
RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Interplay of Linguistic and Cultural Factors in Translating Sensitive Texts

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to explore a specific aspect of translation, rather than to contribute to the ongoing theoretical discussions surrounding it. My primary objective is to highlight a significant feature of texts: the multifaceted nature of their signs in relation to cultural and ideological assumptions. I will specifically argue that by underscoring the importance of the cultural and historical contexts of texts, I aim to provide valuable insights into the cultural influences that shape translation practices and the strategies employed. Additionally, the structure of the text plays a crucial role. The manner in which events are conveyed is as significant as the events themselves. Therefore, it is essential to consider not only the credibility of the text's content but also the perspective from which that content is presented. Language and culture are intricately linked, and accurate translation between two languages requires a thorough understanding of the cultural contexts of both the source and target texts. Language is a vital element of culture, and translation involves navigating two distinct cultural landscapes: that of the source language and that of the target language. The transfer of cultural elements is recognized as a complex challenge. While much research on the translation of culture-specific items has concentrated on fictional literature, it is clear that these cultural elements are relevant across various genres. This paper examines the complexities associated with translating sensitive texts, especially considering cultural and ideological factors..

KEYWORDS

Translation, Culture, ideology, Sensitive Texts, English, Arabic

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1. Heading

Literature Review

The translation is not simply a matter of seeking other words with similar meanings, but rather the finding of appropriate ways of saying things in another language. Different languages may use different linguistic forms, but these forms are only one of the aspects of the difference between the two language systems (Almijrab, 2024). The significance of translation arises from its essential function in conveying meaning and culture, with language serving as the primary medium for this task. According to Davies (2003, p. 68), culture is defined as "the collection of values, attitudes, and behaviors that are shared by a group and transmitted through learning." He distinguishes between the inner and outer dimensions of culture, which can be exemplified through customs, behavioral norms, artifacts, and symbols. The inner values of culture are acknowledged as particularly challenging. Nevertheless, the complexities and significant challenges posed by cultural differences far exceed those presented by variations in language systems for translators. In this respect, Baker (2024) argues that academic discussions surrounding culture, language, and translation do not aim to be manipulative, either intentionally or overtly. However, they may fall short in their efforts to address the political dimensions of language and translation.

The dynamics of modern globalization, rapid technological advancements, international relations, and other factors compel individuals to communicate not only within their own nations and cultures but also in a broader global and intercultural context. As a result, interactions with foreign and unfamiliar cultures have become an integral part of contemporary life. The concept of equivalence, which was developed as a means to address translation misunderstandings between nations, has sparked more debates than it has resolved. Issues of mistranslation and translation difficulties continue to pose significant barriers for translators

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and, consequently, for cross-cultural communication. A pertinent example is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict regarding the interpretations of the French and English versions of International Resolution 242 (1967) principle (i); the Palestinians and of course the Arabs adhere to the French text, while the Israelis supported by the USA and the Europeans favor the English translation. Each side, however, interprets it differently:

Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict.

Retrait des forces armées israéliennes des territoires occupés lors du récent conflit;

The absence of the definite article preceding the term territories in the English text has been interpreted by the Israelis as indicating a withdrawal from some, rather than all, occupied territories, as evidenced by the Arabic translation: انسحاب القوات المسلحة الإسرائيلية من أراضٍ احتلتها خلال الحرب الأخيرة. Conversely, the French expression des territoires which structurally translates to "of the territories," clarifies that the withdrawal pertains to all territories occupied during the recent conflict. This is further illustrated in the following Arabic translation: انسحاب القوات المسلحة الإسرائيلية من الأراضي التي احتلتها خلال الحرب الأخيرة.

The translation of sensitive documents, including the previously mentioned clause from the United Nations, requires a meticulous degree of precision, as even slight ambiguities or errors can lead to serious repercussions. For translators engaged with such delicate material, the pursuit of a neutral equivalent is critically important. It is vital to acknowledge that specific texts, influenced by their genre and cultural contexts, may elicit greater apprehension than others.

