

Translating Riddles

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Abstract

Our world is mixture of different nations and each nation has its own language and culture. Culture is the set of beliefs which governs the behaviour patterns of a society and differs from one society to another. Culture have a great influence on translation especially when it concerns cultural –bound expressions such as wisdoms, proverbs, jokes and riddles.

Riddles as a unique genre has such a long tradition, both oral and written. Different types of riddles have continued to interest people throughout time, because they take them into unknown adventure that either brings delight, amusement and gratification at discovering the right answer, or bewilderment, vexation and frustration when fail to guess the answer. Riddles often include an exchange of words and unexpected answers in order to mislead the riddlee.

This paper tries to provide the reader with a historical background about the riddles. It tries to shed light on the essence of riddle, its definition and its types and possibility of translating riddles from English to Arabic as well as the difficulties a translator may face when they translate riddles. The researcher has chosen a number of riddles. He will try to translate them to Arabic language in a way that suits the Arabic culture and then he will discuss his translations and determines the problems and difficulties that may arise and propose the suggested solutions.

Key words: Riddle, Riddler, Riddlee, Enigma, conundrum, puzzle, mystery, folklore.

ملخص البحث :

علمنا خليط من أمم متعددة ولكل أمة لغة وثقافة تميزها عن غيرها. والثقافة هي مجموعة معتقدات تتشكل من خلالها الأنماط السلوكية للمجتمع وتختلف من مجتمع لآخر. وتؤثر الثقافة في عملية الترجمة وخصوصا عندما يتعلق الأمر بالعبارات الثقافية كالحكم والأمثال والنكات والأحجيات.

الأحجيات كنوع مميز من اللغة لها ضوابط خاصة بها سواء في المجال اللفظي أو الكتابي. وهناك أنواع مختلفة من الأحجيات جذبت انتباه الناس عبر التاريخ لأنها تأخذهم إلى عالم خفي من المغامرات يجلب المتعة والبهجة والسرور حال اكتشاف سرها ومعرفة إجابتها الصحيحة أو الشعور بالحيرة والنكد والاحباط عندما يفشل في حل اللغز. الأحجيات تتضمن تغيير في الكلمات وإجابات غير متوقعة من أجل خداع وتضليل الشخص المتلقي للأحجية.

يحاول هذا البحث أن يقدم للقارئ نبذة تاريخية عن الأحجيات وتسليط الضوء على طبيعة وجوهر الأحجية وتعريفها وأنواعها وإمكانية ترجمتها إلى العربية بالإضافة إلى بيان الصعوبات التي قد يواجهها المترجم عندما يترجم الأحجيات. وقد اختار الباحث

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مجموعة من الأحجيات الانجليزية وسيحاول ان يترجمها إلى العربية بما يتناسب مع ثقافتها ثم بعد ذلك سيقوم الباحث بتحليل الترجمة وتحديد المشاكل والصعوبات التي قد يواجهها المترجم ووضع الحلول المقترحة لها.

الكلمات المفتاحية : أحجية - راوي الأحجية - منلقي الأحجية - لغز - أحجية محيرة - لغز - تقليد شعبي



I. Introduction

Most languages have a word for riddles because riddles belong in all cultures to the archaic stratum of folklore. These words represent the emic category. Many famous writers and scholars have invented and drawn inspiration from riddles.

Riddles came from old English poetry. Their literary ancestry dates all the way back to Plato and Aristotle. In ancient Greece, riddles were used as a cunning tool, to demonstrate wit and wisdom. Writers in poetry also began expressing themselves through riddles. When a poem contains a riddle, the reader's mind can be stimulated and the writer can successfully get their message across in a more interesting way.

Theater is another place where riddles show up. Shakespeare was famous for his works, which had a lot of riddles in them. For example, in Romeo and Juliet, Romeo proclaimed his love in a riddle for the audience to interpret.

Today, examples of riddles can be found in movies as well. For example, in the movie Saw, Jigsaw the main character engages men and women in a riddle to save their lives. Most of the time the answer is simple, but some are difficult to comprehend. One of his riddles is "*Do you feel you have enough faith to stick this out, or do you need the help of some higher power? Look around salvation may be right across the room.*" The answer to that riddle was "a cross".

Riddles can be used in a contest of wit and skill, sort of like a guessing game. Riddle games have been played since ancient times, and are still being played today. They are interesting and stimulate human mind since they kindle the spark of thinking. They constitute an amazing human linguistic phenomenon.

II. History of Riddles

Riddles are very old linguistic phenomenon. Historical records revealed that it is as old as language. Riddles are known to have existed since very old time, for the first documents date back to ancient cultures of India, Palestine, Mesopotamia and Greece.

According to **Archer Taylor [15]**, "the oldest recorded riddles are Babylonian school texts which show no literary polish". They include the following riddles:

"My knees hasten, my feet do not rest, a shepherd without pity drives me to pasture"

Answer: (a river? A rowboat?)

