| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Translating Iraq's selected Covid-19 Cartoons into English

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| ABSTRACT

Cartoons, since they combine written text and visual content, has a major role in conveying different messages about Covid-19. This significance has typically come from the power of images and words that occurred in the cartoons and their impact on receivers' response thereafter. In translation, cartoon creates difficulty because of the cultural aspects and ideas that are created for a specific audience and community. Hence, in this paper, the focus will be specifically on analysing the language of selected cartoons and the translation approaches of the cartoonists' language in the Covid-19 era in Iraq, and this analysis is attained by adopting Norman Fairclough's model of critical discourse analysis. The researcher has categorised cartoons as follows: rhetorical, idiomatic, narrative, and rhymed, so this paper will concentrate on the analysis of the message behind each category that is employed to influence the audience and how it can be translated, especially if it encompasses idioms related to the Iraqi culture, musical rhyme, rhetoric, and pun. Accordingly, analysis of the constituent aspects of the cartoons necessarily takes place on linguistic and cultural levels so as to distinguish how each cartoonist represents the denotative and connotative meanings of the lexical items that are associated with cartoons drawings.

1. Introduction

When Coronavirus (Covid-19) emerged and lockdowns began to occur, people had to remain where they were, with bans on international travel, transport, and face-to-face communication being in place, and abide by local government enforcement. One issue this caused was trying to reach people and educate them about the virus. One of the approaches used was information being placed online, and cartoonists played a role in enhancing understanding regarding Covid-19.). Prilosadoso et al. point out that cartoons are pictures having features and functions like humour or satire communicating fictional stories or real problems. Cartoon are produced to make the audience both laugh and think. Thus, cartoons can be considered actual events. Moreover, cartoons are required to be "understood as media used by cartoonists to catch and interpret thoughtfulness in the community" (Prilosadoso et al., 2019: 760). Consequetly, since cartoons are associated with actual events, cartoons are created to convey a message related to the reality of communities in order to make the audience either smile, laugh, or think (Ibid.).

In this case, the prophylactic language used by cartoonists played a major role in enhancing the understanding of Covid-19. There are three reasons for this: the first is the power of image as, at many times, cartoons without any language being provided can be understood regardless of the language the recipient speaks. Furthermore, the image would probably be understood by the recipient even if any provided written language was not in their native tongue. Second, image is significant for all people, especially for those who are deaf or of hearing, since they will probably understand the intent of the idea without needing written text. Third, the cartoon might be accessible even if the written text is not understandable, depending on the drawing itself and its cultural constraints within a particular culture. However, it is not always the case that the recipient can gain a full understanding if they do

not understand the language of the cartoon. This highlights the importance of translating the cartoons into other languages so as to cover a larger number of people speaking different languages and to provide correct, accurate, and accessible information during a pandemic. Taking this fact into account, the translation of cartoon is a complicated task since it encompasses the translation of not only the strips, which, in many cases, probably include layers of meanings and are culturally-constrained, but also the translation of images, which can also have culturally-restricted elements.

Correspondingly, the translation of cartoon plays a major role in Covid-19 awareness-raising within different cultures and languages where the language of visuals plays a significant role in conveying public health messages, criticising the unstudied decision by governments to deal with the pandemic, and consequently reaching a larger readership. Since the English language is the lingua-franca, and Iraq, like many other countries, uses the English language to communicate with foreigners, whether they are native speakers or from non-Arabic speaking countries living in Iraq. Hence, transmitting the messages of the Iraqi cartoons into English is significant at the time of Corona virus for those who were unable to communicate in Arabic in Iraq. This significance has typically come from the power of images and language occurring in the cartoons and their impact on receivers' responses thereafter.

2. A review of literature
Many studies tackled the translation of cartoons into English, whether from Arabic or from other languages, in which each study discussed cartoon translation from a specific corner. For instance, Guyer (2016) particularly discussed *translating Egypt's political cartoons* after the 2011 uprising in Egypt. He talked about the translation of humour and satire, in addition to the translation of symbols "that are rooted in the local context" to the target audience. He also focused on the role of the translator in interpreting the cartoonist's message to the target receivers by discussing the translation of political cartoon, including pun, tropes, and common symbols of society. As far as the current study is concerned, it is dissimilar in the sense that it concentrates on cartoons incorporating public health messages during the corona virus in Iraq but not the political cartoon.