Cultural Specificity

Language extends beyond simple sounds, words and grammatical frameworks; it is intricately intertwined with human communication and cultural settings. Each instance of language usage mirrors the speaker's social experiences, influenced by their distinct socio-cultural environment and exposure to diverse texts. For instance, in Arab culture, *rain* and *snow* are often perceived positively, representing water resources and the promise of fruitful harvests. Arabs convey good news with the expression أُثلج صدري (it froze my heart), which signifies relief and contentment regarding snow in a predominantly warm climate. In contrast, the English equivalent tends to imply frustration, as freezing is generally associated with adverse weather conditions. Likewise, elements such as the sun, summer, and heat evoke positive sentiments among individuals residing in colder regions like Britain and France, similar to the French phrase, Ça m'a réchauffé le cœur (it warmed my heart). On the other hand, the English saying to *save something for a rainy day* suggests a need to prepare for potential hardships, whereas for Arabs, rain embodies good harvest and prosperity.

Cross-cultural interpretations can illuminate shifts in ideology. The word *gay*, which initially signified happiness, has transformed in the English language to refer specifically to homosexuality. In contrast, the Arabic term شاذ جنسيا (sexual pervert) is used, indicating a more conservative perspective. Given the religious inclinations prevalent among many Arabs, homosexuality is frequently perceived as a departure from both human nature and societal standards. This disparity in language and cultural interpretation can result in considerable misunderstandings when one culture seeks to embrace the concepts of another. It is crucial for translators to develop a deep understanding of cultural subtleties, as they act as key interpreters of texts, influencing the reality presented to the audience. This awareness is vital for carefully considering both the propositional and expressive meanings within the text. Nevertheless, the task can become not only complex but also risky when dealing with texts that Beaugrande (1981) identifies as highly sensitive. Religious texts are particularly representative of this category, as they carry profound sacred significance leads their guardians to be wary of the choices translators must make, often resisting any decisions altogether, as encapsulated in the well-known Italian saying: *traduttore, traditore* (translator is a traitor). Historically, the initial translators who attempted to render the Bible into various European languages faced intense backlash, which sometimes escalated to persecution. The Qur'an similarly encountered skepticism; early Muslim scholars largely held the view that the Word of God (the Qur'an) was untranslatable (Pickthall.2019).

Translating a religious text like the Qur'an involves grappling with complex issues related to its rhythmic structure and the equivalence of vocabulary in translation. The Qur'an is intended for comprehension, as highlighted in Surah 4 Ayah 82, which poses the question, {Do they not reflect on the Qur'an?} This inquiry is reiterated in Surah 47 Ayah 24, which adds, {or is it that their hearts have locks upon them? Do you not apply your minds? Alternatively, perhaps you will apply your minds}. While it speaks to an intelligent audience, the Qur'an is also meant to be appreciated for its beauty. As Cragg (1999) notes, it is "an oracle, not a treatise, meant to be recited rather than read, cherished as music rather than revered in silence." This auditory aspect of the Qur'an is crucial for translators, who must strive to capture the melodic quality of the original text. However, this task is challenging, especially considering that attention to style may necessitate a compromise on content an option that translators of a sensitive text like the Qur'an cannot afford. Almiqab (2024, p. 74) states, "the distinctive language and content make interpreting a challenge undertaking." The translation of the Qur'an's meaning is particularly challenging due to the multifaceted nature of its vocabulary. Terms such as صلاة (prayer), زكاة (charity), صوم (fasting), and حج (pilgrimage) possess various meanings that depend on their contextual usage. These meanings are not always immediately clear from the Qur'an itself and often require reference to other Islamic texts, including the biographies of the Prophet and established traditions. The primary challenge in translating Qur'an terms lies not solely in their polysemy but in the fact that each meaning carries nuances that are difficult to convey fully in the target language.