"You went and took the enemy's property; the enemy came and took your property"

Answer: (a weaving shuttle?)

"Who becomes pregnant without conceiving, who becomes fat without eating?"

Answer: (a raincloud?).

The world's earliest surviving poetic riddles survive in the Sanskrit Rigveda. Hymn 164 of the first book of the Rigveda can be understood to comprise a series of riddles or enigmas (mysteries) which are now obscure but may have been an enigmatic (mysterious) exposition

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of the pravargya ritual. These riddles overlap in significant part with a collection of forty-seven in the Atharvaveda; riddles also appear elsewhere in Vedic texts (Hindu Sacred Religious Books). Taylor cited the following example: "*Who moves in the air? Who makes a noise on seeing a thief? Who is the enemy of lotuses? Who is the climax of fury?*" Answers: The first answer is *bird* (*vi*), the second is *dog* (*çva*), the third is *sun* (*mitra*), and the whole is Viçvamitra, Rama's first teacher and counselor and a man noted for his outbursts of rage'.

While riddles are not numerous in the Bible, they are present, most famously in Samson's riddle in Judges xiv.14, but also in I Kings 10:1-13 (where the Queen of Sheba tests Solomon's wisdom), and in the Talmud. Sirach also mentions riddles as a popular dinner pastime, while the Aramaic Story of Ahikar contains a long section of proverbial wisdom that in some versions also contains riddles.

In the medieval period, however, verse riddles, alongside other puzzles and conundra, became a significant literary form in the Arabic-speaking world, and accordingly in Islamic Persian culture and in Hebrew particularly in Al-Andalus. Since early Arabic and Persian poetry often features rich, metaphorical description, there is a natural overlap in style and approach between poetry in general and riddles in particular. Literary riddles are a subset of the descriptive poetic form known in both traditions as wasf (description). Riddles are attested in anthologies of poetry and in prosimetrical portrayals of riddle-contests in Arabic maqāmāt and in Persian epics such as the Shahnameh.

In Hebrew, Dunash ben Labrat (920-990), credited with transposing Arabic metres into Hebrew, composed a number of riddles, mostly apparently inspired by folk-riddles. Other Hebrew-writing exponents included Moses ibn Ezra, Yehuda Alharizi, Judah Halevi, Immanuel the Roman and Israel Onceneyra.

Riddles are known to have been popular in Greece in Hellenistic times, and possibly before; they were prominent among the entertainments and challenges presented at symposia. Oracles were also represented as speaking in often riddles language. However, the first significant corpus of Greek riddles survives in an anthology of earlier material known as the Greek Anthology, which contains about 50 verse riddles, probably put into its present form by Constantine Cephalas, working in the tenth century CE. Most surviving ancient Greek riddles are in verse. In the second chapter of Book III of Aristotle's Rhetoric, the philosopher stated that "good riddles do, in general, provide us with satisfactory metaphors: for metaphors imply riddles, and therefore a good riddle can furnish a good metaphor."

Literary riddles were also composed in Byzantium, from perhaps the tenth century with the work of John Geometres, into the fifteenth century, along with a neo-Byzantine revival in around the early eighteenth century. There was a particular peak around the long twelfth century.

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Two Latin riddles are preserved as graffiti in the Basilica at Pompeii. The pre-eminent collection of ancient Latin riddles is a collection of 100 hexametrical riddles by Symphosius which were influential on later Medieval Latin writers. The Bern Riddles, a collection of Latin riddles clearly modelled on Symphosius, were composed in the early seventh century by an unknown author, perhaps in northern Italy. Symphosius's collection also inspired a number of Anglo-Saxon riddlers who wrote in Latin. They remained influential in medieval Castilian tradition, being the basis for the second set of riddles in the thirteenth-century Libro de Apolonio, posed by Apolonio's daughter Tarsiana to her father.

Eighth- or ninth-century Veronese Riddle is a key witness to the linguistic transition from Latin to Romance, but riddles are otherwise rare in medieval romance languages. However, in the early modern period, printed riddle collections were published in French, including the Adevineaux amoureux (printed in Bruges by Colard Mansion around 1479); and Demands joyeuses en maniere de quolibets, the basis for Wynkyn de Worde's 1511 Demaundes Joyous.

Riddles survive only fragmentarily in Old High German: three, very short, possible examples exist in manuscripts from the Monastery of St Gallen, but, while certainly cryptic, they are not necessarily riddles in a strict sense. About 150 survive in Middle High German, mostly quoted in other literary contexts. Likewise, riddles are rare in Old Norse: almost all occur in one section of Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks, around 37 riddles depending on the manuscript. These riddles do provide insights into Norse mythology, medieval Scandinavian social norms, and rarely attested poetic forms.

