

# The Role of News Translation in Portraying the Islamist Discourse in News Reports Produced (BBC & Al Arabiya)

Hind Saad AL Rashid

Lecturer, Master's Degree, Department of English Translation, College of Languages, Princess Nourah Bint Abdul Rahman University

**Abstract:** *This study aims to explore the role of news translation in portraying the Islamist discourse in news reports produced by the BBC and Al Arabiya. This study is qualitative. Multidisciplinary in nature, combining translation studies, media studies, and news discourse studies, to achieve study objectives, a comprehensive analysis of news reports from both news organizations will be conducted. It focuses on the textual analysis of Arabic and English versions of news reports, exploring translation patterns and strategies. The analysis delves into labeling practices, language rules, and the use of direct and indirect quotations from Islamists, and contextualization and reconceptualization. Additionally, it examines the visibility of translation in the news reports, comparing how direct and indirect quotations presented in the English and Arabic versions. The study also outlines the prominent hallmarks of the Islamist discourse, emphasizing the use of emotive language, references to Islamic texts, and specific terminology. Furthermore, it addresses the challenges faced by translators in conveying the conative and affective aspects of Islamic terminology to English-speaking audiences, highlighting the need for scrutiny of the translator's art.*

**Keywords:** Strategies, News Text, News Institutions, Islamist Discourse, Translation practices

## 1. Introduction

News translation plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion and understanding of global events. In the context of reporting on Islamist discourse, accurate and unbiased translation is of utmost importance. This essay will examine the role of news translation in portraying the Islamist discourse in news reports produced by two prominent media outlets, BBC and Al Arabiya.

The translation of Islamist discourse in news reports can significantly affect how the public perceives and understands the ideology and actions of Islamist groups. It is essential for news translators to accurately convey the nuances and intentions behind the words spoken or written by Islamist figures. Misinterpretation or mistranslation can lead to misrepresentation and misjudgment, potentially fueling stereotypes and misconceptions.

The BBC, as a renowned international news organization, has a responsibility to provide accurate and unbiased information to its global audience. In the context of translating Islamist discourse, the BBC should prioritize linguistic accuracy and cultural sensitivity. By employing skilled translators who understand the complexities of the Islamist discourse, the BBC can ensure that its news reports present a balanced and nuanced view of the ideology. Similarly, Al Arabiya, a leading Arabic news channel, has a crucial role in portraying the Islamist discourse to its predominantly Arab audience. The channel should prioritize accurate translation that reflects the original meaning and context of the discourse. By doing so, Al Arabiya can contribute to a more informed and nuanced understanding of Islamist ideology among its viewers.

However, it is important to acknowledge that news translation is not without challenges. Translating Islamist discourse requires a deep understanding of the cultural, religious, and political contexts in which it operates. The translator must

navigate through complex terminology, cultural references, and linguistic nuances to accurately convey the intended meaning. Moreover, translators must remain impartial and avoid injecting their own biases into the translation process.

### 1.1 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study:

- 1) To contribute to our understanding of the role of news translation in shaping the portrayal of the Islamist discourse in news reports.
- 2) To analyze the translation strategies employed by the BBC and Al Arabiya in their coverage of Islamist discourse.
- 3) To highlight the importance of accurate news translation in promoting a balanced and informed understanding of Islamist discourse.

### 1.3 Data Collection

The data for this study will be collected from a range of sources, including online news articles, television broadcasts, and social media platforms. Theoretical frameworks will guide the analysis from translation studies, media studies, and news discourse studies.

### 1.4 Methodology of the Study

This study is qualitative. Multidisciplinary in nature, combining translation studies, media studies, and news discourse studies, to achieve study objectives, a comprehensive analysis of news reports from both news organizations will be conducted. The analysis will focus on identifying the strategies employed in translating the Islamist discourse. The study will employ a comparative approach, examining the similarities and differences in the translation strategies used by the BBC and Al Arabiya. This will provide

insights into the potential influence of translation on the portrayal of the Islamist discourse in news reports.

## 2. Literature Review

Translation text analysis serves the purpose of ensuring full comprehension and correct interpretation of the explicit text and provides explanations to the linguistic and textual structures coupled with their relationship with social systems or norms of the language. Text analysis offers significant insights into the decisions made by translators during the translation (Nord 2005:2). Text analysis is major applied in translation studies to make comparisons between the text and the translated text, examining how translators solve the challenges experienced during the translation process and the various translation strategies adopted by translators (Holland, 2013).