Let us consider the three religions mentioned in the Qur'an starting from the cradle of civilization up to the uprising of Islam more than fourteen hundred years ago are accommodating to one religion Islam. This claim can be justified by the following verses from the Holy Qur'an. Ayah 19 from surah 3:

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ ۗ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ
{The Religion before God is Islam (submission to His will): nor did the people of the Book dissent therefrom except through envy of each other after knowledge had come to them. But if any deny the Signs of God God is swift in calling to account.} Ayah 85 from Surah 3 Reads:

وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ
{If anyone desires a religion, other than Islam (submission to God) never will it be accepted of him; and in the Hereafter, he will be in the ranks of those who have lost (all spiritual good)}.

From what preceded, it can be said that all religions before Islam are Islamic religions. Ayah 136 from Surah 2 sums up without a shadow of a doubt that all messengers of Allah were Muslims.

قُولُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَمَا أُوتِيَ النَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ وَتَحْتَ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ

{Say ye: "We believe in God and the revelation given to us and to Abraham Isma'il Isaac Jacob and the Tribes and that given to Moses and Jesus and that given to (all) Prophets from their Lord we make no difference between one and another of them and we bow to God (in Islam).}

From these Quranic verses, it is clear that the three religions referenced in the Qur'an, which trace their origins back to the dawn of civilization and culminate in the emergence of Islam over fourteen centuries ago, can be seen as converging towards a singular faith: Islam. This assertion is supported by specific verses from the Holy Qur'an. For instance, Ayah 19 of Surah 3 states that the only true religion in the eyes of God is Islam, and that the followers of previous scriptures only diverged due to mutual envy after receiving knowledge. Furthermore, Ayah 85 of the same Surah emphasizes that any pursuit of a religion other than Islam will not be accepted, and such individuals will ultimately face loss in the Hereafter. Consequently, it can be inferred that all religions preceding Islam can be classified as Islamic in nature. Additionally, Ayah 136 of Surah 2 unequivocally affirms that all messengers of Allah were adherents of Islam, as it calls for belief in God and the revelations sent to various prophets, including Ibrahim, Ismail, Ishaq, Yaqub, and others, without distinction.

In this respect, domestication and foreignization represent two fundamental strategies in translation that offer both linguistic and cultural direction. These concepts were introduced by Venuti (1995: 20) who defines domestication as "an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values, bringing the author back home," whereas foreignization is described as "an ethno-deviant pressure on those (cultural) values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad". In general, domestication refers to a translation approach that employs a clear and fluent style to reduce the unfamiliarity of the foreign text for readers of the target language, while foreignization involves creating a target text that intentionally disrupts target conventions by preserving elements of the original's foreignness. He (1995) defines them as approach can be employed, allowing for the transliteration of original terms in the target text. This method enables Arabic terms commonly found in the Qur'an, or those of a technical nature, to remain in English while suggesting that the translator direct the target reader to a glossary. Such transliteration may better preserve meaning compared to corresponding terms in the target language that may lack the essential nuances present in the source text. Additionally, it is often more effective than a paraphrase, which can disrupt the original flow and logic of the text.

However, if we were to foreignize every term for which we cannot find an exact match in the target language, the resulting translation could become cluttered with foreign words, potentially leading to oddity or even unintelligibility. As will be elaborated in the following section, each word can convey a depth of meaning comparable to that of a 500-page novel, making it impossible to encapsulate all nuances in a single word in the target language. Ultimately, translation is an inherently loss-laden process, though it can also yield gains. When translating the Qur'an, one must navigate these losses and limitations, echoing Cragg's (1999) metaphor: ships are but boards, sailors but men. Channels into port are hazardous, and the cargo is highly sensitive and precious.

