Erroneous Transfer of Pejorative Meaning in the English Journalistic Discourse into Arabic: A Corpus–Based Study

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Abstract

The current study tackles the mistransference of the pejorative meaning from English into Arabic as exemplified by certain connotation-laden words in journalistic texts. The exemplary words are extracted from a corpus which consists of more than 80 thousand words taken from two professional American magazines namely: *Newsweek* (English and Arabic) and *Foreign Policy* (English and Arabic). The study highlights the realization of connotation in journalistic discourse and the translator's role in transferring the connotative meaning to the selected words. The findings evince that words in the source texts (STs) are charged with pejorative connotation which, in the majority of cases, are not accurately rendered into the target texts (TTs); to some extent, only partial equivalence is attainable due to English and Arabic linguistic and cultural discrepancies. The translations have converted the pejorative meaning into an appreciative counterpart, neutralized it, omitted it, transliterated the pejorative words, or opted for euphemism which have all resulted in erroneous transfer of the original message. The study also demonstrates that rendering accurately the connotative meaning in journalistic discourse is of paramount importance to produce effective and adequate translations.

Keywords: Connotation, Pejorative, Transfer, Discourse, Corpus

1. Introduction

The task of the translator is to faithfully, adequately and accurately render the original message of the ST to the TT. Words are the medium in which writers and translators work; people do not only perceive the words according to their referential meaning, they also react to them emotionally, sometimes positively, neutrally or negatively. In other words, words do not only have referential or denotative meaning, they also have a connotative meaning.

Accordingly, the translator must not only examine the referential meaning of words (denotation) but investigate their connotative aspects which are the associations that a word has over and above its denotation. In fact, these associations are judged by culture to be positive (appreciative), negative (pejorative) or neutral; since language and culture are interrelated, connotative meanings differ from one language to another, that is, a word that may have an appreciative connotation in one language but may have a pejorative connotation in another and vice versa. Journalistic texts do not only convey news and information, but they also interpret, comment on events, and provide opinions and views; they shape attitudes. Thus, it is important that those ideas are translated properly when expressed; else they can result in major catastrophes.

2. Journalistic Discourse

Journalistic discourse can be broadly divided into three genres; firstly, informative genre that tackles factual descriptions of events; secondly, interpretative genre in which information is selected, interpreted and narrated by the journalist; and thirdly, the argumentative genre manifested in an opinion article or a column (Bielsa and Bassnett 2009: 68). In the interpretive journalistic genre, for example, interpretation of facts may differ from one editor to another; that is, the same event may be presented from different perspectives, especially in politics or religion, a topic can be presented to the public in very different lights which entail subjectivity and by corollary bias: the attitudes of the journalist towards his subject tend to creep in his/her writing.

In any political dispute or military conflict, there are always at least two sides: one with and another against. Word choice in journalistic discourse may give support - directly or indirectly - to any political party or group or may seem as taking side in national or international conflicts or disputes. The evidence of the former can be clearly seen in the use of the word *kidnap* to refer to the capture of the Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit by Hamas. *Kidnap* means to hold a person usually for ransom (*Collins English Dictionary* (2003: 894); whereas *abduct* means to take away somebody by violence for non-financial reasons (Ibid, 2003: 2). For instance, searching *Google News Archive* the following two examples show that each presents the event from one particular perspective:

- In Israel, where every high school graduate is obliged to serve three years in the military, the fate of this 19 year-old corporal *kidnapped* and held captive behind enemy lines became a unifying focus for the nation's anxiety.

(Gilad Shalit reveals details of his five years held hostage by Hamas- The Telegraph)

- Members of the Hamas-led government have denied any knowledge of the *abduction* though they have publicly called for the soldier to be well treated if he's being held.

(Israel Vows to Free Gaza Soldier-BBC)

In the same line of thinking Farghal and Shunnaq (1998:118) elucidate that: "journalistic texts may either opt for monitoring the situation (saying what is happening) or else managing it (saying what fits their wishes about what should happen)". In translation, monitoring takes place if the translator does not interfere by evaluating the material in the ST; managing, on the other hand, takes place if the translator interferes in the translation and be biased. An example of managing is when the translator opts to leave out certain materials without translation, e.g., the materials which are against the translator's religious, cultural or ideological beliefs. The following example is cited by Abdel-Hafiz (2002: 93-94):

- Some police states, **like Egypt**, have ruthlessly efficient counter operations.
(*Newsweek* 19 Feb. 2001, p.20)
- و بعض الدول التي تحظى بقوات أمن قوية لديها عمليات محاربة إرهاب شرسة.
(نيوزويك 20 فبراير 2001، ص 14)

In this example, the translator has managed the ST by omitting the parenthetical phrase *like Egypt* because s/he does not like to associate Egypt with such operations.

