

# THINKING ARABIC TRANSLATION

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A Course in Translation Method:  
Arabic to English

*Supplement*

James Dickins

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# Introduction to *Thinking Arabic* *Translation: Supplement*

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*Thinking Arabic Translation: Supplement* is designed to be used alongside *Thinking Arabic Translation* (Dickins, Hervey and Higgins 2002). The *Supplement* contains two sorts of material. The first is textual material further developing the translation issues discussed in the main text of *Thinking Arabic Translation*. The second is additional practicals, supplementing the practicals at the end of the chapters of *Thinking Arabic Translation*. The *Supplement* is particularly suitable for tutors teaching more intensive Arabic>English translation courses of three or more class hours per week.

Textual material in the *Supplement* is organised under section numbers in two ways. Where the material develops ideas specifically related to a particular section of *Thinking Arabic Translation*, it bears the same section number as the relevant material in that book. Where the material in the *Supplement* does not develop ideas specifically related to a particular section of *Thinking Arabic Translation*, but introduces new ideas, it is given a new section number not found in *Thinking Arabic Translation*.

Thus, Chapter 2 of the *Supplement* consists of four sections: 2.1.1, 2.1.5, 2.2.2.1 and 2.2.2.2. These correspond to identically numbered sections in *Thinking Arabic Translation* and specifically develop the ideas put forward in these sections in *Thinking Arabic Translation*.

In Chapter 1 of the *Supplement*, by contrast, the only section, 1.3.1, has no correspondent bearing the same number in *Thinking Arabic Translation*. Chapter 1 of *Thinking Arabic Translation* does, however, have a Section 1.3 (as well as a subsequent Section 4). Section 1.3.1 in the *Supplement* is, accordingly, intended not to develop the ideas in Section 1.3 in *Thinking Arabic Translation*, but to introduce new ideas dependent on those of Section 1.3.

Further materials for tutors relating to both *Thinking Arabic Translation* and this *Supplement* can be obtained directly from James Dickins at the

following address: Department of Arabic, School of Modern Languages and Cultures, Al-Qasimi Building, University of Durham, Elvet Hill Road, Durham DH1 3TU, United Kingdom (e-mail: James.Dickins@durham.ac.uk or James.Dickins@urz.uni-heidelberg.de). These materials include full discussions of the practicals given in this *Supplement*, covering, where appropriate, strategic decisions, possible translations, and decisions of detail. The further materials also include further handouts relating to *Thinking Arabic Translation* which considerations of space precluded us from including in the Tutor's Handbook to that book. Any comments on both *Thinking Arabic Translation* and this *Supplement* are welcome, particularly those relating to possible improvements. These can be sent direct to James Dickins at the above address.

The symbols used in the *Supplement* are the same as those for *Thinking Arabic Translation*, as follows:

- { } Indicates key elements in ST and/or TT where these might not otherwise be clear.
- ō Indicates zero elements in translation (translation by omission).
- Ch. Section reference to section in another chapter (e.g. Ch. 9.2.2 means 'Section 9.2.2').
- § Section reference to section in the same chapter.

Cross-references in this *Supplement* normally refer to material in *Thinking Arabic Translation*. Where they refer to material in the *Supplement* itself, this is marked with a preceding use of '*Supplement*' (thus, '*Supplement* § 5.2.2' means Section 5.2.2. of the same chapter of the *Supplement*).

There is supplementary material for all chapters of *Thinking Arabic Translation* except chapters 17 and 18.

# 1

## Preliminaries to translation as a process: *Supplement*

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### 1.3.1 Annotation: gist, exegesis and rephrasing

Good examples of exegetic translation, and also on occasion gist translation and even rephrasing, can be found in annotated texts. The following is part of the text of *معلقة لبديد*, one of the seven pre-Islamic odes known as the *معلقات*, with an accompanying commentary (in Arabic *شَرَح*) by *الزوزني* (n.d.: 125-127). Such ancient Arabic poetry makes wide use of vocabulary, word order, and to some extent also grammatical structures which were probably already archaic and confined to the poetic register when the poetry was first composed. Considered an essential element of the Arab literary heritage, the *معلقات* are studied as part of the school curriculum throughout the Arab world. Given their difficulty in terms of vocabulary, etc. they are universally studied together with a commentary on them.

In order to make the discussion of the material easier, the text of the relevant portion of *معلقة لبديد* is presented here with an interlinear-type English translation – i.e. an English translation which closely mirrors the structure and wording of the Arabic, and is inserted between each line of the original Arabic text. (Interlinear translation will be discussed further in Chapter 2.)

Note also that every line in a classical Arabic poem (*قصيدة*) is divided up into two halves or hemistiches ('hemistich' in Arabic being *مصراع* or *الشطر الاول* (شطر). The first half of the line is called the *صدر* 'chest' (also *الشطر الثاني* 'the second half'). These are separated by a gap in the text which is somewhat longer than that which standardly occurs between words. Thus in the first line of this poem the *صدر* is *عَفَتِ الدِّيارُ محلُّها فَمُقامُها* is *صدر* while the *عجز* is



عَفَتِ الدِّيَارُ مَحَلُّهَا فَمَقَامُهَا بِمَنَى تَأَبَّدَ غَوْلُهَا فَرَجَامُهَا. We have used the symbol // in the English translation to mark the break which occurs between the two hemistiches.

Parts of the original footnotes for lines 1 and 4 appear after the end of the extract. Translations of the footnote are added beneath the footnote itself. Note that other footnotes in the original commentary have not been included here. Elements omitted from the original footnotes of lines 1 and 4 are marked by [...] in the original Arabic, and by [...] in the English translation.

عَفَتِ الدِّيَارُ مَحَلُّهَا فَمَقَامُهَا بِمَنَى تَأَبَّدَ غَوْلُهَا فَرَجَامُهَا  
Have-disappeared the-camping-grounds – their-alighting-places and their-  
stopping-places // in Mina; have-become-deserted its[i.e. Mina's]-[Mount]-Ghaul and-its[i.e. Mina's]-[Mount]-Rijam.

فَمَدَافِعُ الرِّيَّانِ عُرِّيَ رَسْمُهَا خَلَقًا كَمَا ضَمَّنَ الوَحْيَ سَلَامُهَا  
The torrent-beds of [Mount] A1-Rayyan have-become-denuded their-trace  
// made-threadbare; just as have-encompassed the-writings (obj.) its-stones  
(subj.) [i.e. just as its stones have come to obliterate its writings].

دَمَنْ تَجَرَّمَ بَعْدَ عَهْدِ أَنْيْسِهَا حَجَاجٌ خَلَوْنَ حَلَالُهَا وَحَرَامُهَا  
ruins/dung-heaps have-passed since the-time of their-sociability // years,  
have-gone-by their-unhallowed and their-sacrosanct.

رَزَقَتْ مَرَابِيعَ النُّجُومِ وَصَابِهَا وَدَقُّ الرِّوَاعِدِ جَوْدُهَا فَرَاهُمَا  
[they] have-been-fed with-the-spring-rains of the-stars [adverbial  
accusative use of مَرَابِيع], and have struck-them // the-rain of the-  
thunder-clouds their-[i.e. the thunder clouds']-downpour and-their-shower.

مِنْ كُلِّ سَارِبَةٍ وَغَادٍ مُدْجِنٍ وَعَشِيَّةٍ مُتَجَاوِبٍ إِرْزَامُهَا  
from every night-cloud and darkening morning-cloud, // and late-evening  
answering-itself its-roar [i.e. every late evening cloud whose roar echoes  
back].

*Footnote to line 1 (beginning عفت الديار)*

عفا لازم متعد، يقال. عفت الريح المنزل وعفا المنزل نفسه عفوا وعفاء، وهو في البيت لازم. المل من الديار. ما حل فيه لأيام معدودة، والمقام منها ما طالت الإقامة به. منى موضع بحمى ضرية غير منى الحرم، ومنى ينصرف ولا ينصرف ويذكر ويؤنث. تأبد. توحش، وكذلك أبد يأبد أبودا. الغول والرجام. جبلان معروفان [...] يقول. عفت ديار الأحباب انمحت منازلهم ما كان منها للحلول دون الإقامة وما كان منها للإقامة، وهذه الديار كانت بالموضع المسمى منى، وقد توشحت الديار الغولية والديار الرجامية منها لارتحال قطانها واحتمال سكانها، الكناية في غولها ورجامها راجعة الى الديار، قوله تأبد غولها أي ديار غولها وديار رجامها، فحذف المضاف.

*Translation of footnote to line 1 (beginning عفت الديار)*

'[The verb] عفا is both transitive and intransitive; one may say عفت المنزل 'The wind obliterated [عفت] [the traces of] the camp-site', and 'The campsite itself was obliterated [عفا]. [The verbal noun is] عفو and عفاء. In this verse عفا is used intransitively. محل [Mahall] with respect to camping grounds is where one alights for a limited number of days. مقام [Muqam] is where one stays for a long time. منى [Muna] is a place in the sanctuary of Dirriya, not the Holy Sanctuary [of Mecca]. The word Muna can be [treated as] grammatically declinable or indeclinable, and it can be masculine or feminine. Al-Ghaul and Al-Rijam are both well-known mountains. [...] He [The poet] says: 'The tracings of the camping places of the beloved ones have been obliterated - those encampments where they set down without meaning to stay long, and those where they tarried. These camping sites were in a place called Mina. The camping places at Ghaul and Rijam have become deserted because of the passing on of their inhabitants and the moving away of those who dwelt in them.' There is a metonymy in غولها [its Ghaul] and رجامها [its Rijam] relating back to الديار [the camping grounds]; when he [the poet] says تأبد غولها ['its Ghaul has become deserted'] he means ديار غولها فرجامها ['the camping grounds of its Ghaul and its Rijam'].

*Footnote to line 4 (beginning رزقت مرابيع النجوم)*

[...] يقول. رزقت الديار والدمن امطار الانواء الربيعية فأمرعت وأعشبت وأصابها مطر ذوات الرعود من السحاب ما كان منه عاماً بالغاً مرضياً أهله وما كان منه ليناً سهلاً، وتحرير المعنى ان تلك الديار ممرعة معشبة لترادف الأمطار المختلفة عليها ونزاهتها.

*Translation of footnote to line 4 (beginning رزقت مرابيع النجوم)*

He [the poet] says: 'The camping grounds and the dung-heaps have been watered by the rains of the storms of spring. They have become fertile and green; thundery rain has struck them from the clouds – some of which [rain] was abundant and sufficient for the [its] people, and some of which was gentle and slight'. The gist of the meaning is: 'Those camping grounds are fertile and green because of the repeated rain of different types which has fallen on them, and because of the purity of this rain'.

The three basic types of intralingual translation which we have been discussing – gist translation, exegetic translation, and rephrasing – are all illustrated in the selected portions of this commentary.

Gist translation is illustrated in the footnote to line 4 ان تلك الديار ممرعة معشبة لترادف الأمطار المختلفة عليها ونزاهتها. Here the fact that this is a gist translation is explicitly signalled by the introductory phrase وتحرير المعنى.

Exegetic translation is most clearly illustrated in the additional information

in the footnotes about words or phrases. For example in the footnote to line 1, the exegesis provides glosses for the common nouns محل and مقام, and for the proper names منى, الغول and الرجاء. Under exegetic translation, one might also include the grammatical information which is frequently found in the footnotes, and which is provided because of the difficulty of the text (even for native Arabic speakers). Sometimes this is specifically related to the text itself; for instance, in the footnote to line 1, the commentary on the phrase الكناية في غولها ورجامها راجعة الى الديار، قوله تأبد غولها أي ديار غولها وديار رجاءها، فحذف المضاف. 'There is a metonymy in غولها [its Ghaul] and رجاءها [its Rijam] relating back to الديار [the camping grounds]. When he [the poet] says تأبد غولها ["its Ghaul has become deserted"] he means ديار غولها ورجاءها [the camping grounds of its Ghaul and its Rijam].' Elsewhere, however, the footnote contains a certain amount of more general grammatical information; for example in the footnote to line 1: عفا لازم ومتعد، يقال. عفت الريح: 1. عفا المنزل وعفا نفسه عفا وعفاء، وهو في البيت لازم. 'The verb] عفا is both transitive and intransitive; one may say عفت الريح المنزل 'The wind obliterated [عفت] the camp-site', and 'The campsite itself was obliterated [عفا]. [The verbal noun is] عفو and عفاء. In this verse عفا is used intransitively.' Here the information that عفا can be both transitive and intransitive, and that it has verbal nouns عفو and عفاء goes beyond simple commentary on the text itself. The same generalising form of grammatical exegesis can be seen in the statement (also in the footnote to line 1): ومنى 'The word Muna can be [treated as] grammatically declinable or indeclinable, and it can be masculine or feminine'.

Rephrasing, finally, is illustrated by the simple statements of the meaning of the text which are found in both the footnote to line 1 and that to line 4. For line 1 we find: يقول . عفت ديار الأحباب انمحت منازلهم ما كان منها: وللحلول دون الإقامة وما كان منها للإقامة، وهذه الديار كانت بالموضع المسمى منى ، وقد توشحت الديار الغولية والديار الرجائية منها 'He [the poet] says: 'The tracings of the camping places of the beloved ones have been obliterated – those encampments where they set down without meaning to stay long, and those where they tarried. These camping sites were in a place called Mina. The camping places at Ghaul and Rijam have become deserted because of the passing on of their inhabitants and the moving away of those who dwelt in them'. For line 4 we find ... يقول. رزقت الديار والدمن امطار الانواء الربيعية فأمرعت وأعشبت وأصابها مطر ذوات الرعود من السحائب ما كان منه عاماً بالغاً 'He [the poet] says: "The camping grounds and the dung-heaps have been watered by the rains of the storms of spring. They have become fertile and green; thundery rain has struck them from the clouds – some of which [rain] was abundant and sufficient for the [its] people, and some of which was gentle and slight".'

In all the examples we have been discussing the dividing-lines between

gist, exegesis, translation and comment are somewhat blurred. For instance, the phrase *تَأْبَدُ غَوْلُهَا فَرَجَامُهَا* (line 1 of the poem) is glossed in the commentary as *وقد توشحت الديار الغولية والديار الرجامية منها لارتحال قطانها واحتمال س كانها*. This has been described above as rephrasing. However, not only does this paraphrase contain additional information *لارتحال قطانها واحتمال سكانها*, which can be inferred from the poem, but which is not strictly speaking mentioned in the poem; the gloss, in addition, itself contains a rhetorically motivated doublet *ارتحال قطانها* and *احتمال سكانها*. This doublet involves both repetition of meaning (termed semantic repetition: cf. Ch. 5.2), and complex repetition of morphological patterns (*ارتحال* and *احتمال*, on the one hand, and *قطانها* and *سكانها* on the other) (termed pattern repetition: cf. Ch. 8.2.3.1). That is to say, although one might regard the gloss as essentially a paraphrase of the original poem, it nonetheless introduces certain additional elements, and therefore has some of the features of an exegesis.

