Translating Metaphors in Political Speeches from English to Arabic: Strategies and Procedures

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the metaphors' translation from English to Arabic in political speeches, with the aim of identifying the metaphor translation procedures employed. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, the research analyzed the translation of 82 English source language (SL) metaphors into Arabic target language (TL), employing Newmark's Metaphor Translation Procedures as a framework. The findings reveal that while certain SL metaphors have direct equivalents in Arabic, the Arabic translator introduced two new variants or procedures (H1 and H2). Appropriate metaphors' selection in the TL is found to be affected by all of cultural as well as linguistic factors, in addition to text type and metaphor class. The study sheds light on how translators in the TL effectively address linguistic and cultural challenges during metaphor translation, offering valuable insights into the process of English-Arabic translation. Accordingly, Future studies are is recommended to comprehensively analyze metaphor translation in the political discourse context.

1. INTRODUCTION

The publication of Lakoff and Johnson's book "Metaphors We Live By" in the 1970's sparked a deep interest in the study of metaphor in translation or MiT. This has led to debates about the translatability of metaphors and the strategies or procedures used to transfer them from one language to another. Metaphors function as linguistic tools that allow for the substitution of one concept or object with another, aiding in conveying ideas and promoting comprehension, as outlined by Abdullah (2014). The term "metaphor," traced back to its Greek origin "metaphora," denoting the act of "carrying" or "transferring," is further elaborated upon by Abdullah (2021). Abdullah's examination of the origin of the term "metaphor" emphasizes its core function as a channel for conveying meaning; aligning with the application of metaphors in language to replace one notion with another. This concept resonates with the traditional perspective on metaphors emphasized by Krisnawati et al. (2021), which highlights their historical role in cultivating poetic imagination and enhancing rhetorical expression.

Metaphors play a crucial role in language, often appearing extensively in political discourse and various forms of text. Through metaphors, politicians can help people to understand complex political issues more easily while also tapping into people's emotions to sway their opinions. Although metaphors can enrich language with depth and nuance, they can also pose difficulties in translation. Safarnejad (2018) highlights the particularly challenging aspect of translating metaphors and because it is complex in nature, it becomes one of the most debated subjects in this field.

The translation of metaphors requires careful analysis and consideration of variations in meaning that arise during the translation process. Their translation poses difficulties, requiring a comprehensive grasp of the cultural and social contexts in both the source and target languages, making it a formidable task (Dagut, 1976; Van den Broeck, 1981; Tobin, 1984; AlHarrasi, 2001).

To ensure a precise and reliable translation, translators need to possess extensive knowledge of the cultural and linguistic aspects of both the source and target languages. They must pay close attention to metaphorical expressions and the underlying meanings they convey. Additionally, translators must have differentiated expertise in linguistics, extralinguistic and sociocultural factors of both languages. Wilss (1996) argues that having a strong command of both languages is not enough for effective translation. When translating between languages from different language families, such as Arabic and English, the task becomes even more challenging due to the vast differences in their linguistic systems, as well as their cultural, social, and historical contexts. This can result in the mistranslation or misunderstanding of metaphors used in the source language. Past research has emphasized the importance of identifying translation challenges related to metaphors, aiming to bring attention to these issues (e.g., Al-Bisher, 2016; Carl & Kay, 2011; Kerremans, 2010; Tonoike et al., 2006; Westling, 2011). This study investigates how metaphors are used in political speeches and explores the difficulties or challenges that arise for translators when translating these metaphors from English to Arabic. Additionally, the study examines the implementation of Newmark's translation procedures and investigates any additional or supplementary metaphor translation strategies or procedures employed by Arabic translators.

2.   LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   The Metaphor in Political Speeches

Politics is considered a universally significant aspect of life (Newmark, 1996), manifested through both jargon and strong emotive terms in language. It holds this universal appeal across countries, and political speeches are consistently employed to achieve specific objectives. Such discourse can be classified into four primary categories: mostly value-laden, partially culture-bound, abstract, and historically conditioned. To comprehensively analyze political discourse, various linguistic elements must be considered, including figures of speech, repetition, collocation, and emotive language. Shunnaq (2000) emphasizes the importance of these semantic phenomena in political discourse analysis. Political speeches differ from literary and everyday speeches, as their motives and purposes are distinct. While translation inherently poses challenges, political translation encounters unique difficulties.