An important point to bear in mind when translating journalistic discourse is the fact that everything written or implied in the ST has to be transmitted to the TT since words in the TT are not chosen randomly, they are employed carefully either to clarify or reinforce the text message. Bearing in mind the influence of the former, connotation has a vital part to play in professional judgments and evaluations. Thus, representations of groups and individuals in journalistic discourse are chosen carefully to promote certain attitudes towards them due to the fact that these representations involve perspectives.   For example, an *armed activist* can be seen as a *freedom fighter* by one group and as a *terrorist* by their counter-group. In other words, the same thing can be categorized differently according to the speaker's attitudinal viewpoint due to the fact that the same thing can fall in different categories.

3. Connotation: Culture-Bound

Texts operate within cultural contexts, i.e., they are created in a particular culture and operate in the value system of that culture. Hence, journalistic texts are products of the culture they come from. By corollary, the role of the translator can be seen from a dual perspective: on the one hand, the translator renders factual information, with minimal amounts of modification maintaining the original message of the ST. On the other hand the translator acculturates, makes communication between cultures possible, and enables people with no access to the language of another people to open up a dialogue (Bielsa and Bassnett 2009). Therefore, obscuring connotative meaning in the TT is an obstacle of understanding different perspectives and viewpoints; moreover, it makes communication among cultures arduous or even impossible.

Different perceptions of the world are apparent in the well-known example of *istishhaadi*

استشهادي (literally means martyrdom-seeker) and *suicide-bomber*. A martyr in Islamic culture is the one who 'loses his or her life in the process of carrying out religious duty' (*The Oxford Dictionary of Islam* (2004): 193). Committing suicide, on the other hand, is sinful in Islamic culture. Thus, translating *istishhaadi* استشهادي into *suicide-bomber* inverts the appreciative connotations into pejorative ones. The English *suicide-bomber* literally means *intiḥari* انتحاري.

4. The Role of the Translator

By and large, translators find it problematic to transfer connotative meaning to the TT. This difficulty can be attributed to two different reasons: firstly, Arabic and English are distant languages; they are unrelated genetically: there is divergence in their linguistic as well as cultural systems. Since connotation is closely related to culture, the association of a particular idea in a word in one language is not always paralleled in the other. Hatim and Munday (2004:35) opine that the main problem for the translator is "the frequent lack of one-to-one matching across languages. Not only does the signifier change across languages but each language depicts reality differently. Some concepts are language-or culture-specific". Additionally, the political terminology in Arabic is highly emotive. For instance, the neutral English *parliament* has different emotive equivalents in Arab countries: Jordan and Kuwait call it مجلس الأمة *majlis al-ʔumah* (The Nation's Assembly), Palestine calls it المجلس الوطني *al-majlis al-waṯani* (National Assembly), while Egypt calls it مجلس الشعب *majlis al-shaʕb* (People's Council).

A denotative meaning can be expressed in different synonymous ways. For example, *freedom fighter*, *activist* and *militant* are not true synonyms and what may distinguish these seemingly 'synonyms' are their different connotations. The translator should be aware of this fact. Believing that the evaluative or attitudinal qualities of certain words are sometimes much more important than their denotations, the researchers assert that the evaluative or attitudinal connotative qualities of words in journalistic discourse must be rendered into the TT to ensure that the writer's point of view, evaluation and attitude which are loaded in connotative words in the ST are transmitted to the TT reader. Thus, ignoring the connotative part of the word's meaning in translation may lead to semantic loss and distort the message. To come over such a problem, the translator has to find a connotative equivalent realized when the ST and TT words trigger similar associations in the minds of the native speakers of the two languages. A good example of effective and efficient rendering of connotative sense is found in As-Safi's translation of دعاء الكروان *duʕa? al-karawan* by Taha Husain (***The Call of the Curlew,*** 1980:3)):

ST   (دعاء : الكروان)   لم يكن يقدَّر أني سألقاه قائمة باسمة حين أقبل إلي في ظلمة الليل يسعى كأنه **الحية** او كأنه اللص.