The second study that is interrelated to the translation of cartoon from Arabic is done by Al-Kenani and Banda (2018), who bring up the translation of Yemeni cartoons into English in which these cartoons are connected to Yamani culture and religion. The authors have adopted Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics in the translation of chosen cartoons. Furthermore, the researchers discussed the selected cartoons in Arabic along with their translations in English published in the Yemen Times. The study concluded that, since the cartoon adopted in purely related to Yemeni culture and religion, the translator should consider the culture, the situation, and the metafunctions employed in the source cartoon and should try to transfer them to the extent that possible in the TL in order to keep the cartoon in the target language natural and entertaining to the receivers as the source cartoon. On the other hand, in the current study, the researcher has translated the selected cartoons and adopted the CDA model to analyse the translation in English.

As for the third study, Abdulwahid (2022), in her paper, *Analysing Iraqi Political Cartoons: A Semiotic Model*, she concentrates on is a semiotic analysis of political caricatures announced through the election campaign 2018 in Iraq. The main aim of this paper is to analyse the essential structure of satire in selected political caricatures in Iraq. The study is conducted by implementing Barthes' semiotic model in order to analyse the language of Iraqi cartoon in Arabic. Despite this study is related to cartoon in Iraq, but it scrutinised expressly the examination of the cartoon in Arabic, and the study is not interconnected to a translation by any means. Hence, this is one of the causes that motivated the researcher in the present study to tackle the 'translation' of Iraqi cartoon into English and consider Iraq's selected Covid-19 cartoons.

Regarding the studies tackling the rendition of cartoon from other languages into English, Song (2012), in his study, *Creativity in Translating Cartoons from English into Mandarin Chinese,* specifically observed creativity in rendering cartoons from English to Chinese in which he examined creativity in translating cartoon films for children. Comparing Song's paper with the current study, the central aim of this paper is examining how the translator of cartoon communicates the Corona virus educational messages to adults from Arabic into English. Moreover, the current paper has displayed different samples of cartoons and discussed how every single example can be rendered into English, taking into account all classifications of cartoon.

3. Research objectives and methodology
Regarding the methodology of this study, Rogers et al. have stated that a CDA model of Fairclough includes the following steps: the descriptive level of the text, which incorporates verbal and visual text; the interpretive level encompassing the process of interpreting linguistic choices; the explanation stage which includes the social conditions governing these processes; and an analysis of the linguistic and meta-linguistic features of the text (2005: 371). Hence, the approach that will be followed in this study is based on describing the images and the strips in Arabic that are available in the cartoons, explaining the meaning of the message which the cartoonist is trying to convey, and then analysing the translation of the text into English in comparison with Arabic. It will also take into account cultural differences and, the target readership, and distinctive translation strategies that can be adopted during

the translation process, depending on the category of the cartoon, so as to obtain a clear message and, consequently, reach a larger audience.

Thus, this paper will analyse different categories of cartoons' language in social media campaigns and the translation of persistently chosen Iraqi cartoons that are constrained to Iraqi culture and political conditions, and also aims to examine translation strategies that can be adopted when translating from Arabic into English in view of the target audience in the English language. A critical discourse analysis (CDA) model by Norman Fairclough has been employed to analyse these cartoons. The data for this study is taken from between 1st January 2020 and 1st May 2021 and includes images[1] published by the Iraqi cartoonists Amer Al-Jazie, Bessam Faraj, Khudhair Al-Humairi, and Naseer Ibrahem. Since the cartoons selected are only available in Arabic, the researcher has personally translated the cartoons into English. This is due to the fact that the culture of translating cartoon is not popular in Iraq, and cartoonists are not predisposed to translate their own art into English. The reason for this might be that they want to reach a specific audience and are not aiming their work at an international audience. Another possible reason is not being able to create their work in English due to not having mastered that language. In addition, they might not trust translators to recreate what they have intended to convey.