Meaning Multiplicity

Translation ideally requires effective inter-textual mediation, enabling the source text (ST) to be accessible to the target language (TL) reader through a semiotic transformation of all source language (SL) signs into a TL framework. In essence, the translated text should function as a seamless monolingual piece, fully assimilated into the TL literary context. However, achieving this ideal is often challenging. A text comprises a collection of graphical signs, each characterized by its inherent plurality. This plurality of meaning suggests, every text is a free-play signification system of connotations (Barthes, 1974). Barthes articulates connotation as the encroachment of a text by a code, leading to a diversion from the text itself towards a broader discursive landscape. Consequently, signs derive their significance from being organized into codes, which imbue a text with meaning by referencing other previously encountered texts and the cultural reality they delineate. In 1985, Saudi Prince Sultan took part in a space mission organized by NASA, marking him as the first Arab to venture into space. In recognition of this historic achievement, several Saudi and Arab newspapers prominently featured the phrase, "Do not execute except with authority," derived from Ayah 33 of Surah Al-Rahman which reads:

يَا مَعْشَرَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ إِنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَنْ تَنْفُذُوا مِنْ أَقْطَارِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ فَانْفُذُوا لَا تَنْفُذُونَ إِلَّا بِسُلْطَانٍ
{O ye assembly of Jinns and men! If it be ye can pass beyond the zones of the heavens and the earth, pass ye! Not without authority shall ye be able to pass!}

This highlights the significance of the event, as the term *Sultan*, which means authority, is drawn from the Quranic verse and shares the same name as the Saudi astronaut. It conveys the notion that one cannot reach space without Divine Will. This instance exemplifies the use of Arabic rhetoric through allegory to emphasize the gravity of the occasion.

3.1 Idiomaticity

It represents a hallmark of authenticity that is fundamental to effective translation. It can be defined as the inclination to employ specific established expressions within the target language culture, including collocations, idioms, and proverbs. These expressions constitute integral components of a language's literary heritage. Consequently, the deeper the historical roots of a language, the greater the likelihood that it will generate and maintain such expressions. Languages with a rich tradition often exhibit a distinct literary register, as they encompass a wide array of literary conventions, among which idioms are included. In the case of Arabic, the Qur'an serves as the most prolific source of literary conventions in general and idiomatic expressions in particular. The Quranic Ayah 31 from Surah الأعراف (The Heights) addresses the children of Adam:

يَا بَنِي آدَمَ خُذُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ

First, Abdel Halim's (2004) translation: {Children of Adam, dress well be whenever you are at worship, and eat and drink [as We have permitted] but do not be extravagant: God does not like extravagant people}. Second Ali's (1982) translation {O children of Adam! wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer: eat and drink: but waste not by excess for God loveth not the wasters}. Both translators rendered *ولا تسرفوا* as do not be extravagant and but not by excess. Respectively. Arguably, both translators go for *transgressed* because both translators linked the meaning with food (eat and drink). However, the meaning of the verb *تسرفوا* in the Ayah 53 from Surat 39 (The Crowds) is different:

قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِنْ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

{Say: "O my Servants who Have transgressed against their souls! Despair not of the Mercy Of God: for God forgives All sins: for He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful}.

In this Ayah, the word *أَسْرَفُوا* is paraphrased as (transgressed against their souls). The verb *اسرف* is polysemous in nature which means that translators have to be careful when dealing with the rendering of the meanings of the Qur'an and always opt for the contextual meanings. Another Quranic Ayah 34 from Sura 4 reads:

وَاللَّاتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ فَإِنْ أَطَعْتَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا

{As to those women on whose part ye fear disloyalty and ill-conduct admonish them (first) (next) refuse to share their beds (and last) beat them (lightly); but if they return to obedience seek not against them means (of annoyance): for God is Most High Great (above you all)}.