TT: He did not expect to find me still up, waiting with a smile, when, rather like a ***serpent*** or a thief, he came stealthily towards me in the dark of the night.   (***The Call of the Curlew*** (1980:3)

Here, the translator opts for the word *serpent* as an equivalent to *ḥayiah* حية instead of *snake* due to the fact that *serpent* which has the same referential meaning of *ḥayiah* حية , *yet*

serpent has the connotation of evil and danger due to the fact that serpent is a vicious poisonous snake. The word serpent is employed by Shakespeare in the same sense:

"Look like the innocent flower, but be the serpent under 't." Macbeth

5. Transfer Strategies of the English Pejorative Meaning

The strategies for the mistransference of the pejorative meaning can be listed under five categories exemplified by connotation-laden words such as militant, clique, masses, plotter, politician, propaganda, regime, rhetoric, scheme, spout, reactionary, sect, rebels, fascist, ideology, imperial, radical and revolutionary tax among others (arranged according to their occurrence). These strategies are:

1.5.1. Converting pejorative meaning into appreciative or neutral;

1.5.2. Literal translation;

1.5.3. Opting for euphemism;

1.5.4. Omission; and

1.5.5. Transliteration

5.1 Converting Pejorative into Appreciative or Neutral

Here are some illustrative examples:

Militant

ST: Baker's model for countering extremism echoes the findings of Marc Sageman, a forensic psychiatrist and former CIA case officer who has found in his research that ideologies matter less than relationships in creating terrorists. The 9/11 plotters, who started as a militant study group at the al-Quds mosque in Hamburg, Germany, were typical of the hundreds of radicals Sageman examined: outsiders, often expatriates sent abroad to study, and radicalized within that expat clique, an intellectual cocoon with ever-escalating views that would have been impossible to maintain in their home countries.

(Foreign Policy March/April 2011-Going to Extremes)

TT تتوافق مقاربة بيكر لمكافحة التطرف مع النتائج التي توصل إليها مارك سيجمان، و هو طبيب نفس شرعي و ضابط سابق في وكالة الاستخبارات المركزية الأمريكية (سي أي إيه) أظهرت له أبحاثه أن الأيديولوجيات أقل أهمية من العلاقات في تحويل الناس إلى إرهابيين. مخططو هجمات 11 سبتمبر، الذين بدأوا مسيرتهم كمجموعة دراسية جهادية في مسجد القدس في هامبرورغ بألمانيا شبيهون بمئات المتطرفين الذين درسهم سيجمان: غرباء غالباً ما يكونون مغتربين أرسلوا إلى الخارج للدراسة، و أصبحوا متطرفين داخل جماعة المغتربين هذه التي تشكل قوقعة ذات آراء تزداد تطرفاً لكان يستحيل الاستمرار بها في بلدانهم الأم.

(فورن بولسي- مارس/ أبريل 2011 مقاربات متطرفة)

ST: Since the start of the intifada, Palestinian militants have dug hundreds of tunnels and used them to smuggle arms and bomb-making materials from Egypt into Gaza.
(Newsweek April 5, 2004 - Guns over Gaza)

<div dir="rtl">

و منذ بداية الانتفاضة قام المحاربون الفلسطينيون بحفر مئات الأنفاق و استخدموها لتهريب الأسلحة و مواد صنع القنابل من مصر إلى غزة.

(نيوز ويك 6 أبريل 2004، *سلاح فوق غزة*)

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In the corpus of this study, two articles have been found to include the term *militant*, translated from three different perspectives:

In the first example, the adjective *militant* is translated into جهادية *jihadyiah* which is derived from the Arabic root جهد 'J H D'; *jihadyiah* is the adjective of the noun جهاد *'jihad'*. *Al-Muʕjam Al-Waseet* (1985: 147) defines the Arabic Islamic term *'jihad'* as fighting infidels, who do not enjoy Muslims protection (*?ahl al-thima*). In Islamic culture, the word *'jihad'* bears a highly positive connotative sense: Muslims carry out *jihad* to defend Islam for the sake of Allah; it is not only a right for them to protect Islam but it is also a duty or a must, as they believe that those who die in *jihad* will be sent immediately to heaven because they are considered martyrs; therefore *jihad* is a sacred thing for them. The corollary of the above discussion is that *militant* tends to have a highly pejorative connotation of violence, aggression, extremity, warlike, belligerence and illegitimacy; while on the other hand *jihad* , in Arabic culture, has a highly positive connotation of faith, righteous defense, sacred duty and martyrdom. In other words, these words, i.e., *militant* and *jihadyiah*, function differently in their cultures and have nearly opposite connotations. Consequently, translating *militant* into *jihadyiah* is inaccurate since it does not render the correct connotative sense; it is an instance of mistransference of the connotative sense.

The second example is extracted from *Newsweek* April 5, 2004; from the article <u>*Guns over Gaza*</u> which talks about violence between Palestinians and Israelis as a result of the assassination of Hamas spiritual leader Sheik Ahmed Yassin in Gaza. In this article, *militant* is used as a noun to refer to Palestinian fighters especially Hamas group members, but it has been translated into المحاربون *al-mouhariboon* which is derived from the Arabic root حرب 'HRB', used interchangeably with مقاتلون *moqaatliloon* in other texts.