4. Cartoons in Iraq during Covid-19
Across the world, cartoonists have played a major role in sending out public health messages, dispelling rumours about Covid-19, and fighting misleading information. This has led to the rectifying of information which people have received regarding the virus, helping to fight ignorance and reduce the levels of fear which people have experienced regarding Covid-19. To take Iraq as an example, cartoon artists play a vital role in sending public health messages, raising awareness, criticising wrong behaviours, and condemning the political measures used to deal with Covid-19 through the use of various social media campaigns. This has included, for instance, a "joint social media campaign" by the human rights office of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) and the al Amal Association, an Iraqi organisation (United Nations Human Rights Office 2020). Many Iraqi cartoonists have taken part in this campaign. On the other hand, what can be described as "personal campaigns" have also made their mark whereby cartoonists have decided to directly play a part, via their art, in dealing with the Covid-19 crisis. In addition, Iraqi cartoonists are apt to use cartoons to send out various messages on social and political levels. Socially, they are concerned with the ways in which people deal with the pandemic and aim to direct behaviour and promote cooperation. Politically, they have used their cartoons to convey messages to politicians and criticise the ways in which they have dealt with the pandemic.

As far as the styles of the cartoon are concerned, the cartoons are likely to be welcomed by readers who are concerned with the importance of image as visual depiction. It is a language of communication which is used to convey implicit and explicit messages by employing both verbal and non-verbal elements. Consequently, cartoons tend to be either language-based or visual, as Bush has described: "some cartoon arguments are exclusively visual and others nearly exclusively linguistic" (2012: 24). They can also consist of a combination of both, and this blended employment provides the audience with the opportunity to understand its implications more effectively; this is due to the fact that the existence of language complements the visual content and helps create a greater understanding of the idea of the drawing, and vice versa. In relation to cartoon specifically in Iraq, Abdul Rahim Yasser, an Iraqi cartoonist, mentioned in an interview with Al-Arabiya (2013) that there are styles of cartoon in Iraq, not a school, and that each style has something that distinguishes it. He added that some cartoonists rely on explicating what can be called "caricature fact" to bring it closer to the receiver, while others provide an explanation. Yasser (2013), in the same interview, expressed how he was quite frugal in his use of language, leaving interpretation to the audience, and how this was a lot of fun. On the contrary, Khudair Al-Humairi, another well-known Iraqi cartoonist, acknowledged that "commentary on the caricature" is one of the essential pillars of cartoon art; just as the lines have their expressive energy, the language of commentary and sarcasm similarly carry great energy. Therefore, the two styles can work together and are often used by the same cartoonist, for each style can convey the meaning more eloquence (Al-Arabiya 2013).

Hence, some cartoonists have a tendency to depend predominantly on the image and leave it to the audience to interpret it; this might also be used when the cartoonist prefers not to state something explicitly or where the image might be open to different interpretations, and they intentionally prefer to leave this ambiguity to the recipient so that they can decode the message. As Kress and van Leeuwen have highlighted, "visual communication is always coded" (1996: 32). Furthermore, another motive for relying on visuals is so that the cartoonist can protect themselves, especially if they are crossing "red lines" related to sensitive issues regarding traditions or politics. As an alternative, other cartoonists have a propensity to use language to explain the idea of the visuals and decode any ambiguity or different layers of meaning for the audience. Regardless, each style has its own purpose and message, and the cartoonist will decide on the timing and circumstances of what to choose and what to neglect.

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[1] These images are officially published by the cartoonists on their social media accounts in which each image encompasses the signature of each cartoonist.

Having mentioned briefly the common styles of Iraqi cartoons, it is also important to discuss their categories. In Iraq, it is necessary to consider the categories of cartoons that existed during the coronavirus crisis. Cartoons encompass different topics and thus can be categorised according to the topics they cover. In Iraq, these have included social (generally comprising raising public health awareness), political (commonly criticising political attitudes), and cultural (normally encompassing a sense of humour) categories. Each category of cartoon will tend to have a specific aim; in consequence, this paper will concentrate on an analysis of the message behind each category being employed to influence audiences from diverse backgrounds. Moreover, form plays a central role in constructing the strips of cartoons in the Iraqi dialect; in consequence, a discussion of certain aspects of the language, such as pun and antithesis, will be covered, as well as the use of idioms and proverbs. Accordingly, an analysis of the constituent aspects of the cartoons will examine both their linguistic and cultural levels so as to distinguish how each cartoonist represents the denotative and connotative meanings of the lexical items that are associated with cartoon drawings. Thus, in this study, the classification of cartoons in Iraq during Covid-19 will be organised according to the verbal content of the cartoons and will include the translation of rhetorical cartoon, idiomatic cartoon, narrative cartoon, and rhymed cartoon (see Sections 0, 0, 0, and 0 respectively).