In fact, things could not be otherwise. As this chapter has shown, it is difficult to control (and even to discern) how far an intralingual TT omits from, adds to, or faithfully reproduces the ST message content. As we shall see in the next chapter and throughout the course, what applies to intralingual translation applies a fortiori to translation proper: the *ST message content* can never be precisely reproduced in the TT, because of the fact that the two *forms of expression* are different.

**PRACTICAL 1****Practical 1.3 Gist translation***Assignment*

Produce an approximately 50-word gist translation of the following extract by the Arabic nationalist writer ساطع الحصري (cited in Johnstone 1991: 78–9). Say whether it is easier to produce the gist translation in Practical 1.2 or this one, and why.

*ST*

ومما هو جدير بالذكر والملاحظة أن جميع الآراء التي أُبديت والأبحاث التي نُشرت في «فكرة القومية» وفي «مبدأ حقوق القوميات» خلال القرن التاسع عشر كانت تنحصر بالشعوب الأوروبية وفروعها ولم تشمل الشعوب الآسيوية والإفريقية. لأن جميع المفكرين الأوروبيين كانوا يزعمون أن تلك الشعوب ليست «متأخرة» فحسب بل هي «محرومة من قابلية التقدم والتمدن» أيضا. ولذلك فهي لا تستحق الحقوق التي تستحقها الشعوب الأوروبية. حتى الكتاب الذين كانوا التزموا مبدأ «حقوق القوميات» أشد الالتزام، وتحمسوا له أشد التحمس، لم يخرجوا بآرائهم في ذلك خارج نطاق الأوروبيين، ولم يسلّموا بمثل تلك الحقوق للشعوب الآسيوية والإفريقية.

# 2

## Preliminaries to translation as a product: *Supplement*

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### 2.1.1 Interlinear translation

The translation of the extract from *معلقة لبيد*, given in *Supplement* Chapter 1 was virtually interlinear, although some concessions to English grammar were made in order to render it fairly easily comprehensible to an English reader. A more radically interlinear translation of the same piece would be something like the following (here ~ indicates that the two English words so linked correspond jointly to one Arabic word in the ST, and - indicates that the two English words so linked correspond to two linked Arabic forms or words in the ST):

عَفَتِ الدِّيَارُ مَحَلُّهَا فَمَقَامُهَا بِمَنْيَ تَأَبَّدَ غَوْلُهَا فَرَجَامُهَا  
Disappeared the-camping~grounds alighting~places-their and-stopping  
~places-their // in-Mina become~deserted Ghaul-its and-Rijam-its

فَمَدَافِعُ الرِّيَّانِ عُرِّيَ رَسْمُهَا خَلَقًا كَمَا ضَمَّنَ الوُحْيَ سَلَامُهَا  
And-torrent~beds The-Rayyan became~denuded trace~their threadbare //  
just~as encompassed the-writings stones-its

دَمْنٌ تَجَرَّمَ بَعْدَ عَهْدِ أَنْيْسِهَا حَجَاجٌ خَلَوْنَ حَلَالُهَا وَحَرَامُهَا  
dung~heaps passed since time sociability~their // years went~by  
unhallowed-their and-sacrosanct-their

رُزِقَتْ مَرَابِيعَ النُّجُومِ وَصَابَهَا وَدَقُّ الرُّوَاعِدِ جَوْدُهَا فَرَاهُمَا  
were~fed spring~rains the-stars and-struck-them // rain the-thunderclouds  
downpour~their and-shower-their

من كلِّ سَارِيَةٍ وَغَادٍ مُدْجِنٍ وَعَشِيَّةٍ مُتَجَاوِبٍ إِرْزَامُهَا  
 from every night~cloud and~môrning~cloud darkéning'// and~lâte~evening  
 answering~itself roar-its

As is apparent from the incomprehensibility of the English TT here, interlinear translation is normally only employed where the purpose of the translation is to shed light on the structure of the ST. It is mainly used in descriptive linguistics, where the writer is discussing examples from a language or languages which he or she does not expect the reader to know; the interlinear translation provides a gloss which preserves the structure of the original. Sometimes, interlinear translation may be used in language teaching and related areas; one could imagine this interlinear translation of *معلقة لبيد* being used to make it easier for students studying the text to grasp both its grammatical structure and the meaning.

### 2.1.5 From interlinear to free translation

The word 'idiom' in English has two senses which or of relevance here: 1. an expression whose meaning cannot be inferred from the denotative meanings (Chapter 5) of the words that constitute it, and the meanings of the grammatical relations (cf. Chapter 8) between these words (e.g. 'that's a different kettle of fish', 'he knows his onions'); 2. linguistic usage that is grammatical and natural-sounding to native speakers of a language in the context in which it is used (definitions adapted from Collins English Dictionary). In fact, many expressions which are idioms in the second sense (i.e. they sound natural in the context in which they are used) are not idioms in the first sense, since their meaning can be predicted from their constituent words and the meanings of the grammatical relations between these words. However, almost all expressions which are idioms in the first sense are also idioms in the second sense; i.e. they sound natural if used in appropriate contexts.

The notion of idiomizing translation properly speaking relates to the second sense of 'idiom' given above; i.e. it is a translation which sounds natural if used in an appropriate context. Accordingly, an idiomizing translation will very likely (but not necessarily) use typical TL phonic or rhythmic patterns (cf. Chapter 6). It is also, however, likely to make use of TL idioms in the first sense of 'idiom' given above, since, as already noted, idioms in the first sense tend also to be idiomatic in the second sense, at least when used in appropriate contexts. Idiomizing translations are designed to give an easy read, even if this means sacrificing nuances of meaning or tone. They are also by definition idiomatic – but no more so than most literal, faithful, balanced or free translation.

### 2.2.2.1 Translation by omission

Wherever omission reduces the specificity of the information regarding a particular person, thing, process, etc. which is being referred to, it is also a case of *generalizing translation*; cf. Ch. 5.1.3.

### 2.2.2.2 Translation by addition

Wherever addition provides additional specification regarding a particular person, thing, process, etc. which is being referred to, it is also a case of *particularizing translation*; cf. Ch. 5.1.3.

## PRACTICAL 2

### Practical 2.3 Literal vs. free translation

#### *Assignment*

Consider the degree to which the following two English translations exhibit free or literal approaches to translation. What types of audience do you think each of the translations would be most appropriate for?

The following considerations (perhaps amongst others) should be useful for your discussion:

1. The degree to which the word-order of the ST is maintained.
2. The degree to which the word structure of the ST is maintained (i.e. the extent to which one word in the ST corresponds to one word in the TT).
3. The degree to which the grammatical structure of the ST is maintained.
4. The degree to which the contents (i.e. meaning) is maintained.
5. The degree to which the verse form of the ST is maintained. Arabic verse forms are discussed in more detail in Ch. 7.2.1.2; here it is sufficient to consider the degree to which the hemistich structure (cf. *Supplement* Ch. 1.3.1) of the ST is maintained in the TT.

#### *Contextual information*

The following are two translations of the first five lines of *معلقة لبيد*. The first translation is from Arberry, *The seven odes* (1957: 142). The second translation, which follows, is from *Desert tracings* by Sells (1989). The Arabic original is included with both translations for ease of cross-reference. The interlinear-type translation given in Chapter 1 may also be of use, as may the more radically interlinear translation given earlier in this chapter (especially for the meaning of individual words).



*Arabic text plus Arberry's translation*

عَفَتِ الدِّيَارُ مَحَلُّهَا فَمُقَامُهَا بِمَنْى تَأَبَّدَ غَوْلُهَا فَرَجَامُهَا  
 The abodes are desolate, hálting-place and encampment too,  
 at Miná; deserted lies Ghaul, deserted alike Rijám,

فَمَدَافِعُ الرِّيَّانِ عُرِّيَ رَسْمُهَا خَلَقًا كَمَا ضَمَّنَ الوُحْيَ سَلَامُهَا  
 and the torrent-beds of Er-Raiyán – naked shows their trace,  
 rubbed smooth, like letterings long scored on a stony slab;

دَمْنٌ تَجَرَّمَ بَعْدَ عَهْدِ أَنْيْسِهَا حَجَاجٌ خَلَوْنَ حَالَهَا وَحَرَامُهَا  
 blackened orts that, since the time their inhabitants tarried there,  
 many years have passed over, months unhallowed and sacrosanct.

رُزِقَتْ مَرَابِيعَ النُّجُومِ وَصَابَهَا وَدَقُّ الرُّوَاعِدِ جَوْدُهَا فَرَاهُمَا  
 The star-born showers of Spring have fed them, the outpouring  
 of thundercloud, great deluge and gentle following rain,

مِنْ كُلِّ سَارِبَةٍ وَغَادٍ مُدْجِنٍ وَعَاشِيَةٍ مُتَجَاوِبِ إِرْزَامِهَا  
 the cloud that travels by night, the sombre pall of morn,  
 the outspread mantle of eve with muttering antiphon

*Arabic text plus Sells' translation*

عَفَتِ الدِّيَارُ مَحَلُّهَا فَمَقَامُهَا بِمَنْى تَأَبَّدَ غَوْلُهَا فَرَجَامُهَا  
 The tent marks at Mínan are worn away,  
 where she encamped  
 and where she alighted,  
 Ghawl and Rijám left to the wild,

فَمَدَافِعُ الرِّيَّانِ عُرِّيَ رَسْمُهَا خَلَقًا كَمَا ضَمِنَ الوُحْيِ سَلَامُهَا  
 And the torrent beds of Rayyán  
 naked tracings,  
 worn thin, like inscriptions  
 carved in flattened stones,

دَمِنْ تَجَرَّمَ بَعْدَ عَهْدِ أَنْيْسِهَا حِجَاجٌ خَلَوْنَ حَلَالُهَا وَحَرَامُهَا  
 Dung-stained ground  
 that tells the years passed  
 since human presence, months of peace  
 gone by, and months of war,

رُزِقَتْ مَرَابِيعَ النُّجُومِ وَصَابَهَا وَدَقُّ الرُّوَاعِدِ جَوْدُهَا فَرِهَامُهَا  
 Replenished by the rain stars  
 of spring, and struck  
 by thunderclap downpour, or steady,  
 fine-dropped silken rains,

مِنْ كُلِّ سَارِبَةٍ وَغَادٍ مُدَجِّنٍ وَعَشِيَّةٍ مُتَجَاوِبِ إِرْزَامُهَا  
 From every kind of cloud  
 passing at night,  
 darkening the morning,  
 or rumbling in peals across the evening sky.

# 3

## Cultural transposition: *Supplement*

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### 3.1 BASIC PRINCIPLES

A fairly extreme example of the difficulty posed by cultural difference is provided by the term كَرِيم. According to Sells, كَرِيم as used originally in pre-Islamic Arabia is ‘an untranslatable term usually rendered as “generous” or “noble”: the centrepiece of tribal ethos, symbolized through the *naqa* [ناقاة] sacrifice and the feeding of the tribe, the unflinching defence of the clan in battle, the lavish wine bouts and banquets, and, in a more abstract sense, the refusal to hoard one’s life. The Qur’an gave the *karim* a more ethical and religious dimension, but maintained its centrality as a human ideal’ (Sells 1989: 77-8).

### 3.3. CALQUE

Sometimes calques generate further quasi-calques in the TL. So, in addition to ألقى ضوءاً على for ‘to shed/throw light on’, forms are encountered such as سَلَطَ الأضواء على. It is, however, impossible to say in English ‘shed lights on’. In using calque, it is clearly important to get the form right. A failed calque may sound endearing (as does a lot of ‘foreignerese’), or it may jar with speakers of the TL. In either case, it is likely to distract from the intended message.

**PRACTICAL 3****Practical 3.2 (*extension*) Cultural transposition**

(iv) Underline any words and phrases which raised cultural issues in your translation. Now, produce a translation of this first paragraph aimed not at the general museum-going public, but for an academic journal whose readership was expected to have specialist existing knowledge of Sudanese culture.

**Practical 3.3 Cultural transposition***Assignment*

Consider the following translation (St. John 1999: 7–8). What different techniques of cultural transposition are used by the translator? What motivations might there be for adopting these different approaches at different points in the translation?

*Contextual information*

This text is taken from the short story *حقل البنفسج* by the Syrian writer زكريا تامر. In this part of the story, the hero محمد is infatuated with an unknown young woman, whom he briefly glimpsed in a field of violets, and dreams of winning her heart. He is currently walking around in a confused day-dream.

*ST*

وقادته خطواته الى مسجد كبير، وكان يجلس في داخله شيخ له لحية بيضاء، تحلق حوله عدد من الرجال. وكان الشيخ يتكلم عن الله والشيطان:

« الله هو خالق كل الاشياء، وجميع المخلوقات لا تفعل شيئاً الا بأمره. »  
 فقال محمد لنفسه: اذن يستطيع الله مساعدتي على تحقيق أمنيتي.  
 وقال الشيخ: إبليس عدو البشر.. انه الشر.»  
 وغادر محمد المسجد بينما كانت دماء شرابينه أصواتا تتوسل بلهفة، وتهتف ضارعة: يا الله.

*TT*

His feet led him to a large mosque, and inside it sat a religious teacher with a white beard. Several men were gathered round him and he was talking about God and the Devil.

‘Allah is the Creator of all things, and no creature can do anything unless He wills it.’

‘So Allah can help me realize my dream,’ said Mohammed to himself. The teacher continued.

‘Satan is the enemy of Man – he is evil.’

Mohammed left the mosque, and as he did so, the blood in his veins became a mass of imploring voices, calling out woefully: ‘Oh God.’

# 4

## Compensation: *Supplement*

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### 4.1 BASIC PRINCIPLES

A good example of the difference between compensation and communicative translation is provided by the fact that the standard English equivalent of شرطة مكافحة الشغب is 'riot police' (rather than 'anti-riot police', or 'riot combat police', etc.). The translation 'riot police' for شرطة مكافحة الشغب, or شرطة مكافحة الشغب for 'riot police', does not therefore involve compensation, despite the obvious differences between the Arabic and English forms.

### 4.2 CATEGORIES OF COMPENSATION

Another example of compensation in place, from السيدة ومراته في مصر by بيرم التونسي, occurs where the wife is complaining about the treatment she receives from a female Egyptian customs official. The wife says: يا ما انا منكادة من المرة الخنزيرة اللي في الجمرك دي. This is translated as: 'Really, it's just that woman at the customs got my goat by being piggish to me' (Foreman 1996: 35). Here the translator has chosen not to translate the phrase المرة الخنزيرة as 'piggish woman', or even 'pig of a woman', but has opted for compensation in place 'by being piggish to me' (as well as introducing a pun of his own – i.e. a further element of compensation in kind – through the use of 'has got my goat').