The textual analysis of this research concentrates on the role of news translation in portraying the Islamist discourse in news reports. This is done by focusing on translation matters of labeling, the use of language Rules; is it neutral or biased manner, the implantation of direct and indirect quotations from Islamists, and the practices of contextualization and reconceptualization (Hursti, 2001). This involves selecting information, quotations to be included in each news report, which is directly connect to the production of the Islamist's discourse in the news reports.

To establish the adopted translation practices and strategies in this study, the directionality of the news report will be the institution's original language under investigation (Bassent ,2005). The original news report 'source texts' for the BBC are the English reports, while the Arabic news reports are the 'target texts.' For Al-Arabiya, the original news reports 'source texts' are the Arabic news reports, while the English reports are the 'target texts.' the source text or the target culture as an initial norm, that translation-mediated news reporting is largely a reframing.

The news guidelines of the news institutions, their role in the produced news reports, and the translation effect on news report input the editorial guidelines in both institutions prevent any act of promotion of terrorism and violence by their employers by means of gathering information, interviewing aids, or use of language. This is states clearly in the BBC Editorial Guidelines available on its website (BBC World, 2014). BBC World Service in this editorial guide clearly states that the BBC does not impose threatening messages, like the messages found in Islamist speeches as al-Qaida speeches. It adds that it does not run or publish these messages since they are consider a means of preventing economic damage and spreading terror, is illegal. In addition, this point was widely confirmed in the responses of the two institutions' interviews. However, the issue of translating to English of something that was originally translate by the Islamists themselves raises the question of how neutral the global media is. The translation by a global news agency or an institution such as SITE, though professional, carries with it an American approval and domination

### Islamist discourse

Islamist discourse is becoming increasingly important in political and cultural life in the Arab world. Both oppositions and ruling regimes often articulate and legitimize their positions through Islam. Nevertheless, the translation of this discourse is, I believe, of particular interest, not only because of its prevalence and because of importance, but because of the particular problems, it poses theoretically and practically (Azodi, J., 2016). Firstly, it is a discourse that attempts to speak from outside the orbit of the West and to challenge notions of universality based on European models, yet few in the West are aware of the basic tenets of this ideology. Some writers, such as Sayyid Qutb, have been hugely influential in the Arab world but are rarely read by Western readers. More often than not, they read second-hand accounts filtered and digested for them by Western based academics, always open to the charge of orientalism. So, even more reason for Islamists to be heard directly or as directly as translation allows and all the more reason why the translators' art must be closely scrutinized (Bassnett, 2009). We need to see if a text expressly antithetical to another culture can be translated into the language of that 'Other'. Secondly, these texts bring with them specific problems for the translator-tor, especially concerning intertextuality, rhetorical devices unfamiliar to most English speaking readers and, above all, the conative and affective aspects of Islamic terminology so consistently used by Islamist writers to persuade their Arabic readership of the truth, moral justification and even inevitability of their arguments.

At the beginning, I would like to brief list some of the most known hallmarks of the Islamist discourse. This is to clarify the road map of the textual analysis, so it becomes a leading sign to what we are looking for in the analyses.

### Table 1 is the most prominent hallmarks of the Islamist discourse in general terms

1-This type of discourse uses emotive language to deliver the ideological message. This is an empowering device usually used in political discourse to convince followers of the validity of the speaker's message.
2-This type of discourse usually contains emotive figures of speech, usually written in classical Arabic, such as simile, metaphor, and euphemism. One of the reasons it uses these tools is to prove religious authenticity. When receivers hear and read a language that reminds them of the valuable language of the classical Arabic language, the emotional effect and religious connection they foster.
3- It includes frequent references and allusions to the Holy Qur'an, Hadeeth, or historic Islamic battles, discussing events the Islamists usually connect them to Qur'an verses and Hadeeth, however, this connection is done by recontextualizing these references to match their ideology.
4- Key terms are used frequently in this discourse, mostly in English the Islamists use there Transliteration strategy with these terms in English: such as the following words and terms: the Arabic term <b>شهادة</b> in Islamist Arabic term it is: Shahada the literal translation is: (martyrdom)- the Arabic term <b>شهيدي</b> in Islamist Arabic term it is: Shaheed the literal translation is:(martyr)- The Islamist Arabic terms is: <b>شيطان</b> Satan the literal translation is: (Devil)- The Islamist Arabic terms is: <b>سيف</b> Saif (sword)- The Arabic term <b>إيمان</b> in