5. Cartoon and translation

The translation of a cartoon is unattainable without clarifying the modes used for making meaning. A translated cartoon may not only be observed as humorous by the target recipient; it may also invoke a type of humour distinctive from the original cartoon (Zanettin 2010: 39). That incongruous presentation between the source and target cartoon not only applies when translating humour, but also when converting rhetorical, idiomatic, narrative, rhymed, and other categories of cartoons from one language into another. Subsequently, according to O'Halloran (2005 cited in Al-Kenani & Banda 2018: 54), this involves written texts and images complementing each other across the expression plane, the content plane (including such aspects as grammar and discourse strata), and the context plane (including, for example, register and genre). This also entails accounting for visual-written coherence. All of this plays a role in the comprehension of a cartoon in general. The translation should achieve consistence in terms of visual and verbal coherence within the source cartoon and its target rendition.

As a result of this, verbal and nonverbal aspects cause problems when translating cartoons. For instance, according to Machin and May, "meaning is generally communicated not only through language, but also through other semiotic modes" (2012: 6). In relation to the importance of meaning, Mazid has stated how "In fact, the caricature, like all tests, does not offer a single meaning that will be decoded in the same way by all readers" (2000: 53). Thus, some cartoons are translatable in terms of the language employed and the visuals used, while others encompass layers of meaning as well as the rhythm and culturally-bound expressions related to social patterns, with ironic expressions and the humour factor embedded. Therefore, in this study, the researcher will analyse the translation of captions/speech balloons in different cartoons created by Iraqi cartoonists from Arabic into English, focusing predominantly on analysing the verbal content and its translation between these languages. Cartoonists in Iraq do not tend to translate their own cartoons. In terms of my research, I have struggled to find Iraqi cartoons drawn in both Arabic and English, and that is why I have opted to translate them into English.

Guyer has argued that "there is no such thing as a correct or perfect translation, and the translator of the cartoon is an artist, demanding various tools and a clever wit" (2016: 213). In consequence, the translator of cartoon can adopt different strategies according to each category of cartoon. In a cartoon, a translator is not only required to understand the social and cultural source and context; they are also required to reproduce meanings in a target language that is likely to be culturally different (Al-Kenani & Banda 2018: 53). Cartoonists deal with diverse topics, and they occasionally tackle issues that may not be understood outside of a local community. In view of this, a translation should enable the target reader to understand the other (ibid: 52). The translation of a humorous cartoon must be humorous (op site), and accordingly, the translation of a figurative cartoon should be figurative, and rhymed cartoon should be rhymed, if conceivable. This is attributable to the fact that, for instance, the employment of irony is for a specific purpose, as is the employment of underlying meaning, while the employment of a rhythm or rhyme is used to satisfy a particular purpose in the target culture. For this reason, in Guyer's words: "Some cartoons are so effective that they do not need a translation in the narrow sense" (ibid.: 220). Therefore, in analysing the language of cartoon, different people may have different interpretations within one culture, and in translating these cartoons, for instance, from Arabic into English, other interpretations might occur in anglophonic countries. Many factors play a role in terms of how a recipient understands and interprets, according to their cultural background. As Guyer explains: "The essence of cartoons is its engagement with the reader, pushing him or her to rethink biases. Such a cartoon forces the reader to complete the loop" (Guyer 2016: 220).