The verse addresses women for whom there is concern regarding disloyalty and misconduct, instructing to first admonish them, then to refuse to share their beds, and finally to *lightly beat* them. However, if they return to obedience, one should not seek means of annoyance against them, for God is Most High and Great. The English translation by Ali (1982) interprets the term *واضربوهن* as (beat them (lightly)). This interpretation raises questions regarding its logical consistency, as the concept of beating does not inherently align with the adverb *lightly*. The term *beat* serves as a hypernym, encompassing various specific actions such as slapping or smacking. From a semantic perspective, hypernyms (general words) convey broader meanings, while hyponyms provide more specific definitions. The verb *ضرب* (to beat) appears 25 times in the Qur'an, with 99% of instances does not convey the meaning of physical beating. Consequently, some modern Arab scholars propose that the act of beating in this context should be understood as *احتواء* (embracement), implying an expression of affection towards one's wife. The concluding part of the verse, which states, {but if they return to obedience, seek not against them means (of annoyance): for God is Highest Great (above you all)}, reinforces the idea that reconciliation between spouses is achievable through affection and care rather than through punitive measures. It is widely acknowledged that words hold the power to shape meanings (Almijrab 2024).

In this regard, Barthes' (1974) analytical framework enables translators to uncover hidden ideologies and meanings within the text, highlighting potential challenges in the translation process. This is particularly evident when addressing politically charged texts. For instance, the connotations associated with the name assigned by the American-British coalition (2003) to the ongoing conflict in Iraq resonate significantly for both Arab and English (Western) audiences, as illustrated in table 1 below.

عملية تحرير العراق Operation Freedom of Iraq

Western Connotations	Military Action To liberate Iraq	Overthrowing Tyrannical regime	Destroying Iraqi Weapons mass Destructions	American Justice	American heroes
Arab Connotation	Aggression Against Iraq	Controlling Iraq Petroleum	Eliminating threat To Israel	American hegemony	American villains

Table One: Clash of ideology between the West and the Arabs

The table illustrates a significant conflict of ideologies that arises during the translation process between English and Arabic. A literal translation of the term used to describe the war is likely to exacerbate the frustrations of an already discontented Arab audience. Just as a market analyst must consider the needs and expectations of their target demographic, a translator should similarly tailor their approach to the audience they are addressing. The Arab media has employed the aforementioned translation with irony, utilizing phrases such as "invasion of" or "aggression against Iraq" when depicting, for instance, images of civilian casualties in Iraq. This discourse is governed by what Foucault (1995) refers to as *la police discursive*, which is subjectively established for the benefit of contemporary socio-political institutions, aiming to ensure consensus, continuity, and an ethnocentric perspective.

The problem in this case is not, as simple as that if translators did their job better there might be better understanding, it is more complex because it involves not only the translator but also the language, and culture. The translator has to deal with a myriad of cultural and ideological subtleties, and enters an inter-language transaction where meaning has no closure or singularity. Obviously, Barthes' theory of meaning is time consuming. However, it is sometimes quite indispensable especially for the translation of social texts that tend to be highly connotative compared, for instance, with technical texts. As translators of sensitive texts, we are enabled to understand the conversational implicatures in a text once we allow a free play of connotations without any attempt of naturalization in which we confine ourselves to a single fixed meaning.

3.2 Language Determinism and Translation

The basic principle of the theory of linguistic determinism embodied in the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis is that language shapes our world-view and vice versa. In its most extreme version, the theory claims that people speaking different languages perceive the world differently, i.e., the language we speak shapes our perception and categorization of objects and occurrences. (Sapir-Whorf in Kay and Kempton 1984). The most obvious influence of language on our world-view is that of vocabulary. The language of French New Guinea has only two words *bright* and *dark* covering all colors, so that the New Guinean perceives all colors no matter how numerous they might be in other people's perception, as either *bright* or *dark* (Wardhaugh, 2002). However, this fact does not mean that the New Guineans cannot distinguish between other colors as do, say, English speakers. It is just that language does not provide a larger set for names of colors than their perception could assimilate, probably because this was not a crucial aspect of their daily life.

