

A Study of Sociocultural Norms in Audiovisual Translation: A Case Study of the Translation of English Documentaries into Arabic

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Summary:

This research is highlighting the impact of sociocultural norms in audiovisual translation. In the current period of globalization, audiovisual has become one of the most popular fields in the translation studies since the audiovisual materials such as films, series, and TV programs attract all the people from different generations. However, the main point of this study revolves around English documentaries and their translation into Arabic.

Toury's sociocultural norms theory serves as the foundational resource upon which this research's methodology has been built. Acquiring cultural norms is a necessary precondition for pursuing a career as a translator within a certain cultural setting. According to Toury (1995), the definition of norms is "Values or beliefs accepted by a community as to what is right or wrong, adequate or inadequate into performance instructions suited for and applicable to particular situations". However, sociocultural norms divided into three categories, each of which is suitable for a different phase of the translation process. The terms "Initial norms", "Preliminary norms", and "operational norms" are used to describe these standards, respectively. The result shows that the norms that existed in the given examples are more acceptable than adequate based on the values and beliefs

of the Arabic culture. This means that the translator leans toward the target culture rather than the source culture.

Furthermore, the result reveals that the most used strategy in the given instances is the strategy of literal translation. Where the translator renders the specific cultural terms into Arabic by using word-for-word strategy in order to bridge the gap between these two cultures.

Introduction

Every society has its own unique culture, values, and ways of thinking. Translation attempts to convey cultural and ideological values, beliefs, ideas, and norms from the source culture to the target culture in addition to the literal meaning. Audiovisual translation (AVT) is one form of translation that is now in demand and has the ability to draw in a wide range of viewers of all ages. As a result, during the translation process, audiovisual translators need to be able to handle a variety of cultural factors in a variety of ways. The primary criteria for translation was still truthfulness or equivalency, and it was simply considered a linguistic process. In fact, "translation is not made in a vacuum" (Bassnett & Lefevere, 2001, p.14). "It takes place in concrete, definite situations that involve members of different cultures" (Snell-Hornby, 2001, p.40), and it is invariably limited by the cultures of the source and the destination. Since the late 1970s, a number of translation theorists have extensively studied translation theory from a variety of cultural orientations as a result of cultural studies in the Western academic community. They maintain that until translation studies are placed within the larger context of cultural studies, some complicated questions cannot be resolved. Target-oriented, functional, descriptive, and dynamic translation is the method used. This method successfully forms the basis for the advancement of Norm Theory. Throughout the 1990s, Gideon Toury popularized the idea of norms and used Polysystem theory. He thinks that the

translator fulfills a role that society assigns them and serves a social and cultural purpose. In order to understand the patterns and preferences that translators exhibit during the translation process, he plans to make use of sociocultural restrictions. He calls these restrictions "norms". Norms are defined by him as "general values or ideas shared by a community as to what is right and wrong, adequate and inadequate" (Toury, 2001, p. 55)

2. Literature Review

-2.1-Modes of Audiovisual

The expansion of audiovisual materials during the 1990s has been one factor that has led to the greater prominence of this sector in society. Individuals in our day and age are surrounded by a great number of audiovisual products in their homes, businesses, schools, libraries, restaurants, and other public locations.

There are many different types of audiovisual programs that are aired in today's society, including "documentary films", "short-length films" "cinema films", "TV broadcasts", "children's programs", "radio interviews" "business videos", and "home videos" among others (Gambier, 1994, p. 275). Therefore, there are several AVT modes that are used in the translation process including "dubbing", "subtitling", and "voice-over". Many in the academic community, such as Karamitroglou (2000), who acknowledge audiovisual translation as a sub-branch of translation studies. Other researchers, such as Gambier (1994, p. 277) are of the opinion that audiovisual translation is a new research area within the field of translation studies.