The risk of ignoring the connotative meaning of the word *militant* is too high to ignore; it may drive different problems. For instance, identifying the members of Muslim groups as '*militant*s' may justify combating them. In other words, using this word may de-popularize Muslims and justify violence against them. An accurate translation of the word '*militant*' has been found in *Al-Mughni Al-Akbar* (1997: 795) which is إحرابي= ميال إلى الحرب و العدوان *?ihrabi= 'myal ila al harb wa al-ʕodwaan'* which means literally 'inclined to war and aggression'. Such a translation, renders accurately the pejorative connotative sense of *militant* which reflects the cultural perspective and the attitude of the speakers of the SL.

Notorious

ST: Teodoro was then only 37 years old, but he was already skilled in the art of dictatorship after running Macias's National Guard and Black Beach prison, a notorious torture chamber for political prisoners.

(*Foreign Policy* March/April 2011- <u>*Teodorin's World)*</u>

كان عمر تيودور 37 عاماً فقط آنذاك، لكنه كان ماهرا في فن الديكتاتورية بعدما كان قد تولى إدارة الحرس الوطني التابع لماسياس و سجن الشاطئ الأسود الشهير حيث يتم تعذيب السجناء السياسيين. (*فورين بوليسي مارس/أبريل 2011- عالم تيودورين*)

Notorious has a pejorative sense, it means well-known but "well-known for some bad or unfavorable quality" (*Collins English Dictionary* 2003: 1116). Accordingly, by translating notorious as شهير *shaheer* , the pejorative sense is not rendered to the TT. The word شهير *shaheer*, which literally means 'famous', is neutral if not mostly appreciative in Arabic.
A suggested connotative equivalence can be سيء الصيت sayi? as-seet. *Foreign Policy* employs an accurate translation in another article:

Regime

ST: Karzai was the scion of a prominent Pashtun family in southern Afghanistan, one with a deep-rooted enmity for the Taliban regime. The Taliban, which had ruled the country since 1996, had gunned down Karzai's father in front of a mosque in the Pakistani city of Quetta two years earlier. (*Foreign Policy* – March/April 2011- *How Obama Lost Karzai*

كان كرزاي سليل عائلة مرموقة من الباشتون في جنوب أفغانستان تكن عداوة شديدة و متجذرة لنظام طالبان. كانت حركة طالبان التي كانت تحكم البلاد منذ عام 1996، قد أطلقت النار على والد كرزاي و أردته أمام مسجد في مدينة كويتا الباكستانية قبل عامين.

(*فورن بوليسي- مارس/أبريل 2011- كيف خسر اوباما كرازاي*)

ST: Since 1979 the Saudi regime had openly appeased its homegrown Islamists, handing over key ministries and funds to reactionary mullahs.

(*Newsweek* March 15, 2005- *What Bush Got Right*)

منذ عام 1979، تودد النظام السعودي علنا إلى الإسلاميين المحليين، موكلا إليهم وزارات أساسية و مخصصا أموالا للملالي المعارضين للتقدم.

(*نيوز ويك 15 مارس 2005- ما أصاب فية بوش*)

The other Arab regimes are less fragile.

(*Newsweek* March 15, 2005- *What Bush Got Right*)

نظم الحكم العربية الأخرى أقل هشاشة. (*نيوز ويك 15 مارس 2005- ما أصاب فية بوش*)

English acquired the word *regime* from French *régime*. It is originated in the 18th century to refer to the system of government before the revolution of 1789(*Online Etymology Dictionary*). OED defines *regime* as:" a government, especially one that has not been elected in a fair way" which indicates that it came to power by force. Additionally, *Concise Oxford Online English Dictionary* defines *regime* as" a government, especially an authoritarian one". Besides these definitions, Collin (2004: 208) defines regime as a government, especially a strict or cruel government. Moreover, *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2003:1048) denotes that the word *regime*, in British English, is a disapproving one citing the example 'the old corrupt, totalitarian regime'. In other words, *regime* carries a negative attitudinal meaning; it is the one that it is disapproved of for some other reason.

Undoubtedly, *regime* is paired with negative collocations; searching on *Foreign Policy* web site the following examples have been found:

ST: At the end of the statement, the White House mentioned the crisis in Syria, in which the Russian government <u>is arming</u> the **brutal regime** of President Bashar al-Assad.