In the next section, further details will be provided regarding the CDA of the translation of four categories of Iraqi cartoons (rhetorical, idiomatic, narrative, and rhymed) from Arabic into English. The way the researcher has categorised the above-mentioned cartoons is based on the tool each cartoonist has employed in order to deliver the intended message of the cartoon to the receivers with the aim of raising awareness on how to protect themselves from coronavirus infection. To put it clear, the

motive behind naming the "rhymed cartoon" like this is that the cartoonist has employed the rhyme to play on words, as the the music of the words plays a vital role in Arabic in delivering the intended message in an accessible way. Furthermore, "idiomatic cartoon" is so-called by the researcher because the cartoonist has made use of an idiom for the sake of communicating his intended message. Therefore, to get an unblemished insight, the translation of each classification of the cartoon is discussed independently in the subsequent four sections – rhetorical, idiomatic, narrative, and rhymed.

5.1 Translation Analysis of rhetorical cartoon

Cartoon with rhetorical language can be regarded as being one of the popular varieties of Iraqi cartoon whereby cartoonists will lean towards employing language, such as puns, in the strips. The employment of pun, as one of the rhetorical styles in Arabic, is used to convey an indirect message in the cartoon. Sometimes, this is in order to deliver political messages, while at other times, it is used to criticise a precise state of affairs in Iraq in a satirical way. To take an example, the cartoon below (see Figure 1), entitled *back to school*, was drawn by the Iraqi cartoonist Khudhair Al-Humairi (2021), a well-known Iraqi cartoonist, and the image was taken from his official Facebook page.

Figure 1: Back to school by Al-Humairi

The cartoon above specifically references the Iraqi situation and the decisions made by the Iraqi government, criticising a political decision with the employment of pun. It shows two pupils in front, then the coronavirus, and then a third pupil at the back. Hence, the image symbolises how the danger of coronavirus still exists among us. We see the scared faces of the pupils who are close to the virus while the virus is excited; this signifies the incorrect decision to return to schools as it might lead students to become infected and consequently spread the virus.

This cartoon criticises the Iraqi Ministry of Education for reopening schools and asking pupils to return to school despite an increase in the number of coronavirus cases in Iraq and for not committing to one decision for the entire year. When infection cases decreased, the government at times asked pupils to return to school; however, it asked them to move to online learning when cases decreased. Moreover, the cartoon explains the dangers of forcing students to go back to school. The risks of the virus and the large number of pupils in each class makes it difficult for social distancing and necessary precautions to be followed.

With regard to the image-text relationship and the captions and their translations, we can carefully analyse them along these lines: the heading of the cartoon, which is written above right, is (بدأ الدوام الحضوري - bid' adāwām alḥuẓūrī),[2] of which a verbum translation is (starting in-person learning). On the other hand, the transcribed text directly above the virus is a reaction to the title, which is (بحضوري - bi-ḥuẓūrī) and in plain English translation is (in my presence!). The two lexical words (حضوري - in-person) and (بحضوري - in my presence!) can probably be deemed as puns, whereby the first lexical item means the physical presence of pupils, and the second denotes the occurrence of the virus. Furthermore, these two lexical items are rhymed in the sense of keeping the identical word (ḥuẓūrī), but the article 'al-the' is used in (al-ḥuẓūrī), and the proposition 'bi-in' is used in (bi-ḥuẓūrī). The word-for-word rendition delivers the connotation of the punned words; nevertheless, the sense of playing on words and producing puns is challenging to mimic in English; this is attributable to inconsistencies in the linguistic structures of the Arabic and English languages. In spite of this, generating rhymed confrontations in English can be attained. Put succinctly, apropos the title translation; the rhyme can be recreated as "schools return to in-person", and for the rendition of the second strip, the rhythmed generated side-stepping

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[2] For the phonetic transcription for letters, I followed DIN 31635 transcription system. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/DIN_31635#cite_note-1. However, I have written the names of the Iraqi cartoonists as written on their social media accounts.

literal translation as "I will pop in!". In these translations, the substitution of pun with alliteration might be a potential choice in having 'in-person' and 'pop in,' as well as the use of comic elements by using 'I will pop in!' ironically.