2.1.1-Dubbing

Dubbing originated in the film business during the 1920s as a result of several socio-economic challenges faced during the shift from silent to sound filmmaking. This gave rise to problems about language, and film directors in North America and Europe soon found that accurately translating

speech was their first priority (Chiaro, 2012). Dubbing was the primary technique of marketing American films in the market during this period since a large section of the populace was illiterate and fascism was on the rise. The process of dubbing involves creating a voice in a second language to replace the original dialogue. "attempts to follow as nearly as feasible the timing, phrasing, and lip-movements of the original conversation" is how this technique is described (Luyken et al., 1991, p.31). The purpose of dubbing is to give the impression that the target dialogues were said by the actors who played the roles in the original production. From the very beginning to the very end of the process of dubbing a film, there are generally four fundamental processes involved (Chairo, 2012). The initiate step is choosing the script that has to be dubbed; then, the lip synchrony and the sound of the target language should match with the original characters on screen, third, the script of the target language needs to be recorded by actors; and finally, the output is blended with the original one. The translator of dubbed material should take into consideration the linguistic and cultural adaptation which are both necessary. This is accomplished through a variety of tactics, many of which are the same as those utilized when translating for subtitling.

2.1.2- Subtitling

According to Titford (1982) and Gottlieb (1992), subtitling is regarded to be a sort of restricted translation because the majority of the challenges that the subtitler must overcome are caused by the medium itself. Myaoral et al. (1988, p.363), considers subtitling as a type of constraints as well as, he considers subtitling to be the method of translation that has the second most limitations after dubbing (ibid.). The scholars point out that there are three specific aspects that make subtitling even more challenging: content synchronicity which includes music sounds and images, spatial synchrony, and temporal synchrony, synchrony of time. Content synchrony



is done when the transmitted meaning is aligned with different semiotic channels. Spatial synchrony takes place when semiotic channels take the exact space as the corresponds of them (Caffrey, 2009, p.12). When it comes to subtitling, the two most important limits are time and space. These constraints are placed on the subtitler by the AV medium since the amount of time and space that can be displayed for the subtitles is limited (Diaz Cintas, 2004, p.29). Ferriol (2007) states that there is a professional limitation that exists prior to the phase of translation, and that this constraint is tied to the working conditions of the translator. In specifically, this constraint includes constraints for time, money, and style rules (Caffrey, 2009). According to Gottlieb (2004, p.86), the definition of subtitling is as follows: "the representation in a foreign language and spoken communications in filmic medium, in the shape of one or more lines of written texts, shown on the screen in sync with your original message". In order to provide the best feasible degree of accessibility, guidelines are developed (Gambier, 2001, p.2003).

2.1.3- Voice-Over

As dubbing and subtitling are widely employed in many different countries, a large portion of research in audiovisual translation (AVT) has been directed on these two modalities. However, voice-over is a third way of audiovisual transmission that is widely used in a range of audiovisual markets, despite not having been studied as thoroughly as the other two modes. Voice-over constraints are among the most important topics to which several academics have called attention. They have taken into consideration the fact that it still finds use in certain nations due to its low cost. Most audiences agree that voice-over exists, and translation experts are becoming more and more interested in the academic study of voice-over. There are

several contexts in which the phrase “voice-over” is used, such as translation studies, cinema studies, and the film industry (Franco, 2001). According to Daz Cintas and Orero (2006, p.477), “voice-over is a technique in which a voice giving a translation in a specific target language is heard concurrently on top of the source language voice”. The scholars also state that the sound of the original speaker is decreased to a low volume but it still could be heard in the background, while the voice of the translator is being higher than the original one. It has been stated by the same authors that “typically the translation ends several seconds before the foreign language speech stops, the sound of the original is raised again to a normal volume, and the viewer can once again hear the original speech” (Daz Cintas and Orero, 2006, p.477). Instead, Kuhn and Westwell (2012, p.446) in the academic discipline of cinema studies describe voice-over as the “voice of an off screen narrator or a voice heard but not belonging to any character actually talking on screen” (Kuhn&Westwell, 2012, p.446)