It is clear that language can influence thought or world-view, but it cannot shape it completely as is claimed by the strong version of Whorfianism. According to this theory, people speaking different languages perceive the world differently. Thus, communication between them is impossible even when one speaks the other language to a native-like standard. Obviously, this assumption suggests that translation is impossible. Yet "the mere fact that interlanguage communication and translation have been going on for thousands of years is considered sufficient proof that Sapir and Whorf were wrong" (Schogt 1992, p. 200). Ironically, Whorf's grammatical and lexical evidence that Hopi (An American Indian tribe) speakers' view the world differently from English speakers has been used as a counter-argument to the very same claim simply because Whorf himself was able to explain the Hopi example to English readers through translation. Thus, the claim in its strongest form is false since the example can be paraphrased in another language. However, even if the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis is rejected, the translator still has to deal with differences in structures at the level of syntax, lexis and style. Such differences may be either linguistically inherent or due to the different socio-linguistic contexts of each language (Johnstone, 1991). This is better clarified within the scope of the weak version of Whorfianism, which suggests that language reflects (sometimes reinforces) the cultural structures it describes. Indeed, different cultures give rise to different linguistic classifications of reality.

Thus, a linguistic categorization of reality (the way we perceive the world) is often culture-bound. This may represent a source of difficulty for Arab translators and language learners alike who usually learn the TL outside its cultural context. This can hinder their *cultural capital* (Bourdieu 1991) in comparison with the native speaker no matter how culture-oriented the teaching approach is. The bilingual dictionary is often of no help in such a case. It tends to be more misleading than helpful in the sense that it offers equivalents with a restricted semantic use, i.e. without reference to the associative meanings and with no illustrative sentences to see the meaning in a context). For instance, Arab students mix the term *collaborate* which may connote *working with the enemy* with its synonym *cooperate* which does not share this connotative meaning. In crude terms, collaboration may include brainstorming ideas, making decisions, or solving problems. Cooperation, on the other hand, is when one or more people work toward a common goal but it does not have to be together. The word *gay* is understood by bilingual dictionaries to mean *happy* without their being aware of the new denotation (homosexual) that has accompanied the evolution of this term.

4. Structural Thematicity

According to Halliday (1994) in translation studies, the thematic structure refers to how information is organized in a message and how information therefore flows and is interconnected. Thematic structure, as articulated by Halliday and Mathiesen (2004), serves as an essential conceptual framework that underpins a media text, typically centered on a main topic. It effectively connects a range of specific ideas or assertions, which are grounded in diverse social forms of knowledge, perception, and belief. The

organization of a text, influenced by the social conditions surrounding its creation and reception, reflects a system of values and beliefs. Each society establishes its own guidelines for interpreting specific statements. Translators and speakers of foreign languages often apply their native interpretative frameworks to the translated material. For example, a notable trait observed among Arab translators and English as Foreign Language (EFL) students is their inclination towards rhetorical expression rather than straightforward assertion, often leading to exaggeration. In a comparative examination of the performance of Arab and English students, the results suggest that Arab students are more inclined to exhibit over-assertion, in contrast to their English peers, who generally prefer understatement. Additionally, remarks that Arabs view as demonstrations of decisiveness and strength may be seen by English students as excessive or extreme.

The extent of this interpretative change can differ based on the characteristics of the text and the translator's comprehension of the fundamental ideological disparities at play. The following excerpt is sourced from an Arabic editorial: *الرفض الليبي تسليم متهميه* (The ongoing refusal of the Libyan authorities to extradite the two suspects in the bombing of the Pan Am flight over Scotland). The choice of words in this text indicates an ideological slant. The combination of the terms *حادث* (accident) and *تفجير* (bombing) highlights the author's subjective viewpoint in the article, which appears to downplay the severity of the bombing incident. The term bombing alone would have sufficiently conveyed the British-American perspective that the author sought to express. However, the addition of the term accident introduces a shift in ideology within the narrative, suggesting to the reader that the incident could have been unintentional, thereby insinuating that the two Libyan suspects may not have been involved in the occurrence.