5.2 Translation Analysis of idiomatic cartoon

Idiomatic cartoon can be regarded as a cartoon that incorporates Iraqi idioms in which every single idiom communicates a specific message within the SL culture. The employment of idioms in the Iraqi written and spoken language can be seen as one of the tools used by speakers and writers with the intention of delivering the intended message in a few words. Hence, this classification of cartoon is one of the most popular categories of cartoon in Iraq since it is related to the social matters that connect with Iraqi culture as well as community affairs. During Covid-19, cartoonists attempted to deal with issues related to the pandemic and raising awareness by fighting the harmful behaviours of people. This can be seen in the cartoon below. This cartoon (see Figure 2), named *international crisis*, was drawn by the Iraqi cartoonist Amer Al-Jazie (2020), a young Iraqi cartoonist, and the cartoon was obtained from his official Instagram page. This category of cartoon can be characterised as a cultural cartoon since it embraces a sense of humour because it deals with how some people respond to the crisis in a funny way by disregarding the Corona Virus instructions, and this is accomplished by occupying a humorous Iraqi proverb.

Figure 2: International crisis by Al-Jazie

The title of this cartoon (أزمة عالمية - international crisis) denotes the international crisis that all of the world has faced during Covid-19. The drawing encompasses a conversation between the world, representing the international crisis, and an Iraqi. The world wears a mask and talks to the Iraqi by saying in the Iraqi dialect (اخذوا احتياطكم، تره فايروس الكورونا دينتشر عالميا). This can be rephrased in standard Arabic as (احذروا: فايروس كورونا ينتشر عالميا) and can be plainly translated into English as (take your precautions: corona virus is spreading worldwide). Conversely, the Iraqi person is not wearing a mask and demonstrates carelessness by saying the Iraqi idiom (المبلل ما يخاف من المطر - almbelel mā yaḫaf min almātār) in which it can literally rendered as (a wet person does not afraid of rain) in English.

In this proverb, the verbal and visual components are complementing each other. Regarding the aphorism, it is a popular idiomatic expression in Iraq, which can be literally translated as (a man who is drenched is not afraid of rain). This maxim signifies the inattention of a person who has faced many difficulties and challenges and has reached the ultimate level of negligence. In this cartoon, the person symbolises the case of an Iraqi who does not care whether he might be infected by Covid-19 or not. Hence, the idea is represented in an ironic way in the sense that the Iraqi personality – as a result of what they have faced – starting with war and ending in the current circumstances, which include such issues as corruption and political insecurities, have reached the stage of not even caring about their own health. This state can be perceived in this person: his hand is plastered, his leg is plastered, his face is injured, and his overall situation looks disordered. This visual representation signifies the situations of some Iraqis who refused to follow lockdown restrictions, wear a mask, or take other precautions by reason of what they had previously experienced in Iraq.

Regarding a literal translation of the idiomatic expression in English, the general idea might be clear in that language; nonetheless, owing to the limited space available in translation and the balloons in English generally tending to be succinct, the strategy that can be adopted is the substitution of the cultural element of comedy in the target language. Giving a coinciding translation is probably more acceptable as the translator might avoid translation with explanation and adopt cultural adaptation and succinctness in English as "a wet fears no rain" and "caution! corona is broadly spreading".

5.3 Translation Analysis of narrative cartoon

Cartoons encompassing an imposed narration of a message which the cartoonist would like to send are one of the most widespread cartoons used in Iraq to express opposition or criticise a particular political or other situation without saying it directly. The idea of narration can be attained by narrating the situation of the cartoon by way of articulating one of the Iraqi sayings that is related to the Iraqi couture. Such kind of aphorisms narrate the whole idea of what the cartoonist is struggling to communicate in small words. As Corstange argues, "cartoons provide a venue for political speech, and, in the context of societies which suffer from shaky freedoms of expression, also provide a venue to express political dissent" (2007: 293). Additionally, narration plays an integral role in conveying political messages, and proverbs are also commonly used in the Iraqi context to narrate that message in a concise way. This situation is demonstrated in the cartoon below (see Figure 3), entitled *political situation*, by the Iraqi cartoonist Bessam Faraj (2020).[3] It has been taken from his official Facebook page. This category of cartoon can be classified as a social cartoon because it links a most popular saying in the Iraqi culture with the Corona Virus situation.