Obama congratulates Putin for election "win"- March 9, 2012

ST: <u>Bush: The authoritarian regimes of the Arab world will fall</u> *Bush: The authoritarian regimes of the Arab world will fall* – May 15, 2012

Searching the Telegraph web-site the following headlines have been found:

Syria: Assad regime 'has failed to implement peace plan'

Lord Mandelson courted Mubarak's dying regime

A good example here is <u>Barbara Walters' interview with President Bashar Al-Assad</u> in which Walter tends to use the word *regime* in citing Erdogan's comment on what happening in Syria: *"no **regime** can survive by killing and jailing"*, while on the other hand Al-Assad uses the word *government*, e.g. Al- Assad's comment: *"no **government** in the world kills its people"*, attributing violent actions to militants.

In these examples the word regime is translated into *'niẓaam'* نظام or *'niẓaam ḥokm'* نظام حكم; these translations are not accurate since they do not reflect the pejorative connotative sense of *regime*. We can conclude that the word *regime* has a context-specific *connotation* almost a pejorative one. No Arabic equivalence can possibly cover all the far-reaching connotations of *regime*; the words نظام *'niẓaam'*   or the phrase *'niẓaam al-ḥokom'* نظام الحكم relates only to the general meaning of regime which is a political system without covering its pejorative connotation.

Rhetoric

ST: The onslaught has put extremist groups under mounting pressure. Some could be obliterated. All have found themselves increasingly isolated in a Muslim world where the mainstream is weary of their destructive rhetoric and where even former sympathizers doubt the terrorists' ability to mount another 9/11-style spectacular.

(Newsweek January 11, 2010- *A Thousand Points of Hate)*

هذا الهجوم زاد من حدة الضغوط على المجموعات المتطرفة. فمن الممكن أن يقضى كلياً على بعضها. لكن جميعها وجدت نفسها منعزلة بشكل متزايد في عالم إسلامي حيث تشعر عامة الشعب بالقلق من كلامها العدواني، و حيث يشكك المتعاطفون السابقون حتى في قدرة الإرهابيين على شن هجوم باهر آخر شبيه بهجمات 11 سبتمبر *(نيوزويك 12 يناير 2010- كراهية طاغية)*

ST: He organized a war-on-terror week, with various Islamists and British left-wing speakers invited to denounce American oppression and human-rights violations in the Middle East. But such rhetoric was hardly unusual on British campuses.

(Newsweek January 11, 2010- *The Radicalization of Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab)*

- نظم أسبوعاً خاصاً بالحرب على الإرهاب، وقد دعي خلاله الكثير من الإسلاميين و المتحدثين اليساريين البريطانيين للتنديد بالظلم الأمريكي و انتهاكات حقوق الإنسان في الشرق الأوسط. لكن هذا النوع من **الخطاب** لم يكن أمرا غير عادي في الجامعات البريطانية.

(نيوزويك 12 يناير 2010-تطرف عمر الفاروق عبد المطلب)

The word *rhetoric* has pejorative connotations. *Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture* (1992: 1126) remarks that *rhetoric* is a derogative word defining it as" speech or writing that sounds fine and important, but is really insincere or without meaning". It has the connotations of employing ornamentation and manipulation to persuade, influence or please; implying artfulness over real content. Translating *rhetoric* into خطاب *khitaab* or كلام *kalaam* does not render its pejorative sense: خطاب *khitaab* is a neutral word which literally means 'discourse'; as well as كلام *kalaam* which literally means 'speech'. On the other hand, *rhetoric* according to *Collins English Dictionary* (2003: 1387) is speech or discourse that pretends to be of significance but lacks true meaning; it cites the example: all the politician says is mere *rhetoric*. Suggested connotative equivalents can be حرب كلامية *harb kalaamiyah* or لغة إنشائية طنانة *lughah inshaa?iyah tannanah*.

5.2 Literal Translation

The literal translation of idiomatic expressions does not always render its pejorative sense. Two examples can be cited:

Revolutionary tax

ST: Justice Department and the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency quote sources alleging that Teodorin supplemented his modest ministerial salary of $5,000 per month with a "large **'revolutionary tax'** on timber" that he ordered international logging firms to pay "in cash or through checks" to a forestry company he owned.

(Foreign Policy March/April 2011- *Teodorin's World)*

- تنقل وثائق صادرة عن تحقيق سري مشترك أجرته وزارة العدل الأمريكية و وكالة إنفاذ قوانين الهجرة و الجمارك، عن مصادر قولها بأن تيودورين يُكمِل راتبه الوزاري المتواضع و قدره 5000 دولار في الشهر بواسطة "**ضريبة ثورية** كبيرة على الخشب" يفرض على شركات الخشب الدولية دفعها "نقداً أو بواسطة شيكات" لشركة حراجة يملكها هو.