Islamist Arabic term it is Iman. The literal translation is (Belief)- The Arabic term إيمان in Islamist Arabic term it is Imam. The literal translation is: (leader)- The Arabic term إمام in Islamist Arabic term it is Ansar. The literal translation is: (supporters-followers)- Jihad – The Arabic term الجهاد in Islamist Arabic term it is Al-Ummah al-Islāmīyah. The literal translation is: (community of Islam)- The Arabic term نبذ beheading. –The Arabic Islamist term النصر . The equivalent Islamist Arabic term is al-Nasser. The literal translation is: (victory)- The Islamist Arabic term حماية الإسلام Himayat Al-Islam. The literal translation of the term is: Islam protection- The Arabis Islamist term: مشيئة الله is always translated as: God-willing- The Islamist Arabic term النهضة الإسلامية is always translated as: Islamic awakening- The Islamist Arabic term عباد الله has the equivalence 'ibād Allah. The literal translation is (Allah worshippers)- The Islamist Arabic term إحقاقا للدماء in the Islamist English is ḥiḡqanā liddimā'ī. The literal translation is: (to prevent bloodshed)- The Arabic Islamist term الطغيان is in Islamist terms: tāḡīyyatun. The literal translation is: (tyrant)- The Arabic Islamist term إحصارى in Islamist terms: crusaders- The Islamist Arabic term خونة it always has this English equivalence: traitors- The Arabic Islamist term: الأمر الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر The Islamist English term used is: Muslim must advise- The Arabic Islamist term: الإستعانة بالله . The Islamist Arabic term is: āsta'āna. The literal translation is: (seek Allah's help)- The Islamist Arabic term مكر . The English equivalence is Mukr, most English translations use the most frequent English equivalence (cunning)..

(Copsey, et al, 2013)

### 3. Visibility of translation in the (BBC & Al -Arabiya)

The issue of translation visibility is investigated through the analysis of the Islamists' direct and indirect quotations identified in the texts; Visibility of translation (cf. Venuti 1995) can concern the text as a whole or parts of it. For a complete text, visibility means an explicit indication that the text is a translation, both reports use the same verbs: killed and executed. 2-E: used indirect quotation mentioning the source ANI that is different from the Arabic that used a direct quotation from a different source that is the Mauritanian news agency. The indication of sources of (in) direct quotes. Regarding this feature, the analysis is investigating whether news reports explicitly mention there is a direct quote to the source, e.g:

**BBC TE:** Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) told ANI that it killed Philippe Verdon on 10 March, in retaliation for France's intervention in Mali. However.

**BBC TA:** القاعدة في بلاد المغرب الاسلامي " وأفادت الوكالة الموريتانية أن: "قتلت فيليب فاردون رداً على تدخل فرنسا في مالي".

**BBC Back translation:** The Mauritanian news agency said: "AQIM killed Philip Verdon in response for France's interventions in Mali".

**Al -Arabiya TE** "peaceful and civilized way,"

**Al -Arabiya TA:** وقال مرسي أدعو جميع المواطنين إلى التمسك بالمبادئ النبيلة للثورة المصرية في التعبير عن الرأي بحرية وسلمية ونبد العنف أولاً وفعالاً

The English report though used a direct quotation to present the information but it is a very short quotation: a **BBC**:

The two report versions are different in labelling the group: the English referred to it as: the radical Islamist group Ansar al-Sharia whereas the Arabic: حركة "انصار الشريعة" السلفية

Backtranslation: Ansar al-Sharia Salafi movement

Matter of labelling: hardline Islamists, the ultra-conservative group, the salafis, which don't exist in the Arabic report.

The two reports chose to report different information from the Islamist group spokesman in their direct quotation reporting: Spokesman Seifeddine Rais said on Thursday: "We are not asking permission from the government to preach the word of God and we warn against any police intervention to prevent the congress from taking place." The English revealed the identity of the speaker but doesn't mention the source or the language of it. Most probably this is a covered practice of translation because the Arabic report mentioned that the speech was in Arabic. The second suggestion is that both reports reporting from unmentioned global news agencies each on its language and chose to focus on different information of the Islamist statement.

Al-Arabiya :

It appears from the comparison of two versions of this report, that they were produced independently 1- the two reports have different focus angle which revealed in their different information selection and the different textual practices. The Arabic report opens its lead pointing to Morsi's email swearing to punish persons responsible of violence:

مرسي يوجه رسالة الكترونية للمصريين ويتوعد بمحاسبة المسؤولين عن العنف

This information isn't mentioned in the English report.

### About patronage/sponsorship/ideology/power:

1) An important direct quotation of the leader Islamist is not included in the English.