By contrast, verse riddles were prominent among Anglo-Saxons, made a prominent literary form by the Anglo-Saxon Aldhelm (639–709), writing in Latin and inspired by the fourth- or fifth-century Latin poet Symphosius. He was followed by a number of other Anglo-Saxons writing riddles in Latin. This prestigious literary heritage contextualises the survival of nearly one hundred riddles in the tenth-century Exeter Book, one of the main surviving collections of Old English verse. The riddles in this book vary in subject matter from ribald innuendo to theological sophistication. Three, Exeter Book Riddle 35, 40 and 66 are in origin translations of riddles by Aldhelm. Unlike the pithy three-line riddles of Symphosius, the Old English riddles tend to be discursive, often musing on complex processes of manufacture when describing artefacts such as mead (Exeter Book Riddle 27) or a reed-pen or -pipe (Exeter Book Riddle 60). They are noted for providing perspectives on the world which give voice to actors which tend not to appear in Old English poetry, ranging from female slaves to animals and plants, and they often subvert the conventions of Old English heroic and religious poetry.

With the advent of print in the West, collections of riddles and similar kinds of questions began to be published. A large number of riddle collections were printed in the German-speaking world and, partly under German influence, in Scandinavia. Riddles were evidently hugely popular in Germany: a recent research project uncovered more than 100,000 early modern German riddles, with the most important collection being that Strassburger

Rätselbuch, first published around 1500 and many times reprinted. This is one of the most famous riddles of that time:

German Riddle	It's Translation in English
Es kam ein Vogel federlos, saß auf dem Baume blattlos, da kam die Jungfer mundlos und fraß den Vogel federlos von dem Baume blattlos.	There came a bird featherless sat on the trees leafless There came a maiden speechless And ate the bird featherless From off the tree leafless.

III. What is a Riddle?

Defining riddles was subjected to long scholarly debate. The first major modern attempt to define the riddle was by Robert Petsch in 1899, with another seminal contribution, inspired by structuralism. **Georges and Dundes** [7] suggested that "*a riddle is a traditional verbal expression which contains one or more descriptive elements, a pair of which may be in opposition; the referent of the elements is to be guessed*".

In some traditions and contexts, riddles may overlap with proverbs. The Russian phrase "**Nothing hurts it, but it groans all the time**" can be deployed as a proverb (when its referent is a hypochondriac) or as a riddle (when its referent is a pig).

Pepicello and Green [14] points out that a riddle is an important linguistic genre that evokes humour, fun and entertainment. A riddle is not merely a witty bit of entertainment but a complex linguistic and aesthetic structure that, when subjected to systematic and scientific study, reveals a great deal about the major human system.

A riddle is a deliberately confusing question and has a humorous or clever answer. It usually includes a puzzle or a mystery. It can be a statement, a question, or a phrase that has a double meaning. A riddle can be a thought provoking challenge to figure it out, or it can be a funny comment that makes you laugh.

Riddles as a folklore genre and a rhetorical device, often having veiled or double meanings. They can be great brain busters that make people think. They constitute a thought-provoking challenge for the audience to solve, or they could be a funny comment intended to make the audience laugh.

A riddle is as hard or as simple as you and the person you're telling makes it. The answer can be right in front of your nose and even in the riddle itself, or it can be difficult and hard to comprehend. It depends on how much you open your mind to the possibilities. Some riddles show the wit of protagonists in a narrative, allowing them to escape a terrible situation by using their wit rather than their strength. Often times, answering puzzling riddles may require hours head scratching. To understand the meanings of words requires the knowledge of three types of context:

Pepicello and Green [14] points out that the linguistic context of an utterance refers to the totality of its phonological, lexical and grammatical resources. The social context consists of the cultural and institutional circumstances surrounding the use of language. The cognitive context comprises the totality of the belief, pattern of reasoning and the knowledge which produce the utterance. The linguistic context may be regarded as the super-ordinate context as it is the conveyor, or the provoker of the other two contexts. A functional linguist will rely on the linguistic information to generate social and cognitive meanings from a linguistic expression. Both the social and cognitive meanings can therefore be regarded as linguistic products. Thus, in complex language signs like riddles and jokes, the knowledge of the form and substance or phono-grammatical and lexico-semantic system of the language is secondary, if not totally unimportant, to the knowledge of the cognitive realities which generate the language token. The primacy of cognitive context in the process of interpreting the discourse of the riddle by demonstrating that its linguistic context is inadequate in arriving at its answer.

IV. Function of Riddles

Warner [17] says that in written literature, riddles usually designed to deceive the audience with their meanings. As far as a riddle's purpose is concerned, it explores questions with enough thoroughness to provide readers a clear view of major issues. Riddles can generally be conversation-starters, or brain busters to get readers thinking, while in oral literature, riddles serve as the competition of wits and skills and guessing games. However, if the audience knows the answers they take pleasure in hearing them repeatedly. Gaming riddles reveal the playful side of language in a manageable form. Besides, it is usually possible to draw appropriate metaphors from good riddles.