(فورن بولسي مارس\ أبريل 2011- عالم تيودورين)

Rodgers (1999: 449) affirms that *revolutionary tax* is applied to the payments extorted under threat of reprisals from businessmen and others. It is so called because it is supposedly a levy on profits made through exploitation. Pieth (2003: 152) remarks that *revolutionary tax* is a euphemism for 'protection money'. Translating *revolutionary tax* literally into ضريبة ثورية *dhareebah thawryah* does not render its connotative sense. Suggested translations that may have the same connotative sense are الأتاوة *ataawajh,* دفع الخاوة *daf, al-khaawah* or ضريبة ابتزازية *dhareebih ibtizaziyah*.

The big man on campus

ST: Just two years ago, Donald Rumsfeld was **the big man on** George W. Bush's **campus**—the "matinee idol," as the president once called him—and Condoleezza Rice was just another

obstacle for the Defense chief to run through.   *(Newsweek* March 14, 2005 – <u>*Condi's Clout*</u>
<u>*Offensive*</u>)

- قبل عامين تماماً كان دونالد رامفسيلد **الرجل الكبير في ملعب** جورج دبليو بوش، " معبود الحفلات
النهارية "كما سماه الرئيس ذات مرة و كانت كوندوليزا رايس مجرد عقبة أخرى في طريق وزير الدفاع ينبغي
تجاوزها.   *(نيوزويك 15 مارس 2005 – <u>هجوم كوندوليزا رايس القوي</u>)*

The attitudinal meaning is the factor that differentiate them from their literal counterparts; accordingly, translating' *the big man on George W. Bush's campus*' literally into الرجل الكبير في *al-rajol al-kabeer fi malʕab George W. Bush* ملعب جورج دبليو بوش does not render its connotative sense. *The Pocket Oxford Dictionary and Thesaurus* (2006:81) holds that *big man on campus* is used to refer to a "popular, well-known, or influential person". By examining the translation, it is obvious that the ironical meaning is not handled accurately ; the attitudinal or evaluative meaning is obscured. Even in applying literal translation the equivalent of *campus* is not accurate, the word *campus* refers to "the grounds and buildings of a university" (*Collins English Dictionary* 2003: 245) and not ملعب *malʕab* which literally means 'playground'; *campus* literally means الحرم الجامعي *al-ḥaram al-jamiʕee*. It is worth noting that this culture-specific idiom expresses an irony that is difficult to be rendered into Arabic especially its pejorative sense.

5.3 Opting for Euphemism

Reactionary

ST: Since 1979 the Saudi regime had openly appeased its homegrown Islamists, handing over key ministries and funds to **reactionary** mullahs.

(Newsweek February 22, 2010- <u>*The Jihad Against the Jihadis*</u>)

- منذ عام 1979، تودد النظام السعودي علنا إلى
الإسلاميين المحليين، موكلا إليهم وزارات أساسية و مخصصا أموالا للملالي **المعارضين للتقدم.**
(نيوزويك 23 فبراير 2010 – <u>الجهاد ضد الجهاديين</u>)

Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture (1992:1091) remarks that *reactionary* is a derogative word which means strongly opposed to social or political progress. The translation equivalent معارض للتقدم *muʕaredh li at-taqadum* has a less negative meaning in Arabic than *reactionary* in English. Here the problem is the disparity in the degree of negative sense attached to it. The expression معارض للتقدم *muʕaridh li at-taqadum* could be considered euphemism to the original pejorative sense of *reactionary*; it is a literal translation of *reactionary*'s definition but it omits the intensifier 'strongly'. Thus the literal translation should be معارض للتقدم بشدة *muʕaridh li at-taqadum bi-shidah* which is too long.   A suggested connotative equivalent is the pejorative word رجعي *rajʕee* (*Al-Mughni Al-Akbar* (1997) and *Al-Mawrid* (2001)).

5.4 Omission of the Connotative Word in the TL

The indefinite article: An

ST: Still, for a Scot to become prime minister, a woman to become chancellor, **an** Obama

to become leader of the Western world, they did have to work harder and be tougher than anyone else around them**.**

(Newsweek November 17, 2008 – *Like Europe's Leaders, Obama Is Both Outsider and Insider)*

- و مع ذلك، لكي يصبح اسكتلندي رئيس وزراء، و تصبح امرأة مستشارة، و لكي يصبح أوباما قائد العالم الغربي، توجب عليهم أن يعملوا بجهد أكبر و يكونوا أقوى من أي إنسان آخر في محيطهم.. *(نيوز ويك 18 نوفمبر 2008- أوباما كقادة أوروبا.. وافد و مطلع على بواطن الأمور)*

Rarely, if ever, a function word like the indefinite article *an* conveys some sort of connotation. If the indefinite article *an* is applied to function as a pre-modifier of a proper noun, it may act as a content word which bears the connotative sense of 'unknown person'. The above example, the indefinite article *an* is employed as a pre-modifier of the proper noun *Obama*; in this case, the indefinite article suggests the connotative meaning of an unknown person who is called Obama.