2.2- Sociocultural Norms

Sociologists and social psychologists have long considered norms to be the translation of a community's values or ideas about what is right and wrong, adequate and inadequate, into performance instructions suitable for and applicable to specific contexts, outlining what is required of and prohibited from members of the community, as well as what is tolerated and allowed along a given behavioral, which has recently been elaborated on with individuals pick up social norms throughout their development, and these norms always have the connotation of consequences, both good and negative. Within the society, norms are also used as criteria for judging specific behaviors. Assuming the existence of norms makes sense only when there are several possible courses of action, and only if the process of choosing amongst them is not random. As it is possible to identify patterns of

behavior in repeated instances of the same sort when a norm is truly active and effective, patterns of behavior are an important data point for any research of norms. Although one might consider the explanatory power of linguistics, text-linguistics, comparative textology, or pragmatics with regard to translational phenomena, the role of a translator cannot be reduced to the simple generation of utterances that would be considered translations within any of these disciplines. Rather than being considered meaningless, efforts related to translation should be recognized as having cultural relevance. As a result, "translatorship" generally comes into the capacity to play "a social role" in order to fulfill a function that is allotted by a community to the activity, its practitioners, and/or their products in a manner that is deemed appropriate in its own terms of reference. In other words, "translatorship" is first and foremost about being able to play "a social role". Though, being a translator within a cultural context necessitates the acquisition of a set of norms for judging the appropriateness of that form of behavior, and for navigating between all the elements which may hinder it. There hasn't been much research done on how a bilingual person becomes known for being a good translator. Translation may be characterized as being constrained in a variety of ways and to varied degrees in its socio-cultural aspect. They extend well beyond the original text, the systemic distinctions between the languages and literary traditions engaged in the act, or even the capabilities and limitations of the cognitive apparatus of the translator as a required intermediary. However, "Initial Norms" "Preliminary Norms" and "Operational Norms" are the three classifications of norms that present by Toury (1995, which was referenced in Munday, 2001, p.113). According to Toury (1980), the first step that takes place before the process of translating a text officially begins is where preliminary norms begin to apply. Preliminary norms also determine which texts will be translated. They include two

different kinds of norms that are tied to one another: translation policy and directness of translation. Toury (2012, p.82) refers to the translation policy as the "factors that govern the choice of text-types, even of individual texts, to be imported into a particular language culture via translation at a particular point in time" These characteristics or rules may vary across different text kinds, mediums, or human agents, such publishing firms. On the other hand, "translation directness" refers to the degree of toleration, preference, restriction, or permission granted to works that have been translated directly from particular source languages or through a language that acts as a mediator.

Initial norms refer to the overall conscious or unconscious decisions made by the translator to either heavily lean towards the SL, resulting in translations that can be termed "adequate" or adhere to the TC's norms, resulting in translations that can be termed "acceptable" depending on which direction the translator chooses to lean more heavily towards the source language (Toury, 2012, p. 79).

According to Toury (1980), as reported in Schaffner (1999, p.6), operational norms "guide the actual decisions made throughout the process of translation." In another word, the process of translation is directed by operational norms. They are composed of two different norms, matricial norms and textual-linguistic norms accordingly. The simple presence of the TT, as well as its fullness location, and segmentation, are all topics that are discussed within the context of matricial norms. They take into account omissions, additions, compensation, and the alteration of the original segmentations, such as chapters, stanzas, etc. Textual-linguistic norms are what "govern the selection of linguistic content for the creation of the target text, or the replacement of the original material" (Toury, 2012, p.83).

3. Methodology

The dataset for this study contains several instances of English documentaries and their comparable Arabic translations. These instances were collected from documentaries sourced from various TV channels such as, Al-Jazeera Documentary, and Netflix. The model proposed by Toury of sociocultural norms will be utilized for the purpose of analyzing the data in the current study.

Example

Audrei & Daisy

A documentary deals with one of the social issues. The film tells a story about two high school students Audrie and Daisy. They were victims of sexual assaults and they face bullying from the society.

One day, my sister was walking to class in the hallway from the bathroom. This kid in my class, he decided he was gonna call her "a lying slut" and yell it outside of the door. And she heard it and she ran back to the bathroom crying. I said something to him, like, along the lines of, "Don't you ever say anything to her again" And I knew for a fact, he's a little weeny bag. He would have been easy to kick the crap out of.

Those girls are filthy whores. Shout out to all retarded people who believe all the bullshit stories a certain family made up.

ذات يوم كانت اختي تسير في الرواق. وكانت عائدة الى صفها من الحمام. وقرر طالب في صفي ان يصفها ب الفاسقة الكذابة. وان يصيح بذلك عبر الباب فسمعت هي ذلك وعادت الى الحمام باكية. قلت له ما معناه اياك ان تقول لها شيئاً بعد الان. وكنت على يقين باعتباره صغير الحجم. انه كان من السهل ان اوسعه ضرباً.