Example: *This thing all things devours;
Birds, beasts, trees, flowers;
Gnaws iron, bites steel;
Grinds hard stones to meal;
Slays king, ruins town,
And beats mountain down.* **Answer:** *Time*

A **riddle** comes in the form of a snap joke, playing with similitude and incongruity in order to spark laughter; but enigma is a larger matter, and allied to the sacred. So riddles can be very feeble, silly or smutty like (**What goes in hard and comes out soft? Answer: Macaroni**); or they can be baffling, like the kennings of Anglo-Saxon poetry, some of which have still not been answered, or the mystery of the Eucharist or the Trinity. Like nonsense verse and nursery rhymes, they are as ancient as anything ever told, and they occur in every culture”.

V. Elements of Riddles

According to **Bauman [4]**, there are many elements that serve as framing devices that are culturally recognized as transformers of speech from talk into performance.

1. Special codes such as: archaic or esoteric language, reserved for performance.
2. Special formulae that signal performance, such as: conventional openings and closings, or explicit statements announcing or asserting performance.
3. Figurative language such as: metaphor, metonymy, etc.
4. Formal stylistic devices such as: rhyme, vowel harmony, other forms of parallelism.
5. Special prosodic patterns such as: tempo, stress, pitch.
6. Special paralinguistic patterns such as: of voice quality and vocalization.
7. Appeal of tradition.
8. Disclaimer of performance.

These elements add flavour to the riddle, make it effective amusing. They kindle the spark of interest and make the receiver interact immediately. Using figurative language add mystical factor and push human mind towards deep thinking in order to find the correct answer.

VI. Types of Riddles

Abrahams [1] states that different classifications have put in order to classify riddles. However, riddles have been classified into two main types, Enigmas and Conundrums according to how people them.

1. Enigma

Enigmas are types of riddles that employ the use of allegorical or metaphorical devices. That is, the solution is expressed metaphorically. These riddles involve critical thinking and ingenuity on the solver's behalf in order to devise a solution. An enigma often takes the form of providing descriptive attributes and leaving the audience to guess what it is that could have those attributes (sometimes are contradictory).

Examples: *I have a tail and a body, but I am not a snake. What am I? (Coin)*
Rain is spent. Now colors bent. Frame a clear, blue sky. (Rainbow)

2. Conundrum

A conundrum is a riddle that relies on the use of puns in order to achieve its desired effect. It is a question that opens either the question or the answer.

Examples: *What kind of tree can you carry in your hand? Answer (Palm Tree)*
Feed me and I live, yet give me a drink and I die. Answer (Fire)

Abrahams [1] adopted another criterion in classifying riddles into:

a. Descriptive Riddles are enigmas which permit the riddlee (the person who solves the riddle) to guess the answer of the riddle by describing a certain animal or an object as in:

*In spring I am gay,
In handsome array;
In summer more clothing I wear;*

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*When colder it grows, I fling off my clothes;
And in winter I quite naked appear* (the answer is: Tree)

b. Neck-riddles a type of riddles in which are seen in northern European and African traditions. The executioner asks a riddle like the following one and if the riddlee solves it, he saves his neck but if he cannot find the answer, he is executed:

Horn ate horn up a white oak tree. You guess this riddle and you can hang me.

Neck-riddles do not have any answers but they are based on the riddler's experience or something that the riddler has witnessed. This type is common in the United States which is about a "Mr. Horn" who climbs trees and cooks goats. Knowledge-based riddles.

c. Knowledge riddles is another type of riddles is based on the knowledge of the riddled person as an: **Who was born before his father and died before his mother?**
The answer is (Abel) and this riddle necessitates some knowledge on Bible.

*The beginning of every end,
The end of every place,
The beginning of eternity,
The end of time and space.* The answer is the letter "e"

d. Visual Riddles and Doodles Visual riddles are enigmas in which the riddler does not use words but use his gestures for description. In doodles, the picture of the subject is drawn as a rough sketch.

e. Joking Questions are cause-effect riddles in which the effect is given and the answer is its cause. Here is an example: Why does a freight car need no locomotive? Because the freight makes the car-go.

f. Wisdom Questions are based on memorization of already learned facts because the answer cannot be inferred from the content. This riddle involves background knowledge on the field of baseball as in:

How many outs in an inning of baseball? The answer is Six.

Riddle Poem

A riddle can also be in a form of poem. A riddle poem indirectly describes a person, a place, a thing, or an idea. The reader must try to figure out the subject of the riddle. A riddle poem can be in any length and usually has a rhyme scheme of abcb or aabb.

Riddles are also classified according to syntax into simple or complex:

- A riddle can be simple, brief and straightforward
- A riddle can be complex when it is long and tricky and contains a series of puzzles.

Riddles can be classified according to the subject referred to in that riddle.

1. Riddle on people
2. Riddle on waste product
3. Riddles on Parts of the body
4. Riddles on Birds
5. Riddles on Plants
6. Riddles on Domestic animals
7. Riddles on cultural objects
8. Riddles on Natural phenomena, like rocks

Riddles can be classified according to the style and structure:

1. Declarative riddles are presented as direct descriptions
2. Epigrammatic riddles, which are presented as series of puzzles
3. Idiophonic riddles use idiophones
4. Interrogative riddles are posed as questions
5. They are short and brief
6. Use personification
7. Use of metaphor
8. Use of ideophones
9. Use repetition
10. Use of onomatopoeic words

VII. Ambiguity in Riddles

Pepicello and Green [14] argues that riddles involve two types of ambiguity. The linguistic ambiguity (ambiguity in the grammatical form of the riddle) and the contextual ambiguity (ambiguity produced through a conscious manipulation of social decorum that results in disorientation or confusion of the riddlee within the riddle act itself). Thus, the riddler (the person who narrate the riddle) attempts to outwit the riddlee (the audience) by presenting ambiguities that the riddlee cannot resolve. English riddles employ strategies at the levels of phonology, morphology, and syntax.

Phonological Ambiguity: It refers to separate lexical items that have identical phonological forms but with different meanings as in: (**John lives near the bank.**) The word bank here designates three lexical items belong to the same part of speech (noun) and differ only by semantic features (meaning). The word **bank**, may refer to a building for put or draw money, a mound of earth, or the sloping side of a river.

1. *He went to the **bank** for fishing.* (Bank of the river)
2. *She was sitting on a grassy **bank**.* (Hill)
3. *He went to the **bank** to draw some money.* (Financial institution)

Phonological ambiguity can also be found in two different words but with the same pronunciation as in the following examples:

4. *The book is **red**.*

5. *The book is read.*

The phonological forms of these two words are identical, with the ambiguity lying in the utterance of the item /red/. In sentences in sentences 4 and 5, we find that the underlying difference of the two identical surface structures stems from the morphological level of grammar. Thus, *red* is an adjective while *read* is a verb **Pepicello and Green [14]**.

Syntactic Ambiguity: It may result from processes that take place at the syntactic level of grammar. Consider the following examples:

6. *Sam looked over the car.*
7. *Sam looked the car over.*

The ambiguity in sentences 6 and 7 rests on the syntactic classification of **over** because in the underlying structure, **over** may function as a preposition that takes a noun object, or as a particle which is part of the verb phrase. In sentence 6 indicates an action whereby Sam cast a glance in a manner such that his line of vision was above the level of the car while in sentence 7 indicates that Sam studied the car. It is necessary to show that the surface ambiguity of **over** is not merely phonological and that the difference in this case is indeed syntactic (syntactic ambiguity) **Pepicello and Green [14]**.

Another kind of syntactic ambiguity results when the application of transformations to two different underlying structures results in homophonous surface structures as in:

8. *Who do you expect to marry?*

Sentence 8 is multiply ambiguous because it has two possible interpretations. The first possible reading is asking about your expectation of another person marrying some unidentified third party. The second reading is asking for the identification of the person with whom you intend to enter into marriage **Pepicello and Green [14]**.

The syntactic ambiguity can be manipulated in two different ways. First, is **phrase structure ambiguity** in which two different syntactic structures have identical surface structures as a result of the homophony of contrasting parts of speech. The exploitation of phrase structure ambiguity is rare in riddles, as in:

9. *Why is a goose like an icicle? Both grow down.*
10. *When is a boy like a pony? When he is a little horse.*

The second is **transformational ambiguity** where two different structures have identical surface structures by virtue of the transformational processes that apply in the derivations of the surface forms. It includes two sub-types:

- a. *Rearrangement Transformation* which is simply any transformation that rearranges the order of constituents in a phrase structure such as passivization (*Mary was hit by John*)

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or *Question Formation*, which converts the structure from a statement into a question (*Who did John hit?*).

- b. *Deletion Transformation* which is means deleting some element from a phrase structure tree such as deleting unspecified pronoun. Thus, there are three basic syntactic processes that may be utilized in creating ambiguity in riddles.

Pepicello and Green [14] point out that ambiguity is often exploited in the riddle genre to produce wit. The riddler, in creating ambiguity in the form of the riddle, has a double advantage. First, only he knows where in the composition of the riddle an ambiguity exists. Second, only he knows at what linguistic level this ambiguity exists.

11. What *turns* but does not move? Milk.
12. What has an *eye* but cannot see? Needle.

Conventional orthographic representations of words is another strategy plays upon. In such cases the riddler asks for a clarification or specification concerning a word, or the relationship between two words. The answer in such cases is often an alphabetical letter.

13. What makes oil boil? The letter *b*.
14. What makes a road broad? The letter *b*.
15. What is the end of everything? The letter *g*.
16. What changes a lad into a lady? The letter *y*.

In creating riddles, restrictions on transformations of the syntax of idioms may be violated to confuse the riddlee. That is, the riddler is free to question any element of an idiom as if it were not an idiom, but a literal statement. The riddler is using both the literal and idiomatic meanings of a given syntactic construction to confuse the riddlee.

17. What is it you will break if you even name it? Silence.
18. What does a person grow if he works hard in his garden? Tired.

VIII. Cultural Translation

Language transfers culture from one generation to another while translation is considered as a cross-cultural transfer and a means of intercultural communication. Cultures varies from one language community to another. Each culture has its own beliefs, customs, traditions, ideology and religious doctrines. Cultural expressions such as proverbs, idioms, metaphors, jokes and riddles pose a real problem if the translator does not have a good knowledge of both the SL culture and the TL culture.

Nida [12] discusses the problems of correspondence in translation, giving equal importance to both linguistic and cultural differences between the SL and the TL and concluded that differences between cultures may cause more severe complications for the translator than do differences in language structure. Regarding translation of cultural elements, he paid more attention to *dynamic equivalence* which tries to relate the receptor to modes of behavior

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relevant within the context of his own culture without insisting that he understand the cultural patterns of the SL context. To him this method is more tangible for TL reader.

Newmark [11] defines culture as "the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression", thus acknowledging that each language group has its own culturally specific features. He categorized the cultural words as follows:

1. Ecology: flora, fauna, hills, winds, plains
2. Material Culture: food, clothes, houses and towns, transport
3. Social Culture: work and leisure
4. Organizations Customs, Activities, Procedures.
5. Gestures and Habits

He proposed two opposing methods: *transference* which keeps cultural names and concepts and *compensational analysis* which excludes the culture and highlights the message. For dealing with cultural gap, he introduced the following strategies:

1. Naturalization
2. Couplet or triplet and quadruplet
3. Neutralization
4. Descriptive and functional equivalent
5. Explanation as footnote
6. Cultural equivalent
7. Compensation

Hatim and Mason [9] stated that ideology includes the implicit assumptions, beliefs and value systems which are shared collectively by social groups. They make a distinction between the ideology of translating and the translation of ideology. The ideology of translation refers to the basic orientation chosen by the translator operating within a social and cultural context. That is the translator when translating riddles should pay attention to TL ideology.

Hervey and Higgins [8] believed in cultural translation rather than literal one. They say that accepting literal translation means that there's no cultural translation operation. Cultural obstacles are more difficult than linguistic ones and here a transposition in culture is needed. According to them cultural transposition has a scale of degrees which are toward the choice of features indigenous (natural or familiar) to target language and culture rather than features which are rooted in source culture. The result here is foreign features reduced in target text and is to some extent naturalized. The scale here is from an extreme which is based on source culture (exoticism) to the other extreme which is based on target culture (cultural transplantation):

1. Exoticism
2. Calque
3. Cultural Borrowing
4. Communicative Translation
5. Cultural Transplantation

Venuti [16] and in order to help translators dealing with cultural aspects, he introduced two strategies of **Domestication** and **Foreignization**.

a. Foreignization: Keeping the SL cultural elements by introducing them into the TL without any changes, providing or not providing explanation of the cultural terms and translating idiomatic expressions literally without making adjustments. It is the strategy of retaining the information from the source text and it may involve breaking the conventions of the TL to preserve the SL text meaning.

His hair turned grey.	أصبح شعره رماديا.
All roads lead to Rome.	كل الطرق تؤدي الى روما.
His face is as black as ink.	وجهه أسود كالخبير.
He returned empty-handed.	رجع بخفي حنين.

b. Domestication: Making the SL cultural elements understandable to the TL readers by replacing them by cultural elements of the TL through: finding cultural equivalent, adding additional information to explain the SL cultural expression or clarifying the significance of the idiomatic expression or eliminating the odd elements that may cause problems of understanding to the TL readers. It is the strategy of making TL text closely conform to the TL culture even if there is loss of information from the ST.

His hair turned grey.	واشتعل الرأس شييبا.
All roads lead to Rome.	كل الطرق تؤدي الى مكة
His face is as black as ink.	وجهه أسود كالفحم.
He returned empty-handed.	رجع بخفي حنين.

IX. The Translation of Riddles

Transferability of cultures has been the focus of scholarly attention for a long time, for its importance in cultural exchange. According to **Nida [12]**, **Nida and Taber [13]**, **Larson [10]** and **Bassentt [3]**, translation is not a mere rendition from one linguistic system to another but also translating from one culture to another. They argue "One does not translate **Languages**, one translates **Cultures**".

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Riddles are closely related to culture. Every culture is characterized by its own riddles. Riddles vary according to culture in their content and style. What is acceptable, effective and comprehensible in one culture may not be acceptable, effective and comprehensible in another culture.

Now, the researcher will try to translate a number of riddles in order to show if it possible to convey equivalent meaning and effect.

Riddle No.1:

What makes oil boil? The letter b.

If we try to translate this riddle into Arabic literally, we will face a problem.

Literal Translation: ما الذي يجعل الزيت يغلي؟ الحرف ب.

This translation distort the original message and does not convey the intention of the riddler (the writer of the riddle) because the answer is not logical. The logical answer will be (النار) not the letter b (الحرف ب).

And if we translated it by transliteration: (ما الذي يغير كلمة أويل إلى بويل؟ الحرف ب.) it will be too easy to solve and in this case the intended meaning of the riddle is lost and the puzzle is easily solved.

The same is applied to riddle No.2 and riddle No.3

Riddle No. 2:

What makes a road broad? The letter b.

ما الذي يجعل الطريق واسعا. الاجابة: الحرف ب
ما الذي يغير كلمة road الى broad؟ الاجاب: الحرف b

Riddle No. 3:

What changes a lad into a lady? The letter y.

ما الذي يغير الرجل الى امرأة؟ الاجابة: الحرف واي
ما الذي يغير كلمة lad الى lady الجابة: الحرف y

Riddle No. 4:

What two keys cannot open any door? Monkey and donkey.

This riddle includes a harmony between the word “key” in the question and the words “monkey” and “donkey” in the answer. So, if you translate this English riddle into Arabic literally, it will lose its riddling harmony and effect.

ما المفتاحان اللذان لايمكنهما فتح أي باب؟ القرد والحمار.

The English riddler intentionally put a sort of harmony between the word “key” and the words “monkey” and “donkey” and to keep this harmony in the Arabic translation. This harmony can be conveyed if the translator have good Arabic cultural knowledge. However, the solution to this riddle is translate it according to Arabic culture into:

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ما هما المفتاحان اللذان لا يمكنهما فتح أي باب؟ الإجابة: محمد مفتاح وفرج مفتاح.

Riddles such as the above type that include a linguistic solution are often difficult to translate and they may lose their riddling effect if they are translated literally.

As for the riddles that require a scientific and logical solution, there is no problem in their translation because they don't include a linguistic trick and they can be translated straightforward. Consider the following riddles:

Riddle No. 5:

What gets wetter and wetter the more it dries? (Towel)

ما هو الشيء الذي كلما نشف أصبح مبللاً أكثر. الإجابة: المنشفة

Riddle No. 6:

Take off my skin - I won't cry, but you will! What am I? An onion.

لو نزع عني جلدي فلن أبكي ولكنك أنت سوف تبكي! من أنا؟ البصل

Riddle No. 7:

What is made of water but if you put it into water it will die? (Ice cube)

ما هو الشيء الذي يتكون من الماء وإذا وضعته في الماء يموت؟

Riddle No. 8:

A box without hinges, key, or lid, yet golden treasure inside is hid. (Egg)

صندوق بلا مفصلة ولا مفتاح ولا غطاء ومع ذلك مخبأ فيه كنز من الذهب. البيضة

Riddle No. 9:

He has married many women, but has never been married. Who is he? (Priest)

زوج نساء كثيرات ولكنه لم يتزوج أبداً. من هو؟ الإجابة: الكاهن أو القسيس

Riddle No.10:

What gets bigger when more is taken away? Answer: A hole

ما هو الشيء الذي كلما أخذت منه يكبر؟ الإجابة: الحفرة

Riddle No.11:

I'm light as a feather, yet the strongest person can't hold me for five minutes. What am I? Answer: Breath

أنا أخف من الريشة ومع ذلك لا يستطيع أقوى رجل أن يمسكني لمدة 5 دقائق. من أنا؟ الإجابة: النفس

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Riddle No.12:

I'm found in socks, scarves and mittens; and often in the paws of playful kittens. What am I? Answer: Yarn

أنا موجود في الجوارب والأوشحة والقفازات وفي مخالاب القطط المرححة. من أنا؟ الأجابه: الخيط.

Riddle No.13:

I am an odd number. Take away a letter and I become even. What number am I? Answer: Seven

أنا رقم غريب وإذا حذف من حرفا أصبحت متساويا. أي رقم أنا؟ الاجابه: الرقم سبعة

Riddle No.14:

What five-letter word becomes shorter when you add two letters to it? Answer: Short
ماهي الكلمة التي تتكون من 5 حروف وإذا أضفت لها حرفين أصبحت أقصر؟ الاجابه: أقصر

Concerning the English riddles 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 there is no problem in translating them into Arabic since they do not involve any musical harmony between the words. And they can be translated literally or semantically.

Riddle No. 15:

What is the difference between a jeweler and a jailer?
One sells watches and the other watches cells.

مالفرق بين الجواهري والسجان؟ أحدهما يبيع الساعات والآخر يراقب الزنزانة.