Political discourse plays a critical role in shaping individuals' opinions and actions, with widespread participation in political activities through news consumption, election-related discussions, and debates about governmental decisions (Al-Hamad & Al-Shunnag, 2011). Zheng (2000) further explains that political discourse emerges from a synthesis of an individual's personal development and the relevant social environment. This development is influenced by various factors, such as social circles, education experiences, political affiliations, economic status, and parental influence. For prominent political figures like Obama, Trump, Mahathir, Boris, and others, personal character and growth are shaped significantly by their social contexts.

The use of political metaphors serves to express ideological and political content, making their translation into another language a contentious endeavour (Bulut, 2012). A text is considered political when it employs addressive and persuasive language to contribute to its role as a discourse item. Studies in translation have discussed the ideological conflict components inherent in translating political contexts, as highlighted by Ayasrah (2017) and Bulut (2012). Political texts encompass various forms of communication, including spoken types like

interviews, speeches, and addresses, as well as written forms like reports, columns, news releases, and declarations (Bulut, 2012). The use of political metaphors serves to express ideological and political content, making their translation into another language a contentious endeavour (Bulut, 2012). A text is considered political when it employs addressive and persuasive language to contribute to its role as a discourse item. Studies in translation have discussed the ideological conflict components inherent in translating political contexts, as highlighted by Ayasrah (2017) and Bulut (2012). Political texts encompass various forms of communication, including spoken types like interviews, speeches, and addresses, as well as written forms like reports, columns, news releases, and declarations (Bulut, 2012).

2.2 Strategies for Translating Metaphor

The effective translation of metaphors involves several considerations as highlighted above. The translation of metaphors presents challenges. Vermeer, as cited in Nord (1997), emphasizes that translation is a purposeful activity, and the translator's approach to conveying various aspects of the source text (ST) is significantly influenced by the translation's purpose and objectives. Scholars like Dagut (1976) and Newmark (1981b, 1988b) are regarded as pioneers in the study of metaphor translation. Newmark (1981b, 1988b) proposed a comprehensive set of metaphor translation procedures (refer to Table 1), which serve as a valuable reference for analyzing the translation procedures identified in the political metaphors of both the source text (ST) and target text (TT) in this study.

Table 1 Metaphor Translation Procedures (Newmark,1981b, 1988b)

Reproducing the same image in the TL provided the image has comparable frequency and currency in the appropriate register.	A
Replacing the image in the SL with a standard TL image which does not clash with the TL culture.	B
Translating the metaphor by simile, retaining the image. This is the obvious way of modifying the shock of the metaphor, particularly if the TL is not emotive in character.	C
Translating the metaphor (or simile) by simile plus sense (or occasionally a metaphor plus sense).	D
Converting the metaphor to sense.	E
Deletion. If the metaphor is redundant or serves no practical purpose, there is a case for its deletion, together with its sense component.	F
Translation of Metaphor by the same metaphor combined with sense. The addition of a gloss or an explanation by the translator is to ensure that the metaphor will be understood.	G

3. METHODS

The research methodology employed in this study adopts a qualitative approach. It involves conducting frequency counts of the translated versions of metaphors from the source text (ST) of a political speech, utilizing Newmark's Metaphor Translation Procedures as the analytical framework. The corpus for this study comprises a political speech delivered by the 45th President of the United States of America, Donald J. Trump, during his tenure from 2016 to 2018. Specifically, the speech analyzed were given at the Arab Islamic American Summit in Saudi Arabia on May 21, 2017. Organized by Saudi Arabia and chaired by King Salman, the summit was attended by leaders and representatives from 54 Arab and Muslim countries, all of which were members of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) along with the United States. The analysis examines the metaphor translations of a total of 82 metaphors from the source text (English) into the target text (Arabic). These metaphors are subjected to detailed examination

within the context of Newmark's Metaphor Translation Procedures, allowing for a comprehensive investigation of the metaphor translation procedures employed by Arabic translators in conveying the metaphors in a political discourse setting.

4.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1   Metaphor Use in English (SL) Political Speech and its Arabic (TL) Translation

The findings found that seventy-three (73) source text (ST) metaphors were successfully translated into the target text (TT), underscoring their significance in political discourse. A comparison between eighty-two (82) ST (English) metaphors and their corresponding TT (Arabic) metaphors revealed seventy-three (73) equivalent Arabic terms, with nine (9) ST metaphors omitted in the TT. Notably, two (2) novel variations or procedures - H1 and H2 were identified in the TT translations, as demonstrated in Tables 2 and 3 below.

