation cards into English. The study has shown that the content of marriage invitation cards differs from one place to another from time to time. It is hoped that this study will have a contribution to translation studies, especially those concerned with exploring the social and cultural values and allusions to marriage invitation cards. Though the study has covered many social and cultural aspects of marriage invitation cards in Jordan, it lacks enough studies that have directly investigated marriage invitation cards from a translational perspective, which is considered a limitation of the study. It is suggested that more studies be conducted on marriage

invitation cards in the future to cope with the changes that may have an effect on social and cultural attributions, which would consequently result in new translation challenges.

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