هاتان الفتاتان عاهرتان قذرتان. نداء الى كل الاغبياء الذين يصدقون كل القصص المليئة بالهراء التي لفقتها عائلة معينة.

Table 1

| ST | TT | Sociocultural norms |
|--|---|--|
| "a lying slut" | "الفاسقة الكذابة" | Initial norms: acceptable Operational norms: textual-linguistic |
| "he's a little weeny bag" | "باعتباره صغير الحجم" | Initial norms: acceptable Operational norms: textual-linguistic |
| "Those girls are filthy whores" | "هاتان الفتاتان عاهرتان قذرتان" | Initial norms: adequate Operational norms: textual-linguistic |
| "retarded people who believe all the bullshit stories" | "الى كل الاغبياء الذين يصدقون كل القصص الملئية بالهراء" | Initial norms: acceptable Operational norms: textual-linguistic |

Analysis

During the process of translation, consideration was given to sociocultural aspects as part of the decision-making process. Examples taken from the texts demonstrate how translators frequently engage in cultural mediation in order to ensure that cultural elements are conveyed to the audience in a manner that is acceptable within the target society. Ideological interventions such as removing or altering components connected to cultures are also visible in the translation systems of other cultures; translators may resort to eliminating or downplaying parts relevant to society. Since the target culture places a high value on politeness, the translator sought to reduce the connotations of the term "slut" in translation by rendering it into Arabic as "فاسقة", making it acceptable in the target culture. the preferences of translators are directed towards the culture of the target audience. While in

the translation of the term "whores". the translator strove to maintain the word's colloquial connotations by rendering it into, "عاهرتان", making it adequate. However, the operational norms that can be found in the given example are textual-linguistic more than matricial which means that the translator prefers to modify the original content rather than changing it at all.

Example

The Red Pill

It is an American documentary reveals the movement of men's rights. The movie directed by Cassie Jaye as she films the leaders of the movement and the reaction of other people in the society.

This Southern poverty law center has classified that group. And men's rights groups as hate groups. He wrote a piece declaring the month of October to be "bash a violent bitch" month. Here he is.

Now I've been making documentary films since 2008, most of my work has been about women's issues and sexuality. I've covered a range of topics from the phenomenon of purity balls, to reproductive rights, and LGBT rights.

We're here to fight how misogynistic assholes think they have the right to oppress women. White men are starting to feel misplaced because women are sharing space. It's disgusting, and just grow the fuck up.

صنف مركز قانون الفقر الجنوبي تلك الجماعة. وجماعة حقوق الرجل على انها جماعات كراهية. هو كتب قطعة معلنا شهر اكتوبر شهر "اضرب عاهرة بعنف".

الان انا اعد الافلام الوثائقية منذ 2008. معظم عملي كان عن مشاكل النساء والجنس. غطيت مجموعة من المواضيع من ظاهرة كرات الطهارة لحقوق اعادة الانجاب و حقوق الشواذ.

نحن هنا للقتال كيف اولئك الاوغاد كارهي النساء يعتقدون لديهم الحق في ظلم المرأة الرجال البيض بدأوا يشعرون وكأنهم في غير محلهم لان النساء يشاركونهم مساحتهم انه مقرف. فقط انمو.

Table 2

| ST | TT | Sociocultural norms |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| "bash a violent bitch" | "اضرب عاهرة بعنف" | Initial norms: adequate Operational norms: textual- linguistic |
| "LGBT rights" | "حقوق الشواذ" | Initial norms: adequate Operational norms: textual- linguistic |
| "how misogynistic assholes" | "كيف اولئك الاوغاد" | Initial norms: acceptable Operational norms: textual- linguistic |
| "and just grow the fuck up" | "فقط انمو" | Initial norms: acceptable Operational norms: matricial |

Analysis

Source texts examples are chosen based on cultural and ideological factors. so the translation methods used will be different each time. For example, the given instance shows deletions, replacements, and ideological manipulation in both the text and its context. "Translated texts are the primary descriptive tool used to examine the publisher's translation strategies and the sociocultural norms that operate in the translation process" (Toury, 2012). The analysis shows that the cultural content has changed in many ways. However, it is clear that some kind of cultural manipulation happened during translation and publication. This can be seen in the examples given in the above table, where cultural, political, and ideological factors in the target culture affected translation decisions. The translation of the example "LGBT

rights "الشواذ" "violated the standards of politeness sought by Arabic culture and was considered as adequate; nevertheless. the other example of "just grow the fuck up" "فقط انمو" "has been euphemized in order to maintain its acceptability. While the first one maintained the textual-linguistic operational norms and the second one has achieved the matricial operational norms.