Since Obama has been mentioned in this article to refer to the president of USA, translating 'an Obama' into أوباما omitting the indefinite article *an* and neglecting its connotative sense may mislead the reader and think that this noun phrase refers to the president of USA. Thus, a suggested connotative equivalent can be لشخص اسمه أوباما/لشخص يدعى أوباما/لشخص يحمل اسم أوباما to disambiguate the translation.

Fundamentalist

ST: Why Muslim **fundamentalists** may be our best hope for stopping terror. *(Foreign Policy* March/April 2011 - *Going to Extremes)*

- لماذا قد يكون المسلمون الأصوليون أفضل أمل لدينا لوقف الإرهاب. *(فورن بولسي مارس /أبريل 2011 –مقاربات متطرفة)*

Translating *fundamentalist* into الأصوليون *al-ʔuṣooliyoon* is not accepted by some Muslims. Originally, الأصولية *al-ʔuṣooliyah* is derived from the root أصل *ʔaṣl* which literally means 'origin', 'fundament', or 'basis'. The concept of الأصولية *al-ʔuṣooliyah* means a return to the original teachings of Islam; to be fanatic, to be dogmatic and to be radical is against the teachings of Islam. Thus, الأصولية *al-ʔuṣooliyah* is appreciative and *fundamentalism* is pejorative since it passes negative judgments. In fact, the concept of الأصولية *al-ʔuṣooliyah* is misused and abused in media.

Rebels

ST: A personal visit to a part of India where Mao-spouting armed **rebels** are the law. *(Newsweek* May 18, 2009- *Captors of the Liberated Zone)*

- زيارة شخصية إلى جزء من الهند حيث يفرض المسلحون الذين يهتفون باسم ماو، قانونهم الخاص. *(نيوزويك 19مايو 2009- ثوار المنطقة المحررة)*

The *rebel is* a person who is opposed to the political system in his/her country and tries to change it "by force of arms" (*Collins English Dictionary,* 2003: 1351). The word *rebel*

assumes a hostile attitude; by reviewing *Collins English Dictionary* (2003) and *New Webster's Dictionary of the English Language* (1984) -among others- the noun *rebel*, by and large, does not have any appreciative connotations, it is frequently used in contexts such as: a *rebel* against authority, a *rebel* against his/her parents , or a *rebel* against conventional standards and values. A suitable suggested connotative equivalent of the word rebel are متمرد *mutamarid* (*Al-Mawrid*, 2001: 763).

5.5 Transliteration

A translation procedure that has been found through reviewing the corpus of this study is transliteration of English cultural bound terms. Transliteration relates to the convention of different alphabets; for example, the convention of English alphabets with Arabic alphabets in the transliteration of English "pragmatist" into Arabic براغماتي *praaghmatee*. In this case the word براغماتي *praaghmatee* in Arabic becomes a" loan word". Likewise, the concept of "شريعة" *sharee؟a* is an Islamic culture-specific concept; English has transliterated this word to "sharia" using it also as a loan word.

A thorough analysis of the corpus of this study reveals that five cultural-bound English words are transliterated into Arabic, namely: *fascist, ideology, imperial, propaganda,* and *radical*. In fact, employing this procedure has led to failure in rendering their connotative sense; consider the following examples:

Fascist

ST: While the field may have gotten its name from the **fascist** Italian poet Filippo Marinetti, who authored a brief and obscure "Futurist Manifesto" in 1909, the Tofflers made futurism a true calling -- something that one does.

(Foreign Policy September/ October 2011- *Technology Will Take on a Life of Its Own)*

● صحيح أن هذا الميدان ربما اكتسب اسمه من الشاعر الإيطالي **الفاشي** فيليبومارينيتي الذي وضع "بيانا مستقبلياً" مقتضبا و غامضا عام 1909، بيد أن الزوجين توفلر حوّلا المستقبلية دعوة حقيقيةــــشيئاً يمتهنه المرء.

(فورن بوليسي سبتمبر/أكتوبر 2011- للتكنولوجيا حياتها الخاصة)

Collins English Dictionary (2003: 592) affirms that a *fascist* is the one who adopts *fascism,* defining it as "any right-wing nationalist ideology or movement with an authoritarian and hierarchical structure that is fundamentally opposed to democracy and liberalism". *Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture* (1992:463) marks *fascist* is derogative defining it as "someone acting in a cruel, hard, rather military way which allows no political opposition". Thus, transliterating it into فاشي *fashee* may not explicitly render its pejorative sense.