**PRACTICAL 4****Practical 4.3 Compensation***Assignment*

- (i) Discuss the strategic decisions that you have to take before starting detailed translation of the following text, and outline and justify the strategy you adopt. Pay particular attention to issues of compensation. You are to translate this text for the general reader with no specialist knowledge about Lebanon, for a book entitled *The Lebanese civil war: Arab perspectives*.
- (ii) Translate the text into English.
- (iii) Explain the decisions of detail which you made in producing your TT. For each decision of detail, identify (a) whether there is compensation or not; and where there is compensation: (b) what is lost in the TT; (c) what compensates for this loss in the TT; and (d) how it does so.

*Contextual information*

This text is taken from the start of a book entitled سقوط الإمبراطورية اللبنانية، by فؤاد مطر (1984, vol. 1: 7). The book deals with the breakdown of the political consensus in Lebanon in the mid-1970s, and the ensuing civil war.

*ST*

قد يمر وقت طويل قبل أن يصبح في وسعنا فهم حقائق الحرب اللبنانية التي عصفت بهذا الوطن الصغير فدمّرتة كما لم تدمر حرب من قبل ، ومن هذا النوع ، وطننا من الأوطان في العالم .  
وهذه الحرب التي بدأت في ١٣ نيسان (أبريل) ١٩٧٥ واستمرت قرابة سنتين ، لها خلفيات يمكن القول إنها تكونت مع ولادة لبنان المستقل في العام ١٩٤٣ واستمرت تنمو على الخطأ ، ثم نشأت ظروف موضوعية ، ساعدت على تكريس الخطأ ، إلى أن كانت لحظة الانفجار ، فإذا بها لحظة قاسية جدا حولت الوطن الصغير إلى ساحة حرب لم يسجل التاريخ الحديث ، على الأقل ، مثيلاً لها .  
إن الحرب اللبنانية من النوع الذي يصعب تحديد هويته ، فلا هي طائفية فقط ، ولا هي لبنانية - فلسطينية فقط ، ولا هي إصلاحية فقط . إنها كل هذه الأمور وغيرها مجتمعة .

# 5

## Denotative meaning and translation issues:

### *Supplement*

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#### 5.1 DENOTATIVE MEANING

Denotative meaning is also known as ‘cognitive’, or ‘propositional’ meaning (cf. Baker 1992:13-14). It is also sometimes referred to as ‘literal’ meaning. In this book, we have avoided the use of ‘literal’ in technical discussion (although it is used informally in many places in the book in roughly the sense of ‘denotative’), since ‘literal’ also has a number of other uses. Most important of these, from the point of view of this book, are the use of ‘literal’ in the phrase ‘literal translation’ (Ch. 2.1.2), and ‘literal’ meaning non-metaphorical (cf. Chapter 11).

In the case of words, it is denotative meanings that are given in dictionary definitions. In fact, words may, and typically do, have more than one denotative meaning. The situation in which a word has more than one different and distinct denotative meaning – or more technically more than one *sense* – is known as polysemy. Polysemy can be illustrated by the word *plain*, which means (i) ‘clear’ (as in ‘a plain sky’), (ii) ‘unadorned’ (as in ‘a plain paper bag’), and (iii) ‘obvious’ (as in ‘it’s a plain case of forgery’). There are sometimes problems in deciding between cases where two uses of a word represent more than one sense – i.e. cases of polysemy – and where the two uses in question are merely ‘variants’ of a single overall sense. These need not, however, concern us here, since they are not typically of great importance for translation.

(There are also problems in deciding between what constitutes two senses of a single word, and cases where two words happen to sound the same. This latter situation is known as *homonymy*. An example of homonymy which is fairly frequently quoted is *bank* = ‘side of a river’ vs. *bank* = ‘institution for



the investment and borrowing of money'. Again, these are not of great importance for translation, and need not concern us here.)

A large proportion of a language's vocabulary is traditionally regarded as polysemous (or polysemic). Typically dictionaries list polysemous words under single heads, separating what they regard as the distinct senses of a word by a semi-colon, and what are regarded as merely variants of a single sense by a comma (the Hans Wehr *Dictionary of modern written Arabic*, for example, does this).

Unfortunately, even dictionary definitions of words are not without their problems. This is because they impose, by abstraction and crystallization of one core sense (in the case of non-polysemous, or *monosemous*, words) or a series of core senses (in the case of polysemous words), a rigidity of meaning that words do not often show in reality. In addition, once words are put into a context, their denotative meanings become even more flexible. These two facts make it difficult to pin down the precise denotative meanings in any text of any complexity. The more literary the text, the more this is so; but it is true even of the most soberly informative texts. In this chapter, we shall discuss three degrees of semantic equivalence – that is, how close given expressions are to having identical denotative meanings.

### 5.1.2 Hyperonymy-hyponymy

An example where translators deviate from the pattern of translating an Arabic pronoun by a simple English pronoun hyperonym is al-Hilali and Khan's translation of the initial word *قُلْ* in *سورة الإخلاق*, where they have 'Say, O Muhammad' (cited in Ch. 1.5). Here, 'O Muhammad' goes beyond relaying the fact that this is the equivalent of the Arabic masculine singular, to identifying precisely who it is that *قُلْ* refers to.

### 5.1.3 Particularizing translation and generalizing translation

Other situations in which particularization is acceptable include the following:

- (i) where the context implies something which is typically referred to in more specific terms in the TL than in the SL; thus an *إنذار* issued by a military commander is likely to be an 'ultimatum' rather than simply a 'warning'; a *بيان* in a similar context is likely to be a 'proclamation' or a 'communique' rather than a 'statement'; *غارات* in the context of NATO raids on Kosovo are likely to be 'strikes' or 'air-strikes' rather than 'attacks';
- (ii) where the TL typically makes use of a specific collocation (cf. Ch. 6.6) which happens to involve a hyponym of the TL form; for example *كنز ثمين* is likely to be translated as 'priceless treasure', rather than 'valuable treasure',

since 'priceless treasure' is the more common collocation in English.

Particularizing translation may also be used for other reasons. For example, *كنيسة قديمة* might be translated as 'ancient church' in a particular context where this was appropriate to avoid the ambiguity of 'old church', since this latter could be interpreted to mean 'former church' instead of the intended 'old [= not new] church'. That is to say, 'old' in English is polysemous between the two senses of 'old' and 'former', and in this context, it would not necessarily be clear to the reader which of the two senses was intended.

Other situations in which generalization is acceptable include:

- (i) where the context implies something which is typically referred to in more specific terms in the SL than in the TL. For instance, it is common to refer to a room as *ضيق* in Arabic, to mean not just that it is small but that it is rather too small. In many contexts in English, however, a suitable translation of *حجرة ضيقة* would be the generalizing 'small room', a particularizing translation such as 'cramped room' being reserved for contexts in which it was important to stress that the room was too small. Similarly, *عصفور* in Arabic is regularly used to refer to any small bird. In translating the phrase *عصفور صغير*, it is likely to be sufficient to say 'small bird', although properly speaking what is being meant is a specific small member of the class of small birds (i.e. a bird that is small even among small birds);
- (ii) where the TL typically makes use of a specific collocation (cf. Ch. 6.6) which involves a hyperonym of the SL form. For instance, *للهلة الأولى* denotatively means 'for the first moment'. However, in English the normal phrase is 'for the first time'. Similarly *رث* means 'old and worn out' of clothes. However, in many contexts *ملابس رثة* would be happily translatable by the standard collocation 'old clothes'.

Generalizing translation can also be used for many other reasons. Consider the following:

ومهما تكون المشاكل القانونية المترتبة على تدخل حلف الناتو والتي  
كنت نفسي قد أشرت إليها منذ أيام قليلة [...]

This has been translated (Ives 999:11) as:

Whatever the legal problems linked to NATO intervention, to which I myself have recently referred [...]

Here the generalizing form 'recently' is preferred to the denotative equivalent 'a few days ago' mainly because it results in a less wordy overall phrase. ('Recently' also allows the translator to use the present perfect 'have ... referred' which adds a sense of immediacy and relevance to the statement; 'a few days ago' would require the use of the simple past 'referred'.)

Generalizing translation is *not* acceptable if the TL does offer suitable alternatives, or if the omitted details are important in the ST but not implied

or compensated for in the TT context. An example of this would seem to be al-Hilali and Khan's translation of *سورة الإخلاص* in *قُلْ* discussed above (§ 5.1.2). It seems likely that the inclusion of the compensatory phrase 'O Muhammad' is motivated here by the perception of the translators that is not acceptable in this context to present the possibility that the reader (or some other person than the Prophet Muhammad) is being addressed.

For another example of particularizing translation, consider the word *صهر*, which means 'husband of one's daughter, son-in-law; husband of one's sister, brother-in-law' (Wehr); these different possibilities can be taken as 'variants' of a single sense (i.e. this is not a case of polysemy; cf. *Supplement* § 5.1). Translating *صهر* as 'son-in-law' in a particular case would be an example of particularizing translation, since it would explicitly rule out a part of what can be meant by *صهر* (i.e. 'brother-in-law').

Generalization is acceptable if the TL offers no suitable alternative and the omitted detail is either unimportant in the ST or is implied in the TT context. For instance, *قدر* and *قدرة* in Sudanese Arabic are both words for cooking pot, the difference being that *قدر* refers to something bigger than *قدرة*. For most translation purposes into English, however, the distinction could probably be ignored, and 'cooking pot' would be a sufficient translation.

#### 5.1.4 Partially overlapping translation

The typical uses of partially overlapping translation parallel those of particularizing translation and generalizing translation. Thus partially overlapping translation may be used where the context implies something which is typically referred to by a term in the TL whose denotative meaning overlaps with the denotative meaning of the SL term. For example a poem by the Syrian poet *نزار قباني* contains the line *طاردوها كعصفور ربيعي الى ان قتلوها*. This has been translated (Rolph 1995: 23) as 'They attacked her like a young sparrow until they killed her'. *ربيعي* here overlaps in meaning with 'young'. Some but not all 'spring sparrows' are young, and some but not all young sparrows are 'spring sparrows' (one could have a sparrow which was, abnormally, born in summer). 'Spring sparrow', however, is a problematic phrase in English; it does not have a clear meaning, and there is nothing in this overall context to make the intended meaning clearer in the English ('spring sparrow' also yields an unfortunate collocative clash with 'spring chicken'; cf. Ch. 6.6). Accordingly, the translator has chosen a more contextually acceptable overlapping expression.

Partially overlapping translation may also be used where the TL typically makes use of a specific collocation (Ch. 6.6) which happens to overlap in meaning with the meaning of the SL term. An example of this is *وخير شاهد على ذلك*, which is typically translated as 'the clearest evidence of this' ('clearest evidence' being a more standard collocation in English than the

literal 'best evidence'). 'Clear/clearest' and خير overlap with one another in meaning; some but not all good things are clear, and some but not all clear things are good. Another example is 'coup perpetrators' for رجال الانقلابات, which might typically be translated as 'coup perpetrators' or '[the] perpetrators of coups' ('coup men' or 'men of coups' being quite abnormal in English). 'Perpetrators' and رجال overlap with one another; some but not all perpetrators are men (other perpetrators, even of coups, might be women), and some but not all men are perpetrators (there are, or could no doubt be, men who have never perpetrated anything in their lives).

## 5.2 SEMANTIC REPETITION IN ARABIC

It will be seen that both semantic repetition and other forms of parallelism typically involve repetition of the same grammatical category or categories. In the case of single words, this is fairly trivial; what is repeated is a noun or a verb or whatever. In the case of repetition of whole phrases, however, the effect can be much more striking. Consider the following from an article by the Egyptian journalist مصطفى أمين from الشرق الاوسط, 21 September 1982 :

[..] إذا دافع عن قضية الحرية وحقوق الإنسان، إذا احتضن كل مظلوم،  
إذا قاوم الفساد، إذا ضرب الأمثلة في القدوة الصالحة، إذا حول الكلمات  
إلى افعال والوعود إلى حقائق [...]

This extract makes use of four verb-object combinations: احتضن كل مظلوم, حول الكلمات [إلى], ضرب الأمثلة [في القدوة الصالحة], قاوم الفساد, and [إلى] حقائق, as well as the initial verb-prepositional object combination دافع عن قضية الحرية وحقوق الإنسان. The parallelism is reinforced by the fact that each of these phrases begins with إذا.

### 5.2.2 List restructuring

One particularly striking feature of parallelism in Arabic is a tendency to use fairly long lists of terms belonging to the same semantic field. The following examples are taken from a political article in the Egyptian magazine روز اليوسف (no. 3521, Dec. 4, 1995), which criticizes the use of political violence in the Middle East. They compare the behaviour of the Prophet Adam with that of extremist political groups and individuals in the modern Middle East (from Hetherington 1996: 19, 20):

لقد اختار آدم العقل فكسب الدين والحياء .. منتهى الحكمة والذكاء ..

لكن أحفاده في الشرق الاوسط نسوا خبرته. وتجاهلوا اختياره ..  
فأغلقوا العقل وفتحو النيران .. وغاصوا في الكتب المقدسة لكنهم لم  
ينتبهوا فيها إلا لـ[لعنف والغضب، والتعصب، والاستعلاء، والرفض،  
والتمرد، والالم، والفتنة] {...}

إن هؤلاء [يقتلون باسم الله .. ويسلحون، يفجرون، ويذبحون،  
ويغسلون العقول، يكسرون العظام، ويحرمون الإبداع] أيضا باسم الله!

In the case of the first extract a translation of the list in curly brackets along the lines ‘violence, anger, fanaticism, false superiority, bigotry, insurrection, pain and infighting’ would clearly be possible, as would a translation along the lines ‘kill, take up arms, detonate bombs, massacre, brainwash, break bones, and forbid originality’ in the case of the second extract. In both cases, however, such a translation seems a little strained in English, reflecting the tendency of English to avoid such long lists.

In some contexts an appropriate strategy in translating long lists into English is simply to reduce the listed elements. Thus ‘ties of blood and marriage’ would in many contexts be a sufficient translation of *علاقات القربى والنسب والمصاهرة* (cf. Humphrys 1999: 7); and similarly, ‘based upon kinship, marriage, and ethnic and tribal origin’ would be a sufficient translation of *على اساس القرابة والزواج والاصل الإثني والعائلي والقبلي* (cf. Humphrys 1999: 7).

One function of listing in Arabic seems to be to suggest an overall scene or situation by extensive exemplification of aspects of that scene or situation. In a number of contexts an appropriate strategy in translating into English is to reduce the listed elements, and to substitute other information which provides a summary account of the overall scene or situation. Consider the following, which describes the behaviour of senior military figures in the Arab world:

فهم، كالسياسيين، يصرون على ممارسة الوجاهة بجميع فروعها:  
{البيوت المفتوحة، القصور، الحرس الخاص، الزلم، البذج، واقتناء ما  
عز من الألبسة والحلى والحلل.

This might be translated (cf. Humphrys 1999: 7-8) as:

Like politicians, they insist upon all the outward trappings of privilege:  
mansions, palaces, bodyguards, and all the finery that money can buy.