Example :

The Social Dilemma

The documentary explores the impact of people on social media and how they can manipulate others throughout the screen.

So, today, they are convincing the people that the Earth is flat, but tomorrow, they will be convincing you of something that's false. On November 7th, the Hashtag "Pizzagate" was born. Oh, boy. Facebook's recommendation engine suggesting to regular users that they join Pizzagate groups. [Officer] What were you doing? Making sure there was nothing there. [Officer] Regarding? Pedophile ring.

There's a flow of misinformation online about the virus. The notion drinking water will flush coronavirus from your system. Coronavirus is a... a hoax. I think the US government started this shit.

فهي تقنع الناس اليوم ان الارض مسطحة. لكن غداً ستقنعكم بشيء خطأ. في السابع من نوفمبر نشأ وسم بيتزاغيت، يا رياه. بدأ محرك توصيات فيسبوك في اقتراحها على المستخدمين العاديين حتى ينضموا الى مجموعات بيتزاغيت. ماذا كنت تفعل في هذا المكان؟ اتأكد من عدم وجود شيء هناك. بخصوص ماذا؟ استغلال الاطفال جنسياً.

هناك الكثير من المعلومات الخطأ على الانترنت التي تفوق هذا الفيروس. فكرة شرب المزيد من المياه ستزيل فيروس كورونا من اجسادكم. فيروس كورونا خدعة. اظن ان الحكومة الامريكية هي من بدأت الوباء.

Table 3

| ST | TT | Sociocultural norms |
|--|--|--|
| "today, they are convincing the people that the Earth is flat" | "فهي تقنع الناس اليوم بأن الارض مسطحة" | Initial norms: acceptable Operational norms: textual-linguistic |
| "Oh, boy" | "رباه" | Initial norms: acceptable Operational norms: matricial |
| "Regarding? Pedophile ring" | "بخصوص ماذا؟ استغلال الاطفال جنسيا" | Initial norms: adequate Operational norms: textual-linguistic |
| "I think the US government started this shit" | "اظن ان الحكومة الامريكية هي من بدأت الوباء" | Initial norms: acceptable Operational norms: matricial |

Analysis

There are many differences between the ST and its translation. One of these is the level of rendering the ideas to the audience. The general meaning is maintained while many changes have occurred during the process of translation such as in the above example of "oh boy" "رباه", "and "the US government started this shit" "الحكومة الامريكية هي من بدأت بالوباء", "with many of the encouraging ideas being deleted, added, or changed. These decisions might be motivated by an intention to prevent ideological or cultural conflicts with the Arabic culture and to achieve the acceptability in the translation. However, the example of "Regarding? Pedophile ring," "بخصوص ماذا؟ استغلال الاطفال جنسيا" the translator used such expression to render the source one "Pedophile" into Arabic which resulted an adequate norms. Also included is linguistic mediation, which occurs when the translator adds clarifications to terms or other explanations to assist the

audience in comprehending unfamiliar concepts that are new to their culture such as in the matricial operational norms that shown above.

Example

State of Alabama VS Brittany Smith

The documentary tells the story of Brittany Smith who tries to use the law of "Stand Your Ground" to defense herself after killing a man that she claims he attacked her.

The next morning, I woke up. My heart sank. I told Mom, "I have to go turn myself in."

I think we had a strong Stand Your Ground case. The DA got with Todd's family, and they wanted me to take a 25-year plea deal.

Do you want to just spill your guts to... to a stranger?

استيقظت في الصباح التالي وشعرت بحزن شديد. قلت لأمي يجب ان اسلم نفسي. اظن ان لدينا قضية قوية نندرج تحت قانون الدفاع عن الارض. تواصل النائب العام مع عائلة تود و ارادوا ان اقبل بصفقة اعتراف بالذنب والسجن 25 عاما.