4.2   The Relevance and Adequacy of Newmark's Metaphor Translation Procedures in its Arabic (TL) Context.

Table 2 below illustrates the use of Newmark's metaphor translation procedures throughout the translation process. However, there exist a few instances where these procedures were not applied. The most frequently employed procedure from Newmark's set, denoted as category (A1), involves the "Reproduction of the same image in the TL, given that the image possesses comparable frequency and relevance within the appropriate linguistic context." This procedure accounts for the majority at 51.1%. Subsequently, category (B1) emerges as the second most prevalent approach, advocating the "Replacement of the SL image with a conventional TL image that aligns with the TL cultural context," constituting 15.6% of cases.

Further analysis reveals that category (F1), encompassing "Deletion" ranks third in frequency at 9.2%. Next is category (C1) which involves the "Transformation of the metaphor into a simile while retaining its imagery", contributing to 6% of translations. This is followed by category (D1) representing the translation of metaphors or similes through "Simile plus sense (occasionally metaphor plus sense)," comprising 4.6% of cases. Categories (E1) and (G1) each exhibit a frequency of 3%.

In addition, Table 2 emphasizes the emergence of categories (H1), and (H2). Both these categories signify instances where translations differed from the metaphor translation procedures outlined by Newmark. This category, accounting for 6% of occurrences, refer to translations that involve the "Modification of metaphor sense and type from the SL during translation to the target text (e.g. H1 - "The original form of the ST metaphor is not retained in the translation of the TL; rather, it is replaced by a different metaphor that has a metaphorical equivalent" and H2 – "The metaphor from the ST is used in the TL, but it is an unnatural option for the TL, which means that it is made up on the basis of the ST one"). Table 4 below illustrates examples that showcases H1 and H2.

Table 2 Frequency and Percentage of Newmark's Procedures and those identified from the Metaphor Translation Analysis of the Political Discourse Data

Newmark's Procedures (1988b:107)		Procedures identified from the Metaphor Translation Analysis of the Political Discourse Data (Abdullah, S., 2018:185)		Total Count	Percentage
A	Reproducing the same image in the TL provided the image has comparable frequency and currency in the appropriate register.	A1	The ST metaphor is reproduced in the TL as a natural TL choice which means that a suitable pre-existing TL metaphor is used.	38	46.3%
B	Replacing the image in the SL with a standard TL image which does not clash with the TL culture.	B1	The ST metaphor metaphor is translated into an equivalent in the TL which does not clash with the TL's culture.	13	15.9%
C	Translating the metaphor by simile, retaining the image. This is the obvious way of modifying the shock of the metaphor, particularly if the TL is not emotive in character.	C1	The ST Metaphor is translated into a simile	6	7.4%
D	Translating the metaphor (or simile) by simile plus sense (or occasionally a metaphor plus sense).	D1	The ST metaphor or simile is translated in the TL by using comparisons (similes) and literal explanations to make their meaning clear and easy to understand. The Translator has simplified the figurative language in the TL for better comprehension.	4	4.9%
E	Converting the metaphor to sense.	E1	The ST metaphor is translated word for word by a non – metaphorical expression as a suitable TL equivalent either does not exist or is not used.	3	3.6%
		E2	Conversion of the ST metaphor into its meaning and purpose of usage in the TL. This means in cases where no suitable SL metaphor exists that the translator substitutes the SL metaphor with an explanation of the SL metaphor.	1	1.2%
F	Deletion. If the metaphor is redundant or serves no	F1	Deletion. Both the SL wording and the meaning	9	11.1%

	practical purpose, there is a case for its deletion, together with its sense component.		are completely omitted In the TL		
G	Translation of Metaphor by the same metaphor combined with sense. The addition of a gloss or an explanation by the translator is to ensure that the metaphor will be understood.	G1	The translator uses the same metaphor from the SL and adds an explanation in the TL to make sure the readers understand its meaning.	3	3.6%
		H1	The original form of the ST metaphor is not retained in the translation of the TL; rather, it is replaced by a different metaphor that has a metaphorical equivalent. (This entails employing a TL metaphor that is conceptually comparable to the SL metaphor in terms of its meaning/indication.)	3	3.6%
		H2	The metaphor from the ST is used in the TL, but it is an unnatural option for the TL, which means that it is made up on the basis of the ST one. The translator creates a metaphor in the target language that is influenced by or built upon the metaphor in the source text.		
TOTAL				**82**	**100%**

To sum up, the data presented in Table 2 gives us a clear view of how often Newmark's metaphor translation methods were used in this study. It also shows us when these methods were not followed or used, which helps us understand the choices and changes made by the TT (Arabic) Translator when translating metaphors.