"استأصلوهم عن بكرة أبيهم، مقابل أن لا يخذش التوحيد ولا تضيع أمانة الدين". Back translation: uproot them forcibly in return of not offending al-Tawhid and the safety of religion.

The exclusion of the quotation tells us about the addressees' consideration of Al-Arabiya and its consideration of its statues in the world.

2) إخواني أنتم اليوم تسطرون بجهدكم وعرقكم تاريخ أمتنا وإني لأشد على " أيديكم وأدعوكم إلى احتساب ما تلقونه من الطواغيت عند الله والله إني لأتألم لألمكم وأفرح لفرحكم وإني على يقين لا يتخلله شك أن دعوتنا منصوره وأن العقاب ستكون لنا وإنما النصر صبر ساعة فأتبوا لأعدانكم أنكم على العهد "مع الله ماضون".

Back translation:

Brothers today you write with your effort and sweat your ummah's history, I tighten my hand grip on yours, I urge you to count the suffering you gain from those oppressors in Allah's counts. I swear in the name of Allah I feel your pain

and feel your happiness and I am absolutely sure that Allah will make our prayers true and the victory will be ours, be patient and show your enemies that you will keep your vow with Allah.

#### English quotation:

- 1) "I remind you that our youth sacrificed themselves for the defense of Islam in Afghanistan, Chechnya, Bosnia, Iraq, Somalia and Syria, won't hesitate to sacrifice themselves for their religion in Kairouan," he said.

The Arabic direct quotation included very prominent Islamist marks which are not included in the English report's quotation, thought. The English report chose to quote only short part of the Arabic quotation, not even report the remaining Arabic quotation in directly or paraphrasing it.

- 2) The textual analysis couldn't be certain who made the translation.

لن تجدكم مناصرتهم شيئاً إذا ما قعقت السيوف وأريشت السهام " وضرب النصال بالنصال فوالله إن أرواحنا أرخص من أن نحرض عليها إذا ما حورب ديننا وضيق على دعوتنا.. فالعقل والتدبر قبل "أن ينفطر العقد واني لا أراه إلا منفطراً".

Back translation:

When you hear the swords, darts, and bladed make their sounds heard you will recognize that you didn't gain any benefit from supporting them. We sell our souls for cheap when our religion and Dawa are fought over. Be rational, rethink about it before the chain unravel, though I already seeing it unravelled.

English: "If you continue with these stupid policies, the support of America, the West, Algeria, Turkey and Qatar will not save you when the sound of swords makes itself heard,"

- 3) The English quotation has almost different information from the Arabic quotation, which suggest that the English report combined another quotation with only one line translated from this Arabic quotation: when the sound of swords makes itself heard. The information included in the English quotation pictures the Islamists threat to the world by quoting the Islamist counting the names of countries and sides which fighting the existence of Islamists in Tunisia. This practice confirms Al-Arabiya's ideology, agenda, and world image presentation.

- 4) The English report as shown in other examples attempts to stress the institution's ideology and view stand to the world through inclusions of anti- Islamist information which isn't included in the Arabic report. For example, this direct quotation from the anti-Mursi campaign: "The campaign was launched because the president is no longer able to manage the country," the text adds.

This ideology is clear in this example where the Arabic report included this direct quotation of an Islamist political supporter of Mursi criticises anti- Brother Hood supporters:

- 5) The Arabic report includes this direct quotation of the spokesman of one of the Islamist groups supporting Mursi:

قال الدكتور خالد سعيد، المتحدث باسم الجبهة السلفية، إن حركة تمرّد مدعومة من الطائفين لإحداث فوضى واضطرابات في الشارع قبل الانتخابات. وأضاف أن الجبهة السلفية تدعم الرئيس محمد مرسي، مشدداً ، بحسب قوله "الانقلاب عليه انقلاب على إرادة الأمة" على أن

Dr. Said the spokesman of (the Salafi front) al Jabha al-Salafiya, said that Tamarud campaign is supported by sectarians to create chaos and disturbances before elections. He confirmed that: "Any coup d'état is a coup d'état on the whole Umma."

The institution's different treatment of this quotation in the two versions of the report affirms the institution's ideology and strategy of protecting its image as an anti Islamist institution. In addition, it confirms its ideology in approaching its addressees in the West.

The only Islamist direct quotation included in the English is:

"The only recognized democratic mechanism is the ballot box. Everyone must respect the results of the ballot box no matter what they are," Ahmed Rami said in a statement, reported by AFP.