This translation omits specific translation of the later listed elements in the Arabic, *الزلم، البذج، واقتناء ما عز من الألبسة والحلى والحلل*, utilizing instead the phrase ‘all the finery which money can buy’; i.e. the English

summarizes while the Arabic exemplifies.

The following is a fairly similar example from the same book:

«كنا نخافه، يدخل الى قاعة الاجتماعات {يحاضر ويتوعد، يهدد ويحذر}».

This has been translated (Humphrys 1999: 3) as:

“We fear the officer forcing his way into civilian life, {imposing his will and laying the law down}.”

Here again the English provides a summary account of the officer’s behaviour, using the two parallel composite phrases ‘imposing his will’ and ‘laying the law down’, while the Arabic exemplifies the kind of things he does through the four verbs يحاضر ويتوعد، يهدد ويحذر.

Because English does not so readily use exemplification through listing to suggest an overall scene or situation as does Arabic, it is sometimes appropriate when translating into English to insert a summary phrase, even when it seems reasonable to retain all or most of the elements of the original Arabic list. Consider the following, which is taken from an account of the internal leadership elections of the Phalange (الكتائب) party in Lebanon in 1999.

شبح ١٩٩٢ كان حاضرا بقوة مع كل {الاجتماعات والتحالفات واللقاءات الجانبية} {على الشرفات وفي المكاتب الجانبية وعلى السلم الخارجي}.

This has been translated (Jones 1999: 8) as follows:

The ghost of 1992 was present in force, with {countless meetings} taking place in any available space: {on the balconies, in side offices, and even on the outside stairs}.

The Arabic ST here has two lists: [كل] الاجتماعات والتحالفات واللقاءات الجانبية، and على الشرفات وفي المكاتب الجانبية وعلى السلم الخارجي. The first of these is summarized in English as ‘countless meetings’, while the second is retained in full (and in fact strengthened by the addition of ‘even’ before ‘on the balconies’). However, before the second list in the English, the translator has inserted the additional summarizing phrase ‘in every available space’. (The translation also contains a somewhat unfortunate mixed metaphor ‘ghost [...] present in force’; cf. Ch. 11.4.)

**PRACTICAL 5****Practical 5.3 Semantic repetition, parallelism and list restructuring***Assignment*

- (i) Discuss the strategic problems confronting the translator of the following text, and outline your strategy for dealing with them. You are to translate the text as part of an 'From the Arab Press' section of the English version of the Egyptian daily newspaper الأهرام (the English-language version of this has a certain degree of independence from official political pressure). The intended readership is mainly expatriate English-speakers in Egypt, plus some other readers worldwide, who are likely to have quite a good knowledge of Middle Eastern culture and affairs.
- (ii) Translate the text into English.
- (iii) Explain the decisions of detail you made in producing your translation.

*Contextual information*

This passage is taken an article entitled from the weekly Egyptian news magazine روز اليوسف (no. 3521, Dec. 4, 1995). The article by عادل لعبة الضفادع العقارب في عواصم الشرق الاوسط is entitled. The general theme of the article is the negative political effects of religious fundamentalism in the Middle East (text taken from Hetherington 1996: 34-35). This particular section deals with the behaviour of religious extremists.

ST

إن الرسول الكريم (صلعم) تتبأ في حديث شريف بأن اليهود سيتفرقون على ٧١ أو ٧٢ فرقة. وكذلك النصارى .. أما المسلمون فسيتفرقون على ٧٢ فرقة. والمجموع ٣١٥ أو ٣١٧ فرقة .. كل فرقة انقسمت إلى مجموعات .. كل مجموعة ترى أنها الوحيدة التي على صواب، وترى غيرها على ضلال .. وكل مجموعة يرى اتباعها انهم أوليا الله، وجند الله، واصفياء الله، واصدقاء الله، والناطقون الرسميون باسم الله .. وما عداهم يعيشون في الحرام، والفساد، والجاهلية، والكفر، والإلحاد.

وبعضهم لين .. يميل الى الحسنه .. ولكن السيادة الدينية - في زمن يختلط فيه البارود بالكتب المقدسة - تكون للأكثر تشدداً .. للأكثر تشنجا، وتهورا، وتطرفا .. وللأكثر جرأة على القتل .. إن هؤلاء يقتلون باسم الله .. ويسلحون، ويفجرون، ويذبحون، ويغسلون العقول، ويكسرون العظام، ويحرمون الإبداع أيضا باسم الله!  
لا هم استخدموا الدين للقضاء على الفقر ومتاعب الفقراء، ولا هم استخدموه من أجل الصفو والصفاء .. لا هم اعتبروه وسيلة لتحقيق العدالة الاجتماعية ولا هم وجدوا فيه علاجاً للأمراض النفسية.



# 6

## Connotative meaning and translation issues: *Supplement*

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### 6.7 REFLECTED MEANING

More complex cases of reflected meaning also occur, where parts of phrases are involved in a form of polysemy. One frequently quoted example compares the connotative difference between the two synonyms 'Holy Ghost' and 'Holy Spirit' (Leech 1981: 19). Through polysemous association, the 'Ghost' part of 'Holy Ghost' is reminiscent of the reflected meaning of 'ghost' ('spook' or 'spectre'). Although such an association is not part of the denotative meaning of 'Holy Ghost', it has a tendency to form part of the overall meaning of the expression, and therefore often actually interferes with its denotative meaning. By another, polysemous association the 'Spirit' part of 'Holy Spirit' may call to mind the reflected meaning of 'spirits' ('alcoholic drinks'); here again, the association tends to interfere with the denotative meaning. Clearly, then, while 'Holy Spirit' and 'Holy Ghost' are referential synonyms, their total semantic effects cannot be called identical, in so far as they evoke different images through different reflected meanings.

# 7

## Phonic/graphic and prosodic issues in translation: *Supplement*

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### 7.1.1 Alliteration, assonance and rhyme

In literary STs, especially poetry, marked phonic features very often have a thematic and expressive function – that is, the message would be less complex and have less impact without them. Whether these effects are triggered or not is very much a matter of genre – of what the text is for and what the public is expecting. It is even possible, for example, to imagine the mining sentence as part of a poem. If it were, the purpose of the text would be different, and the reader's/listener's expectations would be different. The phonic features would have an expressive function, and ignoring them might incur unacceptable translation loss. We shall consider further aspects of assonance under pattern repetition (Ch. 8.2.3.1), root repetition (Ch. 8.2.3.2), and suffix repetition (Ch. 8.2.3.3).

### 7.2 THE PROSODIC LEVEL

This section provides some further discussion of the following ST and TT, considered in § 7.2:

*ST*

ومما لا شك فيه أن حصاد وإنجازات العمل البترولي خلال الـ ١٨ عاماً  
الماضية هو بثابة وسام للعاملين بالبتترول ومحصلة للسياسات

والمجهدات التي تمت خلال تكل الفترة.

*TT (adapted)*

No doubt, the achievements of the petroleum sector during the past 18 years represent a triumph for the workers in this sector, and reflect the policies and efforts which have been pursued during this period.

When 'No doubt' is placed at the beginning of a sentence in English, it acquires a sense of emphasis (technically, it becomes an emphatic theme: cf. Ch. 9.2.2.2).

The English TT could be improved somewhat by changing 'No doubt' to 'There is no doubt that' (since this removes the 'no doubt' element from the emphatic initial position in the sentence), although even here the possibility of a contrastive interpretation with a rising intonation pattern remains. Thus:

There is no doubt that the achievements of the petroleum sector during the past 18 years represent a triumph for the workers in this sector, and reflect the policies and efforts which have been pursued during this period.

(For a generally more acceptable translation, see § 7.2.) For further discussion of the contrastive function of initial phrases expressing doubt in Arabic, see Hatim (1997). For further discussion of intonation and stress, see Ch. 9.2.1, 9.2.2.1.

## **7.2 .2 Translating Arabic verse**

As with rhyme, there may sometimes be very little reason for translating ST verse into TT verse. This might be the case where the verse itself is particularly trivial, and where it is being used mainly for humorous effect. Under such circumstances, a prose TT form might be appropriate which relays the denotative meaning (Chapter 5) of the ST and achieves an 'equivalent' (cf. Ch. 2) degree of humour by some other means such as allusion (cf. Ch. 10.3.2). Similarly, a translator would probably be constrained to translate as prose a verse form used in the ST in a context where verse is not appropriate in the target culture. An example is the use of verse at a wedding, which is a feature of some Arabic societies, but not normally of English-speaking ones. It is essential for the translator to consider such issues, before he or she can take a reasoned decision either to translate into prose or couch the TT in an appropriate verse-form.

**PRACTICAL 7****Practical 7.3 The prosodic level***Assignment*

Turn back to the translations of the portion of معلقة لبديد by Arberry and Sells given in *Supplement*, Chapter 2. What strategies do these two translations adopt with regard to the prosodic level? In your opinion which translation works better on this level, and why?

**Practical 7.4 The phonic/graphic and prosodic levels***Assignment*

- (i) Discuss the strategic decisions that you have to take before starting detailed translation of the following text, and outline and justify the strategy you adopt. You have been asked to translate these poems for an anthology of poems entitled *War's words: poetry of conflict from around the globe*.
- (ii) Translate the poems into an appropriate poetic English form.
- (iii) Explain the decisions of detail which you made in producing your TTs, especially those involving compensation.

*Contextual information*

These poems (from قباني 1981: 344, 346–7) are the second and fourth in a series of poems by نزار قباني dealing with the Lebanese civil war and collectively entitled إلى بيروت الأنثى مع حبي. They are simply numbered '2' and '4' in the original collection (as they are here). Beirut is addressed in the second person (feminine singular) throughout.

قباني is Syrian by origin, but lived in Lebanon for many years, attracted there by the greater freedom of expression than in his own country. قباني is a leading exponent of modern Arabic free verse. His writing typically combines simplicity with elegance. Much of his poetry deals with romantic love, but he is also known for his political and social themes.

٢

أه .. كم كُنَّا قَبِيحِينَ، وَكُنَّا جُبْنَاءُ  
عِنْدَمَا بَعْنَاكَ، يَا بِيْرُوتُ، فِي سُوْقِ الإِمَاءِ  
وَحَجَزْنَا الشَّقَقَ الفَخْمَةَ فِي حَيِّ (الأَلِيْزِيَّة) وَفِي (مَإْيْفِير) لَنْدُنْ ..  
وَعَسَلْنَا الحَزْنَ بِالخَمْرَةِ، وَالجِنْسِ، وَقَاعَاتِ القَمَارِ  
وَتَذَكَّرْنَا - عَلَى مَائِدَةِ الرُّولِيْتِ، أَخْبَارَ الدِّيَارِ  
وَافْتَقَدْنَا زَمَنَ الدَّفْلَى بَلْبِنَانَ ..  
وَعَصَرَ الجُلْنَارَ ..  
وَبَكَيْنَا مِثْلَمَا تَبْكِي النِّسَاءُ ...

٤

طَمَنَّنِي عِنكَ  
يَا صَاحِبَةَ الوَجْهِ الحَزِينِ  
كَيْفَ حَالُ البَحْرِ؟  
هَلْ هُمْ قَتَلُوهُ بِرِصَاصِ القَنْصِ مِثْلَ الآخَرِيْنَ؟  
كَيْفَ حَالُ الحَبِّ؟  
هَآ أَصْبَحَ أَيضاً لَاجِئاً ...  
بَيْنَ أَلُوفِ اللَاجِئِيْنَ ...  
كَيْفَ حَالُ الشُّعْرِ؟  
هَلْ بَعْدَكَ - يَا بِيْرُوتُ - مِنْ شَعْرٍ يُغْنِي؟  
ذَبَحْتُنَا هَذِهِ الحَرْبُ الَّتِي مِنْ غَيْرِ مَعْنَى ..  
أَفْرَعْتُنَا مِنْ مَعَانِينَا تَمَاماً ..  
بَعَثَرْتُنَا فِي أَقَاصِي الأَرْضِ  
مَنْبُودِيْنَ ..  
مَسْحُوقِيْنَ ..  
مَرَضِي ...  
مُتَّعِيْنَ  
جَعَلْتَنَا مِنَّا - خِلافاً لِلنَّبُوءَاتِ ..  
يَهُوداً تَأْهِيْنَ ...

# 8

## Grammatical issues in translation:

### *Supplement*

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#### 8.2 THE GRAMMATICAL LEVEL

The essentials of morphology are not difficult to understand. Words in both English and Arabic are made up of ‘bits’, these ‘bits’ being known in linguistics as morphemes. Thus, in English, the word ‘unfortunately’ can be regarded as being made up of four morphemes ‘un-’, ‘fortune’, ‘-ate’, and ‘-ly’. Traditionally, the morphemes which make up English words are classified as stems and affixes. The stem is the central bit of the word; in the case of ‘unfortunately’, the stem is ‘fortune’. Affixes are the non-central bits of the word, which come either before or after the stem. Affixes which come before the stem are known as prefixes; in the case of ‘unfortunately’, ‘un-’ is a prefix. Affixes which come after the stem are known as suffixes; in the case of ‘unfortunately’, ‘-ate’ and ‘-ly’ are suffixes.

Like English, Arabic has both prefixes and suffixes. Thus in the word يذهبون ‘they go’, يـ is a prefix (indicating 3rd person), while ون is a suffix (indicating masculine plural). More strikingly for an English learner Arabic does not really have stems along the lines of English. Rather, it operates with a system of root morphemes and pattern morphemes. Consider the word حَظِيظ ‘fortunate’. Here the basic notion of luck or fortune is conveyed by the consonants ح ظ ظ, this element being traditionally known in English as the root (Arabic جَذْر). The fact that this is an adjective is conveyed by the arrangement of vowels which are interpolated between these letters. This arrangement of vowels is known in English as the pattern (Arabic وَزْن ‘weight’, ‘poetic measure’), and is traditionally represented using the dummy verb فَعَلَ, as a convenient ‘peg’. Thus, the word حَظِيظ is said to be on the

فَعِيل pattern. While English ‘fortunate’ consists of a stem morpheme ‘fortune’ and a suffix morpheme ‘-ate’, the root morpheme ح ظ ظ and the pattern morpheme فَعِيل which make the Arabic word حَظِيظ are completely interlinked with one another. This situation is sometimes referred to as ‘transfixing’ (cf. Bauer 2003: 30-31). We shall consider various issues in relation to Arabic morphology in particular later in this chapter.

Morphology yields words of various classes; traditionally in English words are said to belong to one of eight word classes, or what are traditionally known as parts of speech: noun, pronoun, adjective, verb, preposition, conjunction, adverb, and interjection. And although this division is not traditionally used for Arabic, it does work fairly well for Arabic, particularly when viewed from the perspective of English. The combination of words into phrases does not pose particular theoretical problems, although we may note in passing that the use of the word ‘phrase’ in linguistics tends to be much more closely defined than is typically appropriate for translation purposes. More problematic is the combination of words and phrases into sentences, or rather what we termed above syntactic sentences, and it is this that we turn to next.