Table 3 Examples of New Variants or Procedures H1 and H2

New Procedure	ST	TT	Back Translation
H1: The original form of the ST metaphor is not retained in the translation of the TL; rather, it is replaced by a different metaphor that has a metaphorical equivalent. (This entails employing a TL metaphor that is conceptually comparable to the SL metaphor in terms of its meaning/indication.)	Example 7: I know that our time together will bring many blessings to both your people and mine.	أعلم أن وقتنا معًا سيجلب الكثير من العلاقات جديدة لشعبك وشعبي. aelam 'ana waqtana mean sayajlib alkathir min alealaqat jadidatan lishaebik washaebi	I know our time together will bring many new relationships to your people and mine.
	Example 30: This is a battle between barbaric criminals who seek to obliterate human life, and decent people of all religions who seek to protect it.	إنها معركة بين الجهلاء الذين يسعون إلى طمس حياة الإنسان، وأشخاص محترمون من جميع الأديان يسعون إلى حمايتها. iinaha maerakat bayn aljuhala' aladhin yaseawn 'iilaa tams hayaat al'iinsani, wa'ashkhas muhtaramun min jamie al'adyan yaseawn 'iilaa himayitiha	It is a battle between ignorant people who seek to obliterate human life, and decent people of all faiths who seek to protect it.
H2: The metaphor from the ST is used in the TL, but it is an unnatural option for the TL, which means that it is made up on the basis of the ST one. The translator creates a metaphor in the target language that is influenced by or built upon the metaphor in the source text.	Example 71: King Salman, I thank you for the creation of this great moment in history, and for your massive investment in America, its industry and its jobs. I also thank you for investing in the future of this part of the world.	الملك سلمان، أشكرك على خلق هذا الدعم التاريخي، وعلى استثماراتك الضخمة في أمريكا، وصناعتها ووظائفها. كما أشكركم على الاستثمار في مستقبل هذا الجزء من العالم. almalik silman, 'ashkuruk ealaa khalq hadha aldaem altaarikhii, waealaa aistithmaratik aldakhmat fi 'amrika, wasinaeatiha wawazayifaha. kama 'ashkurukum ealaa alaistithmar fi mustaqbal hadha aljuz' min alealami.	King Salman, I thank you for creating this historic support, and for your huge investments in America, its industry and its jobs. I also thank you for investing in the future of this part of the world.
	Example 81: These are the blessings of prosperity and peace. These are the desires that burn with a righteous flame in every human heart. And these are the just demands of our beloved peoples.	هذه هي نعمة الرخاء والسالم. هذه هي الرغبات التي تشتعل بحرقة في قلب كل إنسان. وهذه مطالب عادلة لشعوبنا الحبيبة. hadhih hi niemat alrakha' walsalami. hadhih hi alraghabat alati tashtaeil biharqat fi qalb kuli 'iinsani. wahadhih matalib eadilat lishueubina alhabibati.	This is the blessing of prosperity and peace. These are the desires that burn with burning in the heart of every human being. These are just demanding of our beloved peoples.

Table 3 above depicts examples of the novel procedures H1 and H2, which use the target language (TL) metaphors to convey similar meanings as the source language (SL) metaphors. In short using comparable metaphors to express the SL metaphors' ideas, as demonstrated in examples 7, 30, 60 for H1, and examples 71, 81 for H2. For instance, in example 30, the TL metaphor "الجهلاء" ("aljuhala) is employed to convey "ignorant people," while the SL metaphor "barbaric" signifies

"uncivilized" or "savage." The innovative translation approach, H1, employs Arabic metaphors akin to specific SL metaphors within political discourse, when direct equivalence is absent as seen in examples 30, 60, and 7, where either a direct TL counterpart is absent or differing cultural and linguistic attributes are present.

Additionally, the translator utilizes the SL metaphorical expressions "great moment and flame" in examples 71 and 81, even though they lack equivalents in Arabic. This situation prompts the use of the new translation approach, H2, to enhance clarity in the TL translation. In conclusion, while Newmark's metaphor translation procedures do enhance the translation process, the complexity of translating political discourse metaphors from ST to TT necessitated the introduction of new procedures (H1 & H2) to effectively address unique or complex ST metaphors.

5.   CONCLUSION

This study examines metaphor translation in political speeches from English to Arabic, focusing on the approaches adopted by Arabic translators to achieve accurate renditions. The findings reveal the frequency of Newmark's metaphor translation methods employed in this study. Additionally, it highlights instances where these methods were not used, the choices made and changes or new procedures implemented by the Arabic translator. In short, the study provides valuable insights into the metaphor translation in political discourse emphasizing careful analysis and a comprehensive understanding of both languages and cultures.

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