Figure 3: Political situation by Faraj

This cartoon is confined within the circumstances of Iraq, whereby the visual context signifies the perplexity of Iraqi citizens who, at some stage during the coronavirus pandemic, were unable to liberate themselves either from the difficult political situation on one hand or the constraints of the pandemic, such as lockdown and its impact on the economic life of Iraq, on the other. In the drawing above, the virus is running after an Iraqi citizen who is at the edge of a valley. The unstable political situation is underneath the valley, and the Iraqi cannot go back because he will be infected by the virus, nor can he continue running forward as he will fall down and the political situation, opening its mouth eagerly, will eat him.

Concerning the textual elements of the cartoon*, the title on the top right of the picture features a popular Iraqi saying (بين حانة ومانة - baīna Ḥānā wa-Mānā), literally translated in English as (between Ḥānā and Mānā). The literal translation makes no sense in English. To explicitly encode the meaning of this saying in Iraqi culture, we need to know the story behind it. It is part of the original saying (بين حانة ومانة ضاعت لحانه - baīna Ḥānā wa-Mānā ḍāʿt laḥāna) plainly meaning (between Ḥānā and Mānā, our beard was lost), which also makes no sense in English with a verbatim translation. The story of this Iraqi proverb is related to the Iraqi culture. It is said that* a man married two women, one of whom was called Ḥānā and the other Mānā. Ḥānā was young, aged no more than twenty, while Mānā was over 50 years old. Every time he met Ḥānā, she would look at his beard and remove every white hair from it as she hated to see them in his beard. When the man went to Mānā's room, she also grabbed his beard and removed the black hair from it, as it bothered her to see black hair in his beard. Events continued in this manner until one day, the man looked in the mirror and saw a great deficiency of hair. Thus, he grabbed his beard violently and said: "Between Ḥānā and Mānā, we lost our beard."

Thus, with literal translation and deprived of giving the above explanation, the idea of the intended message of this saying is inaccessible. Accordingly, taking into consideration the above, it can be deduced that this saying is used when someone is in between two elements and cannot escape from either one of them. This is what the cartoonist attempted to convey: people were lost between coronavirus and its negative consequences on their lives and the unstable political situation. To reflect this idea in English, the idiom "fall between two stools" can be used as a substitution for the Arabic idiom, conveying the same connotative meaning and domesticating the Arabic proverb in English. For this reason, the translation could be "Iraqis fall between two stools." As a substitute and for the purpose of being more precise, the translation can be simply as "between two stools". Thus, the translator will not be able to convey the cartoonist's message in the target culture, exclusive of knowledge of the narrative and symbolic intentions of the cartoon with respect to the Arabic culture.

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[3] Bessam Faraj is a well-known Iraqi cartoonist. He passed away in 2021 at the age of 78 due to Covid-19.

5.4 Translation Analysis of rhymed cartoon

This category of the cartoon is termed as "rhymed cartoon" because it incorporates a rhyme designed to transfer the message of the cartoonist in fewer words. Using rhyming words is popular in the Iraqi dialect, and this is also reflected in cartoon when a cartoonist's aim is to convey a message in an easy and accessible way, and sometimes in an ironic way, with rhyming words. These words are always in the form of antithesis. In this category of cartoon, rhyming words might exist within a text, and these words might be the only words available. Extracted from his official Facebook page, called *Coexistence with Corona Virus* (see Figure 4), was drawn by the Iraqi cartoonist Naseer Ibrahem (2020).[4] This type of cartoon can be categorised as a cultural cartoon since it encompasses a sense of humour.
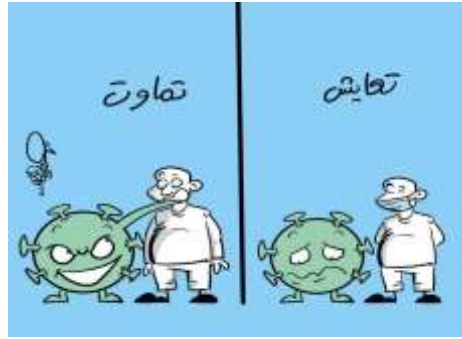