The quotation reported with its source of information; AFP. The analysis estimates that the quotation is included to prove the institution's balanced encountering with the events in Egypt. The quotation only clarifies the Brother Hood party's political opinion about the unrests.

The English report label of one of the Islamist groups which supports Mursi as: ultra-conservative al-Gamaa al-Islamiya group

The label issue here showcases the institution's strategy in dealing with its addresses in the West and the institution's anti-Islamists point of view.

### 3. Discussion

From my interviews of journalists that were informed by mostly theoretical work concerning processes of translation that occur in at the reports of BBC and Al-Arabiya, the actual practices used in news translation concern text selection, news input, and translation agents. The strategies involved in the textual production of the news texts examined are mainly: deletion, omission, addition, the strategy of changing a direct quote to an indirect one, or vice versa. The later strategy might be considered according to the quotation importance, availability and kind of provider of it.

The textual analysis of this research concentrates on the role of news translation in portraying the Islamist discourse in news reports. This is done by focusing on translation matters of labeling, the use of language rules; is it neutral or biased manner, the implantation of direct and indirect quotations from Islamists, and the practices of contextualization and reconceptualization. This involves selecting information, quotations to be included in each news report, which is directly connected to the production of the Islamist's discourse in the news reports.

To establish the adopted translation practices and strategies in this study, the directionality of the news report will be the institution's original language under investigation. The original news report 'source texts' for the BBC are the English reports, while the Arabic news reports are the 'target texts.' For Al-Arabiya, the original news reports 'source texts' are the Arabic news reports, while the English reports are the 'target texts.' that translation-mediated news reporting is largely a reframing. Translation strategies for both media institutions:

The data collected from both institutions the translation strategies found are: Literal translation- paraphrasing – omission – deletion- summarizing. Reveals that translation strategies used, do not follow one language direction route in their application in the reports or strategies' is a matter of textual comparison. These varieties of translation practice in some cases are due to language rules, the news report recipient's interest, the country's view of the events taking place in, the world regulations and rules regarding the dissemination and dealing with speeches said or issued by Islamist groups.

The translation practices found are related to the selection of texts to translate-the translation of the input of the news report-all kinds of editing: copy- language-stylistic- and content editing. The most effective practices of translation found are related to the translation of quotations: direct into direct, indirect into indirect or direct into indirect, or indirect to direct. In addition, the issue of translation visibility is closely connected to the quotation translation practice.

#### 4. Conclusion

The study discusses the role of news translation in portraying the Islamist discourse in news reports produced by the BBC and Al Arabiya. It focuses on the textual analysis of Arabic and English versions of news reports, exploring translation patterns and strategies. The analysis delves into labeling practices, language rules, the use of direct and indirect quotations from Islamists, and contextualization and reconceptualization. Additionally, it examines the visibility of translation in the news reports, comparing how direct and indirect quotations are presented in the English and Arabic versions. The document also outlines the prominent hallmarks of the Islamist discourse, emphasizing the use of emotive language, references to Islamic texts, and specific terminology. Furthermore, it addresses the challenges faced by translators in conveying the conative and affective aspects of Islamic terminology to English-speaking audiences, highlighting the need for close scrutiny of the translator's art.

Moreover, the study discusses the news guidelines and editorial policies of the BBC and Al Arabiya, emphasizing their role in preventing the promotion of terrorism and violence in news reports. It raises questions about the neutrality of global media when translating content originally disseminated by Islamist groups and how translation choices may reflect cultural and ideological influences. The analysis also examines the differences between the English and Arabic versions of news reports, particularly in terms of information selection, textual practices, and ideological positioning. It highlights how these differences contribute to shaping the institutions' image and agenda, illustrating the impact of

translation on the portrayal of Islamist discourse in news media.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes the significance of understanding the Islamist discourse, particularly due to its prevalence and theoretical and practical challenges. It outlines the distinct features of Islamist discourse, including the use of emotive language, classical Arabic rhetoric, and references to Islamic texts. The document underscores the importance of scrutinizing translation practices to ensure an accurate portrayal of the discourse and the cultural and ideological implications involved. Additionally, it addresses the complexities of translating content that challenges Western notions of universality, highlighting the need for direct representation of Islamist voices and close examination of translation choices to convey the intended persuasive and affective elements of the discourse.

The study provides a comprehensive analysis of the role of news translation in portraying the Islamist discourse, highlighting the complexities and challenges involved in conveying the discourse across different linguistic and cultural contexts. It underscores the need for critical examination of translation practices, the visibility of translation in news reports, and the influence of editorial policies and ideological positioning on the portrayal of Islamist discourse in the media.

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