## **8.2.0 The definition of syntactic sentence in English and Arabic**

There are two basic ways of defining a syntactic sentence: in purely grammatical terms, and in more occurrence-oriented terms. These two do not always yield the same results, in that what is a syntactic sentence in one sense may not be a syntactic sentence in the other. Both approaches, however, have their theoretical virtues, as well as their practical implications for translation. We shall therefore briefly consider the two approaches.

### *8.2.0.1 Grammatical definition of syntactic sentence*

The following is a very brief account of the fundamentals of English and Arabic sentence structure, and it necessarily simplifies and omits many issues. It is intended only as a general guide to this aspect of the two languages for the purposes of analyzing features of Arabic>English translation, and particularly, as we shall see in Chapters 9 and 10, features related to theme and rheme, mainness and subordination, and cohesion and coherence. Readers who are interested in more detailed accounts of the grammatical structures of the two languages should consult specialist works such as Leech and Svartvik (1994) for English, and Beeston (1970) and Holes (1995) for Arabic.

### 8.2.0.1.1 English

Traditionally, the syntactic sentence in English is analyzed into a number of syntactic elements. Every syntactic sentence is said to have a verb; Thus, the imperative, 'Stop!' is a syntactic sentence. Every non-imperative syntactic sentence has as a subject as well as a verb; thus, 'They stop' is a syntactic sentence, in which 'They' is the subject and 'stop' is a verb. Additionally, some syntactic sentences may have objects; in the syntactic sentence, 'They stop the car', 'the car' is an object. While most verbs take nominal objects ('noun-based' objects, such as 'the car' in 'They stop the car', some verbs take prepositional objects ('preposition-based' objects). An example is 'on you' in 'I rely on you'. The verb 'to be' is somewhat exceptional to this general pattern in that it is described as taking a complement, rather than an object. Thus, 'in the house' is the complement in the syntactic sentence 'They are in the house'; 'happy' is the complement in the syntactic sentence 'We were happy'; and 'geniuses' is a complement in the syntactic sentence 'You are geniuses'.

The elements SUBJECT-VERB-OBJECT can be complex as well as simple; 'They' is a simple one-word subject in 'They stop the car', while 'the car' in this example is a complex phrase (consisting of 'the' and 'car'). 'The fast car' and 'the very fast car' are more complex still. In all cases, however, the phrase beginning with 'the' and ending with 'car' functions as the object of the verb 'stop'.

Verb phrases (i.e. phrases made up of verbs) may also be complex. Examples are 'may stop' in 'They may stop the car', and 'should have stopped' in 'They should have stopped the car'. Irrespective of the simpleness or complexity of the elements which make them up, however, syntactic sentences in English may all be analyzed as having a main structure consisting of [SUBJECT]-VERB-[OBJECT] (optional elements are here placed in square brackets).

Mainness in traditional English grammar contrasts with subordination. Sometimes the terms 'subordinate' and 'subordination' are used to describe elements which are directly dependent on a central element of the main structure of the syntactic sentence. Thus, in the syntactic sentence 'They stopped the car which had been speeding along the motorway', the relative clause 'which had been speeding along the motorway' is a subordinate clause with respect to the noun 'the car'. In this case, it is easy to see that 'the car' is the central element of the whole phrase 'the car which had been speeding along the motorway'. This is demonstrated by the fact that it is possible to omit the element 'which had been speeding along the motorway' and still retain a grammatically acceptable syntactic sentence: 'They stopped the car'. It is not, however, possible to omit the element 'the car' and retain a grammatically acceptable syntactic sentence; we cannot say in English 'They stopped which had been speeding along the motorway'.

An aspect of subordination which is more important for our current purposes



is subordination of elements to the entire main part of the syntactic sentence. The following are examples of such subordinate elements: ‘at three-o-clock’ in the sentence ‘At three-o-clock they stopped the car’; ‘out of frustration’ in ‘They stopped the car out of frustration’; ‘for petrol’ in ‘They stopped the car for petrol’; ‘near the cafe’ in ‘Near the cafe they stopped the car’; and ‘all of a sudden’ in ‘All of a sudden they stopped the car’. Such subordinate elements are said to function as adverbials, i.e. they work like adverbs. This can be seen from the fact that in some cases at least it is possible to replace the subordinate phrase by a one-word adverb (normally ending in *-ly*); thus, not only can we say ‘All of a sudden they stopped the car’. We can also say, ‘Suddenly they stopped the car’.

All the subordinate elements just discussed are non-verbal (i.e. they do not contain a verb); and with the exception of the single word ‘suddenly’, they are all non-verbal phrases. It is also possible, however, to have clausal subordinate elements of the same type as these. By clausal we mean here ‘containing a verb’. Such clausal subordinate elements are known as subordinate clauses. Examples of subordinate clauses (together with a main clause) are: ‘When three-o-clock came, they stopped the car’; ‘feeling totally frustrated’ in ‘feeling totally frustrated they stopped the car’; ‘in order to buy petrol’ in ‘They stopped the car in order to buy petrol’; and ‘As soon as they got near the cafe’ in ‘As soon as they got near the cafe, they stopped the car’. Forms which introduce subordinate clauses, such as ‘when’, ‘in order to’, ‘to’ (in the sense of ‘in order to’), and ‘as soon as’ can be termed subordinating conjunctions (the *-ing* on the end of ‘feeling’ in ‘feeling totally frustrated’ can also be called a subordinator).

In traditional English grammar, subordination – typically involving subordinating conjunctions – is contrasted with coordination. This latter involves the use of coordinating conjunctions between two main clauses, the most important of these coordinating conjunctions being ‘and’ and ‘but’. Thus, ‘They stopped the car, and they bought petrol’ is an example of clausal coordination. Here the two main clauses ‘They stopped the car’ and ‘they bought petrol’ are linked by the coordinating conjunction ‘and’. This can be compared with ‘They stopped the car in order to buy petrol’. Here, the main clause ‘They stopped the car’ is linked to the subordinate clause ‘buy petrol’ by the subordinating conjunction ‘in order to’.

#### *8.2.0.1.2 Arabic*

The following analysis of the Arabic sentence draws partly on traditional Arabic analyses and partly on modern western-based analyses. It is designed to allow for fairly simple comparison between the structures of Arabic and English.

The syntactic sentence in Arabic has similarities to the syntactic sentence

in English, as well as some dissimilarities. The major dissimilarities lie at the most basic level of sentence structure. In English, as we have seen, from the point of view of overall sentence structure, the main part of the syntactic sentence can be analyzed as [SUBJECT]-VERB-[OBJECT]. In Arabic, the basic element in the sentence can be termed the predicate. In fact some syntactic sentences in Arabic consist of a predicate only. An example is *قف!* 'Stop!'; another example is *تقف* 'It [fem.] stops'. As these examples show, in Arabic both imperatives and non-imperatives may be subjectless, whereas the only English syntactic sentences which may not contain subjects are imperatives (such as 'Stop!'). Where an Arabic syntactic sentence consists of a predicate only, this predicate is always a verb.

More commonly Arabic syntactic sentences consist of a subject and a predicate. (In fact, according to the traditional Arab linguists even a single-word syntactic sentence such as *تقف* 'It stops' contains a subject and a predicate, the subject in this case being a 'hidden pronoun', *ضمير مستتر*, in the verb itself. For present purposes we do not need to worry about the merits or otherwise of this analysis.) An example of a subject-predicate syntactic sentence is *تقف السيارة* 'The car stops'. Here the subject is *السيارة* and the predicate is the verb *تقف*. Traditionally in Arabic, the subject is known as the *مُسْنَدُ* *اليه* and the predicate is known as the *مُسْنَدُ*. Where the Arabic syntactic sentence contains a subject as well as a predicate, the predicate may be something other than a verb. It may, for instance, be a noun, as in *السيارة آلة* 'The car is a tool', or an adjective as in *السيارة سريعة* 'The car is quick', or a prepositional phrase as in *السيارة وراء البيت* 'The car's behind the house'. The predicate may also be more complex, and itself consist of a subject and a predicate. Thus in *هذه السيارة سواقها مشهور* 'This car, its driver is famous' (i.e. 'The driver of this car is famous'), *هذه السيارة* is a subject, and *سواقها مشهور* is a predicate. Within the predicate *سواقها مشهور*, however, there is a secondary, subsidiary subject *سواقها مشهور* and a secondary subsidiary predicate *مشهور* (for further discussion of basic sentence-types in Arabic, cf. Dickins and Watson 1999: 337-340).

As in English, verbs in Arabic may take objects (or in the case of the verb 'to be' complements). Thus in *يوقف الرجل السيارة* 'The man stops the car', *السيارة* is the object of the verb *يوقف*. Verbs in Arabic may also take prepositional objects as well as nominal objects. Thus we can regard *عليك* as the object of *اعتمد* in *اعتمد عليك* 'I rely on you'. As in English elements of the syntactic sentence may be simple as well as complex. Thus *السيارة* is already a complex of *السيارة* + *ال*; this phrase can then be made more complex; e.g. *السيارة السريعة جدا* or *السيارة السريعة*.

As in English also, subordination in Arabic can be of various forms. Thus a relative clause *التي تتسرع على الطريق* 'which was speeding along the road' is subordinate to the noun *السيارة* in the syntactic sentence *وقفوا السيارة التي تتسرع على الطريق* 'They stopped the car which was speeding along the road'.

In summary, Arabic has a basic syntactic sentence pattern [SUBJECT]-PREDICATE. Where there is no subject, the predicate must be a verb, and where there is a subject the predicate may be either a verb or another element, such as a noun (or noun phrase), adjective (or adjective phrase), or prepositional phrase.

Just as everything which falls outside the main [SUBJECT]-VERB-[OBJECT] pattern in English is subordinate and adverbial with respect to the main clause, so everything which falls outside the [SUBJECT]-PREDICATE pattern in Arabic is subordinate and adverbial with respect to the main clause. In Arabic these non-main parts of the syntactic sentence are known as the *فُضْلَة*, the ‘residue’.

Again as in English, in Arabic it is possible to have non-clausal elements which are subordinate to the main clause. Examples are: *فجأةً وقفوا* in *فجأةً وقفوا في الساعة الثالثة* ‘Suddenly they stopped the car’; and *وقفوا في الساعة الثالثة* in *وقفوا في الساعة الثالثة* ‘They stopped the car at three-o-clock’. Equally, it is possible to have clausal elements which are subordinate to the main clause. In this latter case, such clausal elements do not necessarily contain a verb, as they must in English, but they must normally conform to the pattern [SUBJECT]-PREDICATE, which is also found in main clauses. (There are one or two exceptions to this rule, but they need not concern us here.) An example of a subordinate clausal element of this nature – i.e. a subordinate clause – is *وقفوا السيارة عندما دقت الساعة الثالثة* in *وقفوا السيارة عندما دقت الساعة الثالثة* ‘They stopped the car when the clock struck three’. Here *عندما* is a subordinating conjunction.

In Arabic as well as in English, subordination of clauses may be contrasted with coordination of clauses. The three coordinating conjunctions in Arabic are *و* (when not used in a *حال*-construction), *ف*, and *ثم* (cf. Dickins and Watson 1999: 571-6). All other conjunctions (including *و* when used in a *حال*-construction) are subordinating. Thus in *وقفوا السيارة ليشتروا البنزين* ‘They stopped the car in order to buy petrol’, the particle *ل* is a subordinating conjunction, and *ليشتروا البنزين* is a subordinate clause. In *وقفوا السيارة فاشتروا البنزين*, on the other hand, *ف* is a coordinating conjunction and *وقفوا السيارة* and *اشتروا البنزين* are both main clauses.

#### 8.2.0.2 Occurrence-based definition of syntactic sentence

The above grammatical definitions of syntactic sentence in English and Arabic are important in practical terms not only because they provide a means of analyzing sentences in the two languages, but because in formal writing in particular, syntactic sentences are expected to conform to these patterns. This means that in translating Arabic into formal English, one would expect, all other things being equal, all syntactic sentences to conform to the patterns outlined in *Supplement* § 8.2.0.1.1.

However, it is also possible to adopt another more occurrence-based definition of syntactic sentence. Communicatively, we may define a syntactic sentence as a string of words which is not necessarily a complete grammatical syntactic sentence but can nonetheless be uttered in isolation, such that its use is felt to be complete or sufficient in the context in which it is used. Consider again the following, which we saw earlier in Ch. 7.2:

ST

- سألته:  
 - أحجرت؟  
 وهز رأسه وقال:  
 - على وشك.  
 - أطلبت غرفة بحمام؟  
 - نعم.  
 - حسناً. أخبرني عن رقمها. فغفرتي بلا حمام.  
 وأضاف:  
 - الوسخ يضاقني.

TT (adapted from Tunnicliffe 1994: 12)

- 'Have you checked in?', she asked.  
 He shook his head and said, 'Almost'.  
 'Did you ask for a room with a bathroom?'  
 'Yes.'  
 'Good. Give me the number; my room hasn't got one'.  
 And then she added: 'I get fed up with the dirt'.

A lot of informal language usages do not in fact conform to the grammatical rules laid out in *Supplement* § 8.2.0.1.1 and 8.3.0.1.2. In the above Arabic ST, *على وشك*, *نعم*, and *حسناً* do not; and neither in the English TT do the corresponding 'Almost', 'Yes', and 'Good'. Examples of this type are quite typical of informal and particularly spoken language. In traditional linguistic thought, attempts have been made to explain the discrepancies between what formal grammatical analysis dictates syntactic sentences should consist of, and what they do in fact consist of. These attempts apply the notion of ellipsis; i.e. the omission of elements from a syntactic sentence which formal grammar dictates ought to be there. And traditionally in both Arabic and English grammar, complex rules have been devised to describe ways in which particular elements of the syntactic sentence may or may not be ellipted. The details of these need not concern us here, although we may note that in many cases there are serious problems with the practical operation of ellipsis. 'No way' for example seems a perfectly reasonable informal statement of

disbelief or refusal. It is difficult to see, however, what it could be elliptical for. (A form such as ‘There is no way that can be true’, for example, not only sounds a communicatively implausible non-elliptical version of ‘No way’. It is also quite arbitrary, in that there seems no principled way in which we could determine whether ‘No way’ was elliptical for ‘There is no way that can be true’, or ‘There’s no way I’m going to believe you’, or any number of other expressions giving roughly the same idea.)

Whatever the relationship between the grammatical and the occurrence-based syntactic sentence, the important issue from a translation point of view is to take into consideration when it is appropriate to use a grammatical syntactic sentence, and when it is, or may be, better to use an occurrence-based syntactic sentence.