Figure 4: Coexistence with Corona Virus by Ibrahem

The prophylactic language adopted by cartoonists is one way of raising awareness, including the wrong behaviours which people adopted during the pandemic. These include, for example, not wearing face masks properly. The cartoon above represents the co-contextualisation between written text and image and comprises two sides comparing two different situations. The left side shows the coronavirus and a person without a mask; the virus is smiling because the person is unprotected, and hence, he will be infected. For this reason, the person is shocked at their situation. On the other hand, the right side shows the converse. The person is wearing a mask and is protected, and the virus is represented as being in a sad mood, whereas the person is excited because he is protected from infection. In this cartoon, the cartoonist endeavours to send a public health message by employing prepyloric language to educate people about the dangers of not wearing masks, including being the reason for spreading the virus and, most importantly, failing to protect their personal health. This is the visual message of the cartoon. In relation to, the written text, it can be analysed as follows:

The cartoon incorporates the two words (تعايش - taʿīš) and (تماوت - tamāwit). The lexical item *tamāwit* is a new word that has been produced by the cartoonist to recreate the same rhyme with the word *taʿīš*. These lexical items are rhymed so that the first literally means (coexistence) while the latter literally means (threat your life). The latter is derived from the first lexical word; they share the same number of letters, and the first and third letters of each are identical. This helped to create the same rhythm, especially given that the only strips attached to the cartoon are these two words. They are delivered ironically and demonstrate the fact that if you do not wear a mask, you will endanger yourself, and that might lead you to face death. On the other hand, if you do wear the mask, you will protect yourself from the danger of risking your life and will help stop the spread of the virus. To produce a translation of the written text, both words can be translated as "coping with corona virus" and "risking your life," respectively. To be concise, it is perhaps possible to merely say "coping" and "risking." In this way, the rendition has not only conveyed the meaning but has also maintained the rhythm through the addition of "ing" at the end of each lexical item. Subsequently, the substitution of antithesis with alliteration is one of the possible choices a translator can adopt to translate such a category of cartoon so as to preserve the music of the original as a tool for carrying the intended message of the source cartoon for the target audience.

6. Conclusion and recommendations

Four carefully chosen cartoons by well-known Iraqi cartoonists were selected, with each piece representing one category of cartoon in Iraq, including rhetorical, idiomatic, narrative, and rhymed. Throughout this paper, the researcher has endeavoured to recreate the speech balloons of the cartoon as figuratively/literally as possible according to the requirements of the text; however, the *captions* attached with some cartoons include idiomatic expressions, verse, slogans, and Iraqi slang, an idiomatic language rooted to the Iraqi dialect and cultural background. Hence, the languages of these cartoons have been analysed with regard to visual and

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[4] "Naseer is one of seven young Iraqi cartoonists who have been taking part in a joint social media campaign by the human rights office of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) and the al Amal Association, an Iraqi organization" (United Nations Human Rights Office 2020), in addition to adopting a personal campaign to raise awareness through his social media accounts.

linguistic items in Arabic and their translations in English by adopting Fairclough's model of CDA to analyse the source and target languages. It has been concluded that no one translation strategy can be adopted by the translator of the cartoon. This is due to the fact that there are different categories of cartoons, and every classification has a specific purpose. For some cartoons, the point is to convey a direct message, and for this type, literal translation might work. On the other hand, other classifications, especially those that encompass rhetorical language and have an underlying message, can be difficult to translate. Therefore, literal translation will not be possible, while domestication, adaptation, or substitution is probably the translator's decision. In the context of cartoon, the formal aspects of language, such as rhythm, antithesis, alliteration, and pun, always exist. Subsequently, in translation, the substitution of one literary genre with another is always a possible choice; however, this can be difficult to carry out much of the time; for this reason, focusing on the target culture and adaptation might be a good decision for the translator. For the translation of cartoon, including proverbs, the replacement of the source proverb with a target proverb conveying the message intended by the cartoonist in the source language and conveying an understandable message for the recipients in English is preferred.

Regarding recommendations, one vital recommendation for cartoonists in general and for Iraqi cartoonists in particular, especially for those who are seeking to reach a larger readership, is to either translate their own cartoon into other languages if they are able to or start thinking of looking for professional translators to translate their works. That is to say, cartoonists, if they are bilingual and seek to reach a larger audience, are recommended to create their cartoons in both Arabic and English since the English language is the world's lingua franca, or they might decide on another language instead of English, deepening the purpose of their cartoons and its target audience.

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