Radical

ST: Yet instead of dominating the debate in Indonesia, the voice of **Muslim radicals** is hardly to be heard. *(Newsweek* April 5, 2004 - *Radical Retreat)*

- و لكن بدلا من الهيمنة على الجدل الدائر في أندونيسيا، فإن صوت **الراديكاليين الإسلاميين** بالكاد يكون مسموعاً. (نيوز ويك 6 إبريل 2004 -<u>تراجع المتطرفين</u>)

Radical has a pejorative sense in English since it includes a negative attitudinal or evaluative connotative meaning, and labeling people as *radicals* is offensive. The word radical is employed to refer to extreme groups. Consequently, transferring *radicals* to Arabic as راديكاليين *radicaaliyn* does not render this sense. It is worth mentioning that the word *radical* in the headline is translated into المتطرفين *al-mutaṯrifeen* while it is transliterated in the body of the text, which indicates that there is inconsistency in translation. *Foreign Policy* employs this translation in many examples among which is the following:

ST: The government is, in effect, betting that the ideology that so many Islamist **radicals** claim to believe in can be employed to keep them from becoming terrorists in the first place.

(*Foreign Policy* March/ April - <u>*Going to Extremes*</u>)

- فالحكومة تراهن في الحقيقة على أنه يمكن استغلال الأيديولوجية التي يدعي الكثير من الإسلاميين **المتطرفين** أنهم يؤمنون بها للحؤول دون تحولهم إلى إرهابيين. (<u>فورن بولسي مارس /أبريل 2011 – مقاربات متطرفة</u>)

6. Conclusion

Pejorative-laden words are deep-rooted in journalistic discourse especially in argumentative and persuasive topics. Connotative words are found, in this study, to be used extensively in the representation of groups and individuals. The analysis of the translated words along the dimension of connotation has revealed serious mismatches. What seems to have been mostly neglected in the majority of translations is rendering the pejorative sense into Arabic: Arabic translation does not have any pejorative senses or there is discrepancy in the degree of pejorative senses or an inversion of pejorative sense has been found. There are rarely two words that have the same connotative meaning which can be used interchangeably in all contexts.

The Mistransference of connotative meaning, be it deliberate or not, undermines the intentionality of the ST. There seems a general consensus that a good translation should keep the same meaning of the ST. Since connotation is an essential part of meaning, it should be rendered to the TT to ensure that the ST message is delivered to the TT reader as accurately as possible. The risk of ignoring the connotative meaning in journalistic translation is too high to ignore, it may drive different problems and misunderstandings. The study reveals that the detected errors in translation can be attributed to adopting translational strategies which have been exemplarily elaborated.

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Transcription

The method transcription adopted here suits the computer keyboard characters. Consonants

a	ا
b	ب
t	ت
t h	ث
j	ج
h	ح
k h	خ
d	د
t h	ذ
r	ر
z	ز
s	س
s h	ش
s	ص

<u>d</u> <u>h</u>	ض
<u>t</u>	ط
<u>z</u>	ظ
،	ع
g h	غ
f	ف
q	ق
k	ك
l	ل
m	م
n	ن
h	ه
w	و
y	ي
?	ء

Short Vowels

u	<u>da</u> mma	الـ ضمة
a	fat Ha	الـ فتحة
i	ka sra	الـ كسرة

Long vowels

a a	الأ لف
o o	الو او
ee	الياء
ay	إي

List of Abbreviations

SL: Source Language

TL: Target Language

ST: Source Text

TT: Target Text

OED: Oxford English Dictionary

CA: Componential Analysis

About the authors

Professor A. B. As-Safi is a translation theorist and practitioner. He has written two books on translation: *Translation: Theory and Practice* (1974), *Translation: Theories, Strategies and Basic Theoretical Issues* (2011), *Islamic Jurisprudential Maxims* (2012) and *Translation of Types of Discourse* (2016). He has also translated into English: *Taha Hussein: The Call of the Curlew,(*published by E.J. Brill, Leiden,1980), *Iraq: 30 Years of Progress* (published by Ministry of Information and Culture, 1998); and into Arabic: *Catford's A Linguistic Theory of Translation* (1983). He has also published twenty-five papers in Belgium, Britain, Holland, Iraq, Jordan and Morocco.   He has supervised more than thirty MA and ten PhD theses. He holds PhD in literary translation from Lancaster University, Britain. In addition to teaching and research, he has occupied several posts as Head of English Department at Basrah University, Iraq; and Translation Department at Al-Mustansiriyah University, Baghdad, Iraq; President of Iraqi Translators' Association; and Dean of the Faculty of Arts at Al-Zaytoonah University, Jordan. He is currently lecturing on translation at postgraduate level at Petra University, Jordan.

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