### 8.2.2 Grammatical arrangement

Noun-adjective compounds, such as الشرق الاوسط, throw up similar issues to genitive compounds. In English it is possible to make adjectives from compound nouns of this type; thus ‘Middle Eastern’ from ‘Middle East’. In Arabic, it is not traditionally possible to do this. Accordingly, the name of an academic institution ‘The Centre for Middle Eastern Studies’ would have to be translated into Arabic as the complex genitive مركز دراسات الشرق الاوسط. As in the case of the phrase ستائر غرفة النوم الجديدة, discussed in § 8.2.2, this means that a phrase such as مركز دراسات الشرق الاوسط الجديد is ambiguous between ‘The New Centre for Middle Eastern Studies’ and ‘The Centre for the Studies of the New Middle East’ (or more idiomatically ‘The Centre for the Study of the New Middle East’). Again, this is likely to generate periphrastic structures in Arabic, utilizing ل and other forms, providing opportunities for translators into English to find conciser, more tightly structured translation equivalents.

More recently, Arabic has begun to develop adjectival compounds based on noun-adjective compound nouns. So, from الشرق الاوسط ‘the Middle East’ one now comes across شرق اوسطي ‘Middle Eastern’. Accordingly, ‘American Middle-East policy’ might now be translated into Arabic as سياسة أمريكا الشرق اوسطية (note the use of only a single ال in the definite phrase الشرق اوسطية). However, given that forms of the type شرق اوسطي are met with extreme disapproval by linguistic purists in the Middle East, one is relatively unlikely to encounter them outside the realm of politics and related matters. Thus, ‘The Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies’ at the University of Durham in England is translated into Arabic in official documents as مركز دراسات الشرق الاوسط والدراسات الاسلامية, rather than the more concise مركز الدراسات الشرق اوسطية والاسلامية, even though the former involves a repetition of دراسات which is slightly inelegant because it involves the use of the word in the first instance without

and in the second instance with the definite article الـ. The translator from Arabic to English, faced with a form such as مركز دراسات الشرق الاوسط والدراسات الاسلامية is likely to have to find the original name in an English source in order to work out what the correct English form is.

### 8.2.3.1 Pattern repetition

Pattern repetition by definition involves assonance (Ch. 7.1.1); and the more frequently the pattern is repeated, the greater the assonance will be, as well as the greater the degree of emphasis conveyed. Consider the following:

وبشكل عام فإن هذه الاتجاهات الجديدة على كافة الأصعدة  
الاقتصادية والاجتماعية والسياسية والفكرية أخذت {تتسارع}  
{وتتصارع} و{تتكالب} جميعها بما تحتويه من إيجابيات وسلبيات على  
رأس المجتمع المصري الذي كانت أغلبيته الساحقة تحيا على فطرتها  
البيطة ....

This has been translated (Calderbank 1990: 16) as:

In short, these various currents began to exercise an unprecedented influence – whether positive or negative – on all aspects of economic, social, political and intellectual life. {They thus became locked in a desperate struggle} for the intellectual leadership of an Egyptian society, the great majority of whose members were still living a simple, traditional life ...

Here the translator has transposed the ST three-verb structure ({تتسارع} {وتتصارع} و{تتكالب}) grammatically, as a composite verb-prepositional-object phrase ‘became locked in a desperate struggle’. He has also made use of alliteration and assonance (‘d/t’, ‘s’, ‘l’), giving the English an added sense of emphasis.

Finally, pattern repetition may give rise to rhymes where the roots involved have radicals with the same final one or two letters. Sometimes such rhyme - like some examples of rhyme elsewhere – will be best ignored in the English translation. An example of this is مشروع التوحيد والتجديد translated as ‘the project of unification and reform’ (from a Lebanese newspaper article dealing with changes in the Lebanese Phalange Party). Elsewhere something more striking may be called for in the English TT, such as alliteration, assonance or rhyme, or possibly an appropriate English cliché, as in the case of the formulaic في السراء والضراء, which might be translated as ‘in good times or bad’.

**PRACTICAL 8****Practical 8.2 Lexical item repetition***Assignment*

- (i) Paying particular attention to lexical item repetition in the ST, discuss the strategic decisions that you have to take before starting detailed translation of the following text, and outline and justify the strategy you adopt. Your translation should be aimed at an educated, but non-specialist readership, and will be published as a book.
- (ii) Translate the text into English.
- (iii) Explain the decisions of detail you made in producing your translation.

*Contextual information*

The ST is a from a book entitled *العسكر والحكم في البلدان العربية* by Humphrys (1999: 10). It deals with the relationship between political power and the military in the Arab world and is aimed at the interested non-specialist reader.

*ST*

إن التمييز الطبقي بين الضباط والعسكر يتأثر إلى حد كبير بمستوى التكنولوجيا للجيش. خذ مثلاً على ذلك نسبة الجنود إلى الضباط. إن نسبة الجنود للضباط في الجيوش المتخلفة تكنولوجياً تفوق بكثير (حوالي ١٥ جندياً لكل ضابط) النسبة الموجودة في الجيوش الأخرى والتي تتراوح بين ٤ أو ٥ جنود لكل ضابط. كلما ارتفعت نسبة الجنود إلى الضباط، انخفض مستوى التكنولوجيا، والعكس صحيح.

# 9

## Sentential issues in translation: *Supplement*

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### 9.2 THE SENTENTIAL LEVEL

As noted in §9.2, a sentence can be defined as a complete, self-contained and ready-made vehicle for communication: nothing needs to be added before it can be uttered and understood in concrete situations.

From a more theoretical perspective, the difference between what we termed a syntactic sentence in the *Supplement* (Ch. 8.2.0) and a sentence in the full sense, as we are using it here, is as follows: a syntactic sentence is just a collection of words arranged in a grammatical pattern, whereas a sentence (in the full sense) is more than this. This is evident in spoken language. Any spoken sentence has in addition to the words it contains a particular intonation pattern; in fact it is virtually impossible to speak a sentence without some features of rhythm and stress, and where these are artificially removed, as can be done with synthetic speech, the results are almost incomprehensible (indeed, even where such intonation features are not fully developed – as is sometimes the case with artificial speech on telephone answering services – the results are extremely odd).

That a sentence is more than a collection of words arranged in a grammatical pattern is also evident from the fact that in grammatical terms (as we have described them in Ch. 8.2.0.1.1), ‘They stopped the car at three-o-clock’ and ‘At three-o-clock they stopped the car’ are identical (i.e. they both consist of a main clause ‘They stopped the car’ plus a subordinate element ‘at three-o-clock’). They are clearly not, however, identical in terms of word order. Nor, as we shall see (§ 9.2.2, 9.2.2.2) are they identical in terms of the weighting they give to the bits of information conveyed.

We should note here, that although this chapter deals with sentential



issues in translation, it is often impossible both in translation and in linguistic analysis to consider one sentence in isolation from other surrounding sentences. Discussion at various points in the chapter will therefore sometimes go beyond the level of the single sentence, with the intention, however, of explicating features at the level of the individual sentence.

### **9.2.2 Theme and rheme**

In terms of overall ‘information structure’ theme and rheme can be looked at in two ways. The first is as a cline, or continuous progression. Thus, in a sentence ‘Ayatollah Khomeini was the son of a cleric’, it is possible to think of there being a continuous progression throughout the sentence from the most predictable information ‘Ayatollah Khomeini’ to the most unpredictable information ‘a cleric’. Elements at various stages on this cline are sometimes said to differ in terms of their ‘communicative dynamism’ (cf. Baker 1992: 161-4).

The second way of thinking about theme and rheme is in terms of discrete chunks. Thus, in ‘When she got there, the cupboard was bare’, it makes sense to regard ‘the cupboard was bare’ as the overall rhematic (i.e. less predictable) chunk, in contrast to ‘When she got there’, which is the overall thematic (i.e. more predictable) chunk. Within each chunk one can make further analysis of a theme-rheme nature. Thus, within ‘the cupboard was bare’, we can think of ‘the cupboard’ as being theme (‘theme-within-rheme’), and ‘bare’ (or ‘was bare’, perhaps) as being rheme (‘rheme-within-rheme’). In some cases it might be possible to set up multiple ‘Chinese boxes’ of this nature. Alternatively, it is possible to combine chunk and cline analyses; so having got our two chunks, ‘When she was there’ and ‘the cupboard was bare’, we might prefer to analyze each of these further in terms of a theme-to-rheme cline, rather than through additional chunking.

The question of clines vs. chunks is interesting from a theoretical linguistic point of view, and solutions to the apparent incompatibility of the two approaches could be pursued there. From the point of view of translation practice, it is reasonable to mix the two approaches, and adopt whichever one seems more appropriate for the particular problem in hand.

### **9.2.2.3 Basic theme-rheme translation issues**

One particularly interesting feature of Arabic from the point of view of theme and rheme is the distinction between clauses and sentences which have *Verb-first* word order (e.g. *Verb-Subject-Object* word order), and clauses and sentences which have *Subject-first* word order (e.g. *Subject-Verb-Object* word order). This is of greater relevance to English>Arabic translation than

to Arabic>English translation, since there it normally makes no difference to the standard English word order which places the subject before the verb whether an Arabic text has the verb first or something else first.

We can term texts which deal with the real world in a fairly neutral way 'empirical' texts (cf. §. 13.2). Within such empirical texts, we can also make a fairly traditional distinction between narrative texts on the one hand, i.e. those texts which describe events, and descriptive or conceptual texts on the other, i.e. those elements which describe static scenes or abstract relationships. In Arabic, narrative texts (and narrative sections of texts) tend to use *Verb-first* word order, and descriptive and conceptual texts (and descriptive/conceptual sections of texts) tend to use *Subject-first* word order. The initial sentence element in these cases reflects the general orientation of the text in question. Narrative texts are action-oriented (or event-oriented), actions (or events) being expressed through the use of verbs. In narrative texts (or sections of text) the event is accordingly more predictable than the other elements (if we are tell a story, for example, we know that things will happen). Descriptive and conceptual texts (or sections of text), on the other hand, are scene-oriented, static scenes being expressed through the use of nouns. In such texts (or sections of text) the characters or features involved are more predictable than the other elements (if we are describing a scene, we know that there will be features of the scene to be described).

In a narrative action-oriented text, or section of text, therefore, the writer tends to begin a clause by presenting an event (i.e. the verb, which is presented as predictable information) and then saying something about those involved in the event (i.e. the characters, or entities referred to by the subject, object, etc., which is presented as unpredictable information). In a descriptive or conceptual scene-oriented text, or section of text, the writer tends begin a clause by presenting a character, feature or entity (i.e. a subject noun, which is presented as given information) and then saying something about this character, feature or entity (using a verb with a possible object, or a predicate noun, etc., which is presented as new information).

Consider the following text from مجلة الشرق الاوسط (October 11,1994) about the satirical Palestinian cartoonist ناجي العلي, who was murdered by an unidentified gunman in London in 1987. Relevant verbs and subjects are put in curly brackets, and labelled *verb* or *subject*.

{ولد *verb*} {ناجي العلي *subject*} في قرية « الشجرة » عام 1936، وهي قرية تقع بين الناصرة وطبريا في الجليل الشمالي بفلسطين، وبعد إبعاده عام 48 مع عائلته نحو الجنوب اللبناني عاش حياته في « عين الحلوة » في خيمة صغيرة وزعتها وكالة الغوث الدولية .  
وقد {كانت *verb*} {حياته تلك *subject*}، بين الخيام، مصدر إلهامه في رسومه في ما بعد، شارحاً حياة الذل التي عاشها وقاساها شعبه هناك. وبعد حصوله على شهادة دبلوم الميكانيكا، {دخل *verb*}

{ناجي *subject*} أكاديمية الفنون في لبنان، التي قطعها عام 63 حيث سافر الى الكويت، ليعمل في صحيفة «الطليلة» الكويتية رساماً ومخرجاً فنياً.

[...]

{سر نجاح ناجي العلي *subject*} {ينحصر *verb*} في عفويته الصادقة، التي لم يعهدها الفن الساخر العربي. و{عفويته *subject*} {تنطلق *verb*} من خلال رسوم ملتزمة، تلمس الجرح الفلسطيني والعربي بسهولة قاسية.

In sentences which contain both a verb and a subject, the verb in this extract comes first in the narrative sections (paragraphs 1 and 2), which relate aspects of ناجي العلي's life. In descriptive/conceptual sections (paragraph 3), by contrast, the verb comes before the subject. It will also be seen that the word order subject-verb in the conceptual sections mirrors the word order subject-predicate which occurs in sentences without a main verb (e.g. وهي قرية تقع وهي قرية تقع بين الناصرة وطبريا في الجليل الشمالي بفلسطين in the first sentence of this text; here هي is the subject and ... قرية is the predicate). Since sentences without a main verb are common in description and conceptual exposition, and since the verb in subject-verb sentences is also a kind of predicate, it will be seen that the general standard word order for description and conceptual exposition tends to be subject-predicate. For further discussion of these issues, see Holes (1995: 265–6); also Dickins and Watson (1999: 348–50).

It is also worth stressing that what is important here is the type of material, not the tense of the verb. Thus, while description and conceptual exposition tend to have imperfect (مضارع) verbs in Arabic, and tend to have subject-verb word order, not all types of text involving imperfect verbs will have this word order. Where the imperfect verbs express repeated action or are used to describe narrative (imperfect describing past events, for example), the word order will tend to be verb first. This can be seen in the text from عرس الزين (Practical 7.2). Here all the verbs except the first verb in the text are in the imperfect. The word order throughout, however, is verb-subject.

It is worth noting that apparently not all distinctions between the use of verb-first structures, and subject-first structures can be explained in terms of theme-rheme features. Consider the following from a short story by the Iraqi writer محمود الظاهر (quoted in Somekh 1991: 32):

الخيوط الرمادية بدأت تسودّ .. قصص الليل مخيفة جدا .. امه قالت له: الشياطين تخرج ليلا لتحارب بعضها البعض. سرت رجفة خوف في جسمه الصغير. وغاصت قدماه في الرمال. والده أكد لأبناء القرية بأنه حارب الجن في نومه ويقظته. قرونهم معقوفة وحادة. الشيخ لم يكذب في هذه المرة. هذا صحيح.

This can be translated as follows:

The gray threads were beginning to darken. How frightening are the tales of the night. His mother had said to him: ‘The devils come out at night to fight each other’. A shudder passed through his little body, and his feet sank deep into the sand. His father used to tell the villagers that he fought against the *jinn*s both asleep and awake. Their horns were crooked and sharp. In this case the old man wasn’t lying; it was true.

This text mainly depicts the thoughts and feelings of a village boy, haunted by the fear of *jinn*s as night approaches. As Somekh (1991: 32) notes, wherever the text can be taken as expressing the boy’s thoughts (whether these provide general descriptions of exterior events, such as the first clause *الخيوط الرمادية بدأت تسود*, or more psychologically oriented judgements such as *الشيخ لم يكذب هذه المرة*) the word order is subject-first. However, wherever the text describes exterior events from a neutral standpoint (or from the point of view of the narrator, as in traditional narrative), the word order used is verb-first (e.g. *سرت رجفة خوف في جسمه الصغير*), as one would expect in a standard narrative context.

Another context in which theme-rheme considerations seem irrelevant to word order is newspaper headlines. Here the word order is always *Subject-first* (where there is a verb in the headline), notwithstanding the fact that news stories are unambiguous examples of Arabic narrative texts (cf. Dickins and Watson 1999: 154). In fact, in general, there seems to be a greater tendency for Modern Standard Arabic to make use of structures in which the subject precedes the verb than did Classical Arabic, a phenomenon which may reflect the tendency towards subject-first structures in at least some Arabic dialects.

#### 9.2.4 Interaction of theme-rheme and main-subordinate elements

While it may be that in most cases subordinate clauses in rheme position (i.e. towards the end of the phrase or sentence) convey information which is both backgrounded and relatively unpredictable, in some cases this expectation is not fulfilled. Consider the following example from English:

Where a society regularly uses two or more languages to carry out its affairs, we can speak of societal bilingualism. The restriction of each language to certain areas is referred to as geographical bilingualism. In parts of Belgium, for instance, French is spoken as a first language, {whereas Flemish is natively spoken elsewhere}; and both languages have official status. Some people, of course, will be bilingual; and in most bilingual societies, one language-group is more bilingual, at the individual level, than the other (Leith 1983: 12; cited in Sekine 1996: 83).

Here, the information conveyed by the phrase ‘whereas Flemish is natively

spoken elsewhere' is unpredictable, but it is not, as one would have expected from the fact that it is subordinate and rhematic, backgrounded. In this context, neither French nor Flemish has been previously discussed, and the text does not go on to discuss either of them subsequently. In fact, it would seem perfectly possible to reverse the occurrences of 'French' and 'Flemish' without materially altering the information conveyed by the text. Thus: 'In parts of Belgium, Flemish is spoken as a first language, whereas French is natively spoken elsewhere' seems little different from the version in the actual text. In this case, the relationship between the information conveyed by the main clause and that conveyed by the subordinate clause is roughly one of equality in terms of degree of foregrounding/backgrounding. In this respect, the balance of information is more like that typically conveyed by coordination than that conveyed by subordination.

As noted in § 9.2.4, reversal of the subordination structure is a fairly common strategy for dealing with cases in which rhematic subordinate clauses in Arabic convey foreground information. An example is the following extract, from the start of a newspaper article, which we have seen previously in Ch. 5.2.1 (from Al-Jubouri 1984):

في استطاعة أي حزب أن ينجح إذا دافع عن قضية الحرية وحقوق الإنسان، إذا احتضن كل مظلوم، إذا قاوم الفساد، إذا ضرب الأمثلة في القدوة الصالحة، إذا حول الكلمات إلى أفعال والوعود إلى حقائق. كل حزب يقف إلى جانب الشعب يقف الشعب إلى جانبه يحيط به عندما توجه إلى ظهره الخناجر وإلى صدره المدافع والسيوف.

For any political party to succeed it must be prepared to stand up for freedom of expression and human rights, to protect the weak, to oppose corruption, to set itself the highest standards, and to act according to these standards. Any party which supports and defends the people will find that it is supported and defended by the people.

Compare this translation with a more literal one:

It is possible for any political party to succeed if it is prepared to stand up for freedom of expression and human rights, to protect the weak, to oppose corruption, to set itself the highest standards, and to act according to these standards. Any party which supports and defends the people will find that it is supported and defended by the people.

This more literal translation sounds slightly odd because the information presented in the rhematic subordinate clause beginning 'if it is prepared' seems too important to the overall development of the text to be backgrounded in this way.

As also discussed in § 9.2.4, one strategy for dealing with unpredictable foreground information which is conveyed by a rhematic subordinate clause

in Arabic is to translate the Arabic rhematic subordinate clause as a separate sentence in English. Sentences are 'informationally independent'. This strategy can be further illustrated by the following extract from a magazine article about music in Islamic Spain:

ثم جاء عبد الرحمن الثاني فرفع من قيمة الطرب والموسيقى بعد أن استضاف أشهر موسيقي في تاريخ الموسيقى العربية «زرياب» {الذي} كان أول من تجرأ على تطوير الموسيقى العربية التي كانت تعتبر آلة العود من أهم الآلات، فقام بإضافة الوتر الخامس إليه ليطور إمكانيات أدائه {بعد أن} كانت هذه الآلة تقتصر فقط على أربعة أوتار لعصور طويلة.

A possible English translation of this is as follows:

He [Abd al-Rahman the First] was followed by Abd al-Rahman the Second, who further raised the status of music by bringing to his court the most famous musician in Arab history, Ziryab. {Ziryab} pioneered the development of Arabic music by adding a fifth string to its most important instrument, the Oud, thereby greatly increasing its potential musical range. For many generations {previously} the Oud had been limited to four strings only.

Here the Arabic relative clause introduced by *الذي* is converted into a second sentence, introduced and related back to the first sentence by the repetition of the name Ziryab. The subsequent temporal clause in Arabic introduced by *بعد أن* is also converted into a separate sentence in English, the word 'previously' being used to provide the appropriate temporal relationship. This example and the previous one also illustrate the tendency in Arabic to make use of multiple subordinate clauses introducing rhematic but foregrounded information. The standard relative pronoun *الذي* (and related forms), and the clausal relative markers *الامر الذي* and *مما* (cf. Dickins and Watson 1999: 235) are particularly commonly used in this way.

### 9.3 DENOTATIVE ASPECTS OF SUBORDINATION

From a denotative point of view the information contained in a subordinate or element can be regarded as subordinate to the information contained in the main clause in that the former normally qualifies the latter. Consider the following:

1. Tom screamed until the police arrived.
2. Tom screamed once until the policy arrived.
3. Tom screamed, and eventually the police arrived.
4. Tom screamed once, and eventually the police arrived.

Example 1. here is readily interpretable as meaning that Tom screamed and carried on screaming until the police arrived. Example 3. is, without further context, ambiguous between Tom screaming once and then eventually the police arriving, and Tom continuing to scream until the police arrived. Example 4. obviously only allows the interpretation that Tom screamed once. Example 2., however, is odd, since the information given in the subordinate clause, and particularly that given by ‘until’ (i.e. continuity of action) cannot coherently qualify the information given in the main clause, and particularly that given by ‘once’ (i.e. a single completed action). The result is a ‘logical’ or denotative contradiction. Example 2. can be contrasted particularly with example 4. in which the coordinating conjunction ‘and’ is used (together with ‘eventually’). Here the grammar of English does not require that the information contained in the second clause – in this case a second main clause introduced by ‘and’ – qualify in this way the information contained in the first clause. The second clause ‘[and] eventually the police arrived’ does not, therefore, force an interpretation that the screaming continued right up to the arrival of the police; and there is therefore no contradiction between the use of ‘once’ in the first clause and the use of ‘[and] eventually’ in the second clause.

The principle that the information contained in a subordinate clause or element is subordinate to the information contained in the main clause in that the former qualifies the latter seems to be largely upheld in both Arabic and English. There are, nonetheless, occasions in both languages where this principle does not hold true; these seem to be commoner in Arabic than in English.

Consider the following which comes at the end of a newspaper article about the life of طه حسين (from الشرق الاوسط, Oct. 24, 1992; in Dickins and Watson 1999: 469-471). The subordinate clause of particular interest is placed in curly brackets:

عاش د. طه حسين ٨٤ عاماً منذ مولده في ١٤ نوفمبر ١٨٨٩ وحتى رحيله في ٢٨ أكتوبر (تشرين الاول) ١٩٧٣. صادف خلالها العديد من

المحن والعقبات كان أولها فقدان البصر وهو ما زال طفلا ولكنه لم ييأس أبدا {إلى أن وصل إلى أعلى الدرجات العلمية}.

An initial translation of this might be along the following lines:

Born on November 14, 1889, Taha Hussein lived until he was eighty-four, eventually dying on October 14, 1973. During this time, he had to deal with numerous trials and tribulations, the first of which was losing his sight when he was still a young boy. However, he never despaired {until he reached the pinnacle of scholarly achievement}.

In fact, the final sentence of the English gives an entirely different sense to that intended by the Arabic; it suggests that when Taha Hussein reached the pinnacle of scholarly achievement he despaired. This is because the information contained in the phrase 'until he reached the pinnacle of scholarly achievement' qualifies – i.e. limits the validity of – the information contained in the main clause 'he never despaired' and particularly that expressed by the word 'never'. The same qualification – or limitation – does not obtain when the coordination conjunction 'and' is used instead of the subordinating 'until'. Thus, 'However, he never despaired, and ultimately he reached the pinnacle of scholarly achievement' retains the intended sense of the Arabic ST.

A similar, but less extreme, example is provided by the following (Brown 1996: 53):

ومع حلول المساء، كان قد نال منه التعب فعاد إلى «العلية» والقي بنفسه على الأرض {حتى بزوغ الفجر}. ثم نهض وقد احس بظهره كأنه لوح من الخشب.

An initial translation of this might be:

With the advent of evening, tiredness had taken hold of him, so he returned to the Upper Room and flung himself on the ground {until dawn}. Then he rose to discover that his back was as rigid as a plank of wood.

In fact, the actual TT reads:

With the advent of evening, tiredness had taken hold of him, so he returned to the Upper Room and flung himself on the ground. {He lay there until dawn} then rose to discover that his back was as rigid as a plank of wood.

Here the translator has avoided the implication of the initial translation given above that the character in question continued to fling himself on the ground until dawn by placing the equivalent of *حتى بزوغ الفجر* in the following sentence. It is thus no longer subordinate to the information expressed by '[he] flung himself on the ground', and therefore does suggest an interpretation



of the character's continuous flinging of himself on the ground until dawn.

In fact, there are occasions, even in English, when the principle of 'denotative subordination' does not seem to hold true. Thus a passage describing the life of Ayatollah Khomeini contains the sentence, 'He then moved to Qom, the religious capital of Iran, until heart problems forced him to return to Tehran where he lived in the northern suburbs for the rest of his life' (cf. Dickins and Watson 1999: 462). Here, we are not expected to interpret the sentence as meaning that Ayatollah Khomeini moved continually to Qom until heart problems forced him to return to Tehran, which would be the logical interpretation if the principle of 'denotative subordination' operated rigorously in English.

## **PRACTICAL 9**

### **Practical 9.3 Coordination in Arabic narratives**

#### *Assignment*

Consider the following short Arabic ST and the two possible English TTs which follow it. Identify and briefly discuss coordinating and subordinating conjunctions in the (a) the original Arabic ST, (b) English TT 1, which is intended to be fairly literal, and closely reproduces the coordination and subordination patterns of the ST, and (c) English TT 2, which is intended to be more idiomatic, and incorporates subordinating structures typical of English narratives.

#### *Contextual information*

This passage is an extract from the novel *مدينة البغي* by the Palestinian author عيسى بشارة (taken from Brown 1996: 32). The novel concerns a young journalist صابر, and his sense of alienation in *مدينة البغي*, the 'City of Oppression', in which he lives. In this short extract صابر is with his mother.

*ST*

وأحنى رأسه، وقبل جبين امه ثم شد الغطاء على جسدها الهَرَم وطلب  
منها أن تخلد الى النوم، وراح يجلس في حجرته لاجترار ألامه  
وعذاباته المتواصلة.

*TT 1*

And he bent forward and kissed his mother's forehead, then he pulled the covers over her frail body and told her she must sleep, and he went to sit down in his bedroom, to brood over his endless grief and pain.

*TT 2*

He bent forward and kissed his mother's forehead, then, pulling the covers over her frail body, told her that she must sleep. He went and sat in his bedroom brooding over his endless grief and pain.

# 10

## Discourse and intertextual issues in translation: *Supplement*

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### 10.3.1 Genre membership

As noted in § 10.3.1, the *مقامة* genre itself has effectively disappeared in modern Arabic, as has *سجع* in its pure form). It is, however, possible to find *سجع*-like material in modern literature, and even in some non-literary texts (cf. Dickins and Watson 1999: 548-9). An example which we saw in Ch. 7.1.1 was the following from the novel *مدينة البغي* by the Palestinian writer *عيسى بشارة*:

ولم يكن بوسعه ان يطفي نار العين بالإغضاء او يخفي تكشيرة الناب  
بالإصغاء [...] ]

This has been translated (Brown 1996: 13) as:

It was not in his power to smother the fire in his heart with indifference or, by listening, to disguise his grimace.

As noted in Chapter 7, the translator chose here, with good reason, not to translate the Arabic rhyme into an English rhyme. There are occasions, however, where *سجع*-like material is acceptably translated into English rhyme. Consider the following from the historical novel *اسد بابل* by *نواف حردان*, which deals with the fall of Babylon in the 6th century BC. The novel adopts a somewhat archaic style in parts. This extract is from an initial introductory section lamenting the fall of Babylon:

كيف سقطت المدينة العظيمة الحصينة؟ ذات الاسوار المنيعة الشامخة  
.. والهياكل الشارخة والقصور الباذخة .. والجيوش الجرارة والبطولات  
الكرارة

This has been translated (Morrey 2000: 8-10) as follows:

How could she fall, the Great Invulnerable City? With walls impregably  
towering, temples divinely flowering, palaces proudly glowering, with  
armies vast and ferociously grave, heroes cunning and valiantly brave.

Much of the rhyme, parallelism and repetition of the Arabic ST is preserved  
in the English TT. However, this is only acceptable because of the archaic  
nature of the material, and because the translator has chosen to translate this  
material in an archaizing manner reminiscent of the kind of rhyming used  
particularly in pre-modern plays. That is to say, although ST is from a  
modern novel, the translator has managed to find a TL generic model from  
outside the typical form of the modern novel which makes this translation  
plausible.

Even where there is a more obviously close correspondence between  
genres in Arabic and English, there may be significant genre-related problems  
in translating between the two languages. Consider the following example of  
English>Arabic translation from Hemingway's novella *The old man and the  
sea* (cited by Abdulla 1994: 69). The original reads:

He was an old man who fished alone in a skiff in the Gulf stream and he  
had gone eighty-four days now without taking a fish.

Abdulla compares two translations of this, which we can designate TT1 and  
TT2:

*TT1*

كان الرجل قد بلغ من العمر عتيا، ولكنه لا يزال رابضاً في زورقه  
يطلب الصيد في الخليج «غولف ستريم» وقد عبرت به حتى الساعة  
اربعة وثمانون يوماً لم يجد عليه البحر خلالها بشيء من الرزق.

*TT2*

كان رجلاً عجوزاً يصيد السمك وحده في قارب عريض القعر في تيار  
الخليج، وكان قد سلخ اربعين يوماً من غير ان يفوز بسمكة واحدة

Abdulla comments:

Excerpt [TT1] is by Salih Jawdat, a contemporary Arab Romantic

poet who transports the text into a much more poetic style than Hemingway would use. A noteworthy indicator is the use of the term عتياً ('decrepit'), an echo from the Qur'an when Zacharia, addressing God, asked how he could beget a son when he has grown decrepit from old age [قَدْ بَلَغْتَ مِنَ الْكِبَرِ عَتِيًّا: from سورة مريم, v. 8]. The translator's grandiloquence hardly befits Hemingway's simple, direct and secular style. A whole sentence was added, which could be back-translated as 'he is still crouching alone in his boat', injecting an element of sentimental suspense by likening the old man to an animal waiting for prey. The last sentence, back-translated as 'The sea has not endowed him with any sustenance' is too general and abstract to match Hemingway's preference for the concrete (e.g. 'fish' rather than 'sustenance'). In sum, the translator has presented Hemingway, who had established his literary career as a master of an objective, unadorned style, to his Arab readers as a more romantic writer prone to religious allusions, high abstractions and verbal redundancy. [...]

[TT2] was made by Munir Ba'albaki, the compiler of the well-known English-Arabic dictionary *Al-Mawrid* [...], and offers a decidedly less romantic version than [TT1]. In place of the Qur'anic عتياً we have the Standard Arabic term عجوزاً ('old'), which however in Classical Arabic was reserved for women; later in the passage, the translator shifted inconsistently to the Classical quasi-synonym شيخ. The verb سلخ for becoming weary through the passage of time (literally, 'take the skin off the body') sticks out as grand Classical style in otherwise prosaic rendering that comes close to the original even in having the same number of words (as compared to [TT1] with 37 words).

We thus have a choice between the frankly and consistently high style of [TT1] versus the more neutral but inconsistent style of [TT2]. While the latter is closer to Hemingway, the former serves to mediate cultural differences by linking up to the high tradition of Arabic narrative, which is much more alive today than the corresponding English high style that Hemingway so roundly repudiated. The translator's stylistic decisions are therefore plainly crucial and should be carefully weighed throughout the process of translating (Abdulla 1994: 69-70).

### 10.3.2 Quotation and allusion

A variation on genre membership is imitation, which may shade into parody. The following provides a small-scale example. This extract is taken from a section of a magazine article dealing with extremist politico-religious groups in the Middle East:

[...] وكل مجموعة يرى اتباعها انهم أوليا الله، وجند الله، واصفياء  
الله، واصدقاء الله، والناطقون الرسميون باسم الله [...]

This can be translated (cf. Hetherington 1996: 20) as:

The followers of each group see themselves as the companions of God,  
His chosen soldiers and friends – and His official spokesmen.

Most of this Arabic extract uses language which clearly belongs to a religious register (ولي, pl. أولياء is a traditional word for an Islamic ‘saint’; جند ‘army’ is a word with strong Classical and Islamic overtones: cf. جيش, which is the more normal term for ‘army’ in modern Standard Arabic). By contrast the phrase ... والناطقون الرسميون باسم ... ‘the official spokesmen for ...’ belongs specifically to the language of modern politics. The juxtaposition is here used to mock the pretensions of the extremist groups which the author is attacking.

### Practical 10.3 Textual restructuring

#### Assignment

Consider the following ST and the proposed TT of the first paragraph below it. Identify ways in which the TT is odd in the light both of material in this chapter on textual restructuring (§ 10.2.1.2) and on the interaction of theme-rheme and main-subordinate (Ch. 9.2.4). Produce your own revised version of the TT, dealing with the oddities which you have identified. Translate the first paragraph of the ST only. (The second paragraph is included here simply to provide fuller context.)

Note that *أن بعد* here has both a temporal and a causal aspect; i.e. the reason that there is a need to return to the roots of Islam is that western ideologies have previously emptied Arabic culture of its true contents.

#### Contextual information

The ST is from the start of a publisher’s blurb for a book by الصادق الصوت الناس ... محنة ثقافة مزورة entitled *صوت الناس ... محنة ثقافة مزورة* entitled *صوت الناس ... محنة ثقافة مزورة*.

*ST*

كتاب يدعو للعودة الى جذور الاسلام الاولى كما فهمها المسلمون في عهد الرسول العربي واعتمدها الخلفاء الراشدون من بعده، {بعد أن} أفرغت الايديولوجيات الغربية الثقافة العربية من محتواها الاساسي وعرّت اللغة العربية من مضمونها الاصلي. ويتسائل المؤلف في هذا الكتاب كيف خسرنا المحيط، وكيف أن الاسلام لم يحقق رسالته العالمية على يد الفقهاء، بل خسر معركته، وظهرت الرأسمالية بمثابة دين عالمي بديل. ويناقش المؤلف الفرق بين الشورى والديمقراطية ، أي بين المصطلح الاوروبي والمصطلح الاسلامي.

*Proposed TT*

This book calls for a return to the fundamental roots of Islam, as these were understood by Muslims in the age of the Arabian apostle, and applied by the Rightly Guided Caliphs who followed him, since western ideologies have emptied Arabic culture of its true contents and have destroyed the authenticity of the Arabic language.

# 11

## Metaphor:

### *Supplement*

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#### 11.2.2 The purposes of metaphor

Basing ourselves on Newmark, we can say that metaphor has two purposes, a denotative-oriented purpose and a connotative-oriented purpose. (Newmark in fact uses different terminology; he calls these ‘referential purpose’, and ‘pragmatic purpose’ respectively.) The denotative-oriented purpose is ‘to describe a mental process or state, a concept, a person, an object, a quality or action more comprehensively and concisely than is possible in literal or physical language’ (Newmark 1988: 104). This analysis of the denotative-oriented purpose of metaphors is particularly appropriate in the case of lexicalized metaphors. Thus, if someone says, ‘He lashed out at his opponent’, this is a very concise way of saying that ‘he burst into or resorted to verbal or physical attack’ (cf. Collins English Dictionary). In the case of non-lexicalized metaphors, and original metaphors in particular, another denotative-oriented purpose is often foremost. This is the use of metaphor to express an open-ended denotation or potential range of denotations. This open-endedness of interpretation of original metaphors is a function of the fact that the grounds of a metaphor are often not defined precisely enough by the context to enable a reader to say exactly what the metaphor means.

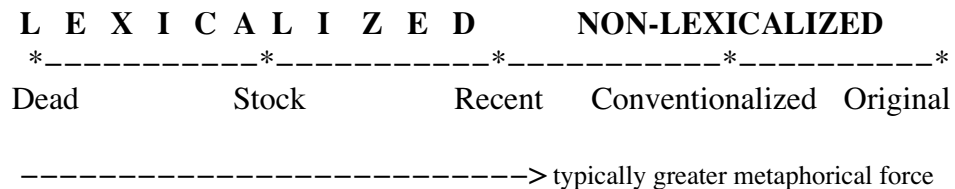
The connotative-oriented purpose of metaphor ‘is to appeal to the senses, to interest, to clarify “graphically”, to please, to delight, to surprise’ (Newmark 1988: 104): in short, metaphors tend to carry with them a strong emotional force. The reason metaphor is able to achieve these effects is a function of the fact that all metaphors except dead ones have a strong reflected meaning (Ch. 6.7), original metaphors typically having the strongest reflected meaning. Metaphorical usages are quite frequently extremely witty. Consider the following, from a football summary on British radio: ‘Tottenham were a marshmallow of a team: sweet, expensive – and downright soft in the middle’. Here the summarizer has made use of multiple metaphors to produce a



memorable and entertaining turn of phrase.

### 11.2.3 Metaphorical force

On the basis of the above account of metaphor, it is possible to draw up a scale of metaphorical force as follows:



As this diagram shows, there is a typical correlation between non-lexicalized metaphors and metaphorical strength. Non-lexicalized metaphors tend to be more striking or forceful or vivid than lexicalized metaphors, at least partly because of the unpredictability of the meaning of non-lexicalized metaphors. However, the metaphorical force of conventionalized non-lexicalized metaphors is typically less than that of original metaphors. Thus metaphors such as ‘vultures are the sharks of the air’, or ‘my head is a balloon this morning’ seem rather weak because it is fairly typical normal to use sharks as an example of rapacious animals, and there is a general convention in English that emptiness signifies lack of intelligence or understanding. Similarly, some non-lexicalized metaphors which were originally quite striking might be considered hackneyed now because of their frequent repetition. An example might be John Donne’s ‘No man is an island’.

Conversely, lexicalized metaphors tend towards the banal because of the definable and predictable nature of their meaning; often lexicalized metaphors lose almost all their force, and scarcely recall the more basic meaning of the word or phrase with respect to which they are metaphorical; i.e. they become dead metaphors. Even such dead metaphors, however, can be ‘debanalified’ and rendered vivid. Normally, we would hardly think of ‘sift’ meaning ‘examine minutely’ as being a metaphor; ‘He sifted the evidence’ seems to have little metaphorical force, and could be classified as a dead metaphor. As soon as we add ‘through the fine sieve of his intellect’ to give ‘He sifted the evidence through the fine sieve of his intellect’, however, the original metaphor ‘fine sieve’ ‘resuscitates’ and renders vivid the non-original metaphor ‘sifted’.

For a fuller treatment of issues involved in the translation of metaphor see Dickins (forthcoming).

# 12

## Language variety and translation: register, sociolect and dialect:

### *Supplement*

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#### 12.6 REPRESENTATIONS OF SPEECH IN WRITTEN ARABIC

The examples *ممكن* and *مش ممكن* which were discussed in § 12.5 illustrate two approaches to the representation of spontaneous speech in written Arabic. The first is to relay speech as it was actually said, or in the case of fiction, as it might have been said. The second is to ‘convert’ the actual or imagined colloquial into Standard Arabic.

One type of writing in which spontaneous speech is regularly represented is modern fiction. Some writers make regular use of colloquial Arabic in representing direct speech. The following is from the short story *عرس الزين* by the Sudanese writer *الطيب صالح* (n.d.: 5). Here the colloquial elements are in a rural Sudanese dialect of an area on the Nile north of Khartoum. Since most readers are unlikely to be familiar with this dialect, we have provided English glosses for the dialect forms in footnotes at the end of the ST:

قالت حليلة بائعة اللين لآمنة - وقد جاءت كعادتها قبل شروق الشمس - وهي تكيل لها لبناً بقرش:  
«سمعت الخبر؟ الزين مو داير يعرّس»<sup>1</sup>  
وكاد الوعاء يسقط من يدي آمنة. واستغلت حليلة انشغالها بالنبأ فغشتها اللين.  
كان فناء المدرسة «الوسطى» ساكناً خاوياً وقت الضحى، فقد اوى

التلاميذ الى فصولهم. وبدا من بعيد صبي يهرول لاهث النفس، وقد وضع طرف رداءه تحت ابطه حتى وقف امام باب «السنة الثانية» وكانت حصة الناظر.

«يا ولد يا حمار. ايه اخرك؟»<sup>2</sup>

ولمع المكر في عيني الطريفي:

«يا افندي سمعت الخبر؟»<sup>3</sup>

«خبر بتاع ايه يا ولد يا بهيم؟»<sup>4</sup>

ولم يزعزع غضب الناظر من رباطة جأش الصبي، فقال وهو يكتم ضحكته:

«الزين ماش يعقدو له بعد باكر»<sup>5</sup>.

#### Footnotes

1. Does'n't Zein want to get married?: 'الزين مو داير يعرّس' = negative particle, 'داير' = 'wanting', '[he] wants'.

2. «يا ولد يا حمار. ايه اخرك؟» 'Boy, donkey, what has made you late?': 'ايه' = 'what'.

3. «يا افندي سمعت الخبر؟» 'Sir, did you hear the news?': 'افندي' = 'Sir'.

4. «خبر بتاع ايه يا ولد يا بهيم؟» 'News of what, boy, dumb animal?': 'بتاع' = 'of', 'بهم' = 'dumb animal'.

5. «الزين ماش يعقدو له بعد باكر» 'Zein, they're going to make the wedding contract for him the day after tomorrow': 'ماش' = '[they are] going to', 'يعقدو' = 'they make the wedding contract', 'باكر' = 'tomorrow', 'بعد باكر' = 'the day after tomorrow'.

The following, by contrast, illustrates the use of Standard Arabic for representing spontaneous speech. This extract is taken from the novel قلب الليل by نجيب محفوظ (n.d.: 3). We have placed elements which we will further discuss below in curly brackets:

قلت وأنا اتفحصه باهتمام ومودة :

- {إنني} أتذكرك جيدا .

انحنى قليلا فوق مكتبي وأحدّ بصره الغائم . وضع لي من القرب ضعف بصره ، نظرتة المتسولة ، ومحاولته المرهقة لالتقاط المنظور ، وقال بصوت خشن عالي النبرة يتجاهل قصر المسافة بين وجهينا وصغر حجم الحجرة الغارقة في الهدوء :

- حقا !؟ .. لم {تعد} ذاكرتي {أهلا لـ} لثقة ، ثم {أن} بصري ضعيف ..

- ولكن أيام خان جعفر لا يمكن أن تنسى ..

- مرحبا ، اذن فأنت من {أهل} ذلك الحي!

قدمت نفسي داعيا إياه الى الجلوس وأنا أقول :

- لم نكن من جيل واحد ولكن {ثمة} أشياء لا تنسى .  
فجلس وهو يقول :  
- ولكنني أعتقد أنني تغيرت {تغيراً كلياً} وأن الزمن وضع على  
وجهي قناعاً قبيحاً {من صنعه هو لا من صنع والدي} !  
وقدم نفسه بفخر دون حاجة الى ذلك قائلاً :  
- الراوي ، جعفر الراوي ، جعفر ابراهيم سيد الراوي ..

In this extract not only is the dialogue relayed in Standard Arabic, but also in a form of Standard Arabic which is quite formal and clearly distinct from colloquial Arabic. The writer chooses to use {إنني} أتذكر جيداً instead of أتذكر جيداً or even أنا أتذكر جيداً, both of which would be closer to the colloquial. Similarly {تغيرت} تغيرت with its use of the absolute accusative (cf. root repetition; Ch. 8.2.3.2) and {ثمة} أشياء لا تنسى and {ولكن هناك أشياء لا تنسى} are markedly formal usages (cf. the less formal لا تنسى), as is the word order in the phrase {من صنعه هو لا من صنع والدي}. Even usages such as {أهل} and {ثم أن} , {أهلاً} , {لم تعد} (in the way in which it is used here) seem chosen to distance the forms of this extract from those of colloquial speech.

Some writers choose in their representation of speech to avoid both colloquial Arabic and a markedly non-colloquial form of Standard Arabic. There are two ways in which this can be done. The first is to make use of a form of Arabic which obeys all the grammatical rules of the Standard language, but which avoids words, phrases, and grammatical usages which are markedly in contrast with those of colloquial Arabic. The result is a form of Arabic which has a colloquial feel without being colloquial. This approach was adopted by the playwright توفيق الحكيم amongst others.

The second technique is to adopt a form of writing which makes various concessions to colloquial Arabic, either using a certain number of colloquial words and phrases, or in the sporadic adoption of colloquial and non-Standard grammatical forms. Consider the following which is from a book of jokes entitled نوادر جحا relating to the Middle-Eastern folk-character Juha and written by يوسف سعد (n.d.: 10). Elements of relevance to the current discussion have been placed in curly brackets:

- \* قابