Q/ How does English differ from Arabic concerning gender system?

A/ English does not have gender for second person pronouns like Arabic الناقة و البعير and does not have gender for الناقة و البعير

The following English example translated into Arabic illustrates the kind of problems gender can pose in translation:

- Shampoo the hair with a mild WELLA-SHAMPOO and lightly towel dry.

Note: The translator uses passive voice to avoid using gender because he does not want to restrict the sale of the shampoo to men or women.

The secretary spared no effort in organizing the office.

In the example above, the translator uses feminine gender 'السكرتيرة' despite the fact that 'the secretary' can be feminine or masculine. This is because this job is often occupied by women.

Person

Person is the category of person relates to the notion of participants roles.

Q/ Compare between English and Arabic as far as person system is concerned?

A/ In English we have first person (I, we) second Person, (you) and third person (he/she/it/they) in Arabic the person system has both a gender and number dimension as in " هنّ ، انتم ، انتن "

Q/ How is person distinction reflexed?

A/ Some languages unlike English have some **formality/politeness dimension** in their person system, in French for example: *vous* as opposed to *tu*.

1.1. Translation of Verb 'BE' (i.e. 'am, is ,are/was, were/be, been'):

Problem 1: Literal translation of 'am, is, are':

When these verbs are the main and only verbs in the sentence, they are translated by many students literally into (یکون), which is a poor translation: e.g.

"I am a student": (أنا أكون طالباً)
"She is kind": (هي تكون طيبة)
"You are a father": (أنت تكون أباً)

Solution: 'am, is, are' can be omitted altogether here, thus changing the English verbal sentences into Arabic nominal ones: i.e. into a topic and a comment(مبتدأ وخبر) each. e.g.

"I am a student": (أنا طالب)
"She is kind": (هي طيبة)
"You are a father": (أنت أب)

a. The present progressive:

"I am leaving now": (أنا أكون أغادر/مغادراً الآن)
"He is eating an apple": (هو يكون يأكل/آكلاً تفاحة)
"We are speaking English": (غن نكون نتكلم/متكلمين الإنجليزية)

The good versions of these examples drop verb 'be', as follows:

2. "He is eating an apple": (هو يأكل(آكل)تفاحة)

3. "We are speaking English": (نحن نتكلم (متكلمون) الإنجليزية)

b. The present passive voice:

1. "I am given another chance": (أنا أكون أُعطى فرصة أحرى)

2. "She is invited to the party": (هي تكون تدعي إلى الحفلة)

3. "They are put in the same situation": (هم يكونون يوضعون(موضوعين)في الموقف نفسه)

The more acceptable versions of Arabic translation dispose of verb 'be':

1. "I am given another chance": (أنا) أُعطى/معطى فرصة أخرى)

2. "She is invited to the party": (هي تدعى(مدعوة)إلى الحفلة)

3. "They are put in the same situation": الموقف نفسه) الموقف نفسه