In this scenario, two separate groups of students were assigned the task of translating the same text into English. The first group consisted of ten native English speakers living in Britain, who are currently enrolled in Arabic studies at the University of Leeds. The second group was made up of ten final-year Libyan students specializing in Translation at the University of Benghazi, Libya. A comparison of the translations from both groups highlights a significant ideological divergence. The English students rendered *حادث تفجير* (accident of bombing) as the term bombing, while the Libyan students opted for the word explosion, which carries a different implication. The term bombing is associated with a negative connotation, whereas explosion is perceived as more neutral. In both cases, the experiential meaning of the text, reflecting the interpretations of the original author and the translators, underscores the conflict arising from their varied experiences, especially when dealing with sensitive subjects that provoke subjective reactions from the participants. Such responses are likely to emerge from either group when their ideological perspectives are challenged or come into opposition with those of the original writer.

The way information is structured, referred to by Fairclough (1989), as classification schemes, represents the author's particular ideological organization of the reality which serves as an institutional discourse to legitimize a social order or to reverse it. Applying Barthes's model to translation, it can be said that the English expression: *green with envy* cannot be translated as *اخضر وجهه حسدا* (his face became green with envy) because of the positive connotations the green color assimilates in the Arab culture. Black is rather the equivalent color in Arabic that carries a relatively similar negative association as can be seen in the Qur'an when Allah describes the unbelievers in Surah 106 as *اسودت وجوههم* (whose faces will be black). Thus, an equivalent effective translation of the English expression above would be *اسود وجهه حسدا* (his face became black with envy) should also be noted that green color has gained a new positive association owing to the recent ecological movements such the Green Party that seek to protect nature symbolized in that color. It is not surprising, then, that this Barthian model of analysis not only removes the veil on concealed ideologies and meaning in the text but also explains how they may be problematic in translation. This can be explained if we consider how connotation of the following text holds paradigmatically for both the Arab and English (Western) reader.

الحركات الاسلامية Islamic movements

Western Connotations	Islamic Fundamentalisms	A bunch of Fanatics	Clandestine Activities	Suicide Attack	Death Squad	Terrorism Attack
Arab Connotations	Party of Allah	Brothers of Islam	Party Meetings	Martyrdom	Holy War	Self-denying act of Heroism

Table Two: clash of connotations, Hatim and Mason (1990:114)

The problem in this case is not, as Weldon (1953, p. 44) argues, "if the translators did their job better there might be better understanding". It is more complex than Weldon might have thought and involves not only the translator but also the language, the politician, the culture, the media, the reader etc. Besides, neither translators would have enough time for such analysis, they could not limit its plurality of meaning to make the text ready for translation, nor would they have enough space because a single lexeme can "open onto the same amount of meaning as a 500-page novel, connotation leads, then, to a serious attribution" (Silverman 1983, p. 31). In the light of our reference to Whorf's approach and Barthes's (1974) theory of connotation, we can claim that despite the fact that language is largely culture-specific and highly potent with connotative meaning, translation, despite

losses, is possible. Translators can be acculturated even to a relatively native-like standard in which they can allow a free-play of significance and decide accordingly the lexico-syntactical selection in their translation.

Finale

The translator encounters a host of challenges when bridging the gap between two distinct cultures and their often-conflicting ideologies, like those found in Arabic and English. In this context, a translator's role can be likened to that of a decision-maker within a systems theory framework. Cultural clashes are inevitable, and they call for careful evaluation and thoughtful handling. There isn't a one-size-fits-all approach for every translation scenario, which makes true neutrality a bit of a myth. Instead, the translator steps into the shoes of a cultural mediator, recognizing that successful communication relies on active participation. Their job extends beyond mere neutrality; it requires engagement and intervention, where words and structures become part of a vibrant, dynamic dialogue.

Determining how to establish a correspondence in translated texts can be a rather challenging task.. Translation is far more than just swapping words or grammatical structures; it's a complex mix of concepts, meanings, and, importantly, socio-cultural norms and traditions. Focusing solely on one aspect of translation isn't just inadequate; it highlights the necessity for a more integrated interdisciplinary approach that brings together various models and methods. Nevertheless, the strategies mentioned earlier offer valuable insights that are crucial for training future translators.

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