Riddle No.16:

What is the difference between a deer fleeing from hunters and a midget witch? One is hunted stag, the other a stunted hag.

مالفرق بين غزال يهرب من الصيادين وساحرة قزم؟ الاجابه: أحدهما غزال مطارد والآخر جنية قزم.

Riddle No.17:

What is the difference between a professional musician and one who hears him? One plays for his pay, the other pays for his play.

مالفرق بين العازف الماهر والذي يستمع إليه؟ الاجابه: أحدهما يعزف من أجل النقود والآخر يدفع النقود من أجل العزف.

Riddle No.18:

What is the difference between a donkey and a postage stamp?
One you lick with a stick, the other you stick with a lick.

مالفرق بين الحمار والطابع البريدي؟ الاجابه: أحدهما يضرب بالعصا والآخر يلصق بلعقة.

The Arabic translations of the English riddles 15, 16, 17 and 18 are not as equal and effective as the original texts because the musical harmony between the successive words “sells watches” and “watches cells”, “hunted stag” and “stunted hag”, “plays for his pay” and “pays for his play” and “lick with a stick” and “stick with a lick” is lost.

Now, we turn to riddle poem. Translating riddle poems is not that easy because a poem is a piece of writing that expresses emotions, experiences and ideas in short lines using words that rhyme. A poem should be rendered as a poem in order not to lose its beauty and effect. Due to cultural difference between English and Arabic achieving the equivalent musical effect is too difficult. Hence, gain and loss in translating riddle poem is possible to a great extent.

Riddle No. 19:

<p>Voiceless it cries, Wingless flutters, Toothless bites, Mouthless mutters. Answer: Wind</p>	<p>تصرخ بهمس وترفرف بلا جناحين وتعض بلا أسنان وتدمدم بلا فم. الاجابة: الريح</p>
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Riddle No. 20:

<p>I have lakes with no water, I have mountains with no stone, I have cities but no buildings, I have forests but no trees. What am I? Answer: A map.</p>	<p>عندي بحيرات بلا ماء عندي جبال بلا حجارة عندي مدن بلا مباني عندي غابات بلا أشجار من أنا؟ الاجابة: الخريطة</p>
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Riddle No.21:

<p>It always says something, But doesn't know how to talk; It can run but never walk. What is it? Answer: (a clock)</p>	<p>دائما ما تقول شيئا لكنها لا تعرف كيف تتكلم يمكنها أن تركض ولكن لا تستطيع المشي ما هي؟ الاجابة: الساعة</p>
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Riddle No. 22:

<p>For thousands of years, Seen only in tale. The wind as a sail, for one thunderous gale. Shiny stores rich in lore, The burning temper, like Earth's core. Answer: Dragon</p>	<p>لآلاف السنين فقط نراه في الحكايات الريح كالشرع تجاه عاصفة مدوية مخازن متلئنة غنية بالمعرفة بمزاج ملتهب مثل باطن الأرض الاجابة: التنين</p>
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Riddle No. 23:

In marble walls as white as milk,
Lined with skin as soft as silk,
In a fountain crystal clear,
A golden treasure does appear.
There are no doors to this stronghold,
Yet thieves break in and steal the gold.
What is it?
Answer: An egg.

عندي جدران من الرخام بيضاء كالحليب
مربوطة بغشاء ناعم كالحرير
في عين نقية كالؤلؤ
وفي وسطها يظهر كنز ذهبي
ولا توجد لهذه القلعة أبواب
ومع ذلك يقتحمها اللصوص ويسرقون الذهب
ما هي؟
الاجابة: البيضة

X. Conclusion

Riddles are culture-specific phenomenon. Translation main aim is to find in the TL an equivalent expression that carries meaning equivalent to that of the SL. Culture-bound expressions such as riddles pose a problem for translators due cultural differences between English and Arabic culture and due to lack of SL and TL cultural knowledge.

Translators, often find it difficult to convey the equivalent meaning and provide proper translation particularly when it is related to culture-bound expressions. And to preserve the same symbolic picture and the same effect, the translator should literalisms and if he wishes to convey the same metaphorical and idiomatic translation that will convey the intended meaning of the riddler and adds cultural flavour.

This paper revealed that translating riddles from English to Arabic is not that easy since riddles are designed to amuse and examine human intelligence in solving the puzzle. The riddler deliberately uses cultural specific expressions loaded with emotive meaning and transferring these cultural elements to the TL often fails. It has also shown that riddles carry literary- linguistic creativity with a mystical semantic core rooted in the personal knowledge or experience of the riddlers. In addition to their humorous content, riddles are products for testing linguistic and experiential domains of knowledge.

Finally, the translator have to be aware of the cultural differences between English and Arabic. Knowing the differences between the SL culture and the TL culture helps the translator in providing a good and effective translation to the TL reader.

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