هل يريد المرء ان يفصح عن معلومات خاصة لشخص غريب.

Table 4

| ST | TT | Sociocultural norms |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| "Stand your ground" | "الوقوف في ارضك" | Initial: acceptable Operational: textual-linguistic |
| "My heart sank" | "شعرت بحزن شديد" | Initial norms: acceptable Operational norms: textual-linguistic |
| "The DA got with Todd's family" | "تواصل النائب العام مع عائلة تود" | Initial norms: acceptable Operational norms: textual-linguistic |
| "spill your guts" | "ان يفصح عن معلومات خاصة" | Initial norms: acceptable Operational norms: textual-linguistic |

Analysis

This example examines phrases that have idiomatic expressions. It's possible that the presence of plenty of idiomatic features will make the content harder to understand and put up language barriers for the target audience. In spite of this, the source materials are challenged by cultural factors that may be difficult to convey to the Arabic. In spite of this, it is almost certain that some degree of cultural manipulation occurred in some form or another during the process of translation. This is evidenced by the selected examples that are outlined in the section of the analysis that discusses how decisions regarding translation were influenced by cultural, political, and ideological factors in the target culture.

Conclusion

The research findings indicate the existence of norms throughout the process of translating culturally unique English words and sentences into Arabic for use in documentaries. Based on the initial findings and data analysis, it is worth noting that in all the selected examples, the AV translators made an effort to create translations that were deemed acceptable. They seemed to adhere to the norms of the target language in order to produce translations that would be well-received. AV translators employed various strategies to ensure that the words and sentences were adapted to align with the cultural, moral, and social values, as well as the expectations of different societies. There were no direct translations of taboos and cultural specific expressions found in the data under investigation. This demonstrates the sensitivity of AVT. As an AV translator, it is important to be highly conscientious of the work and strive to meet the expectations of the audience. The translation policy and directness of translation are key factors that are taken into consideration when establishing preliminary norms. In regards to Toury's 'translation policy' that determines the factors for selecting



texts for translation in a specific culture, language, or time, it can be observed that while Toury does not extensively explore this area in case studies, it can be inferred that multiple factors play a role. In the previous sections, we have discussed Toury's concept of 'operational norms' and its two subcategories: 'matricial norms' which refer to the completeness of the target texts, and 'textual-linguistic norms' which involve the selection of linguistic elements such as lexical items, phrases, and stylistic features in the translated texts. The operational norms are occurred in two different types, textual-linguistic and matricial.

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دراسة المعايير الثقافية والاجتماعية في الترجمة السمعية والمرئية دراسة حالة لترجمة الافلام الوثائقية الانجليزية الى العربية

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الملخص:

بانت الترجمة السمعية والبصرية واحدة من اكثر الترجمات انتشاراً في عالمنا حديثاً، حيث ان الافلام والمسلسلات والبرامج التليفزيونية تجذب اليها العديد من الناس بمختلف الاعمار. لذا تسلط هذه الدراسة الضوء على دور المترجم في نقل القيم والمعتقدات الاجتماعية والثقافية من اللغة الانجليزية الى العربية وذلك عن طريق دراسة حالة لبعض الافلام الوثائقية المترجمة الى العربية التي تحتوي على القيم والتوجهات الاجتماعية والثقافية وفق العالم جيدون توري (1995) والتي قام بتقسيمها الى ثلاثة اقسام (المعايير الاولى ، المعايير العملية، والمعايير التمهيدية). كما وتستنتج الدراسة بأن المترجم يسعى الى انتاج ترجمة مقبولة وفق المعايير الثقافية للجماهير المستهدف.

وايضا تقوم هذه الدراسة بتحليل الطرق المتبعة في الترجمة وفق نظرية فيناي وداربلنت وتقييمها من حيث توافقها مع معايير الثقافة المستهدفة. وظهرت نتائج هذه الدراسة بأن الترجمة الحرفية هي الاكثر استخداماً من بين طرق الترجمة الاخرى وبنسبة 77%. مما يدل على ان المترجم يهدف الى انتاج عمل يتوافق مع قيم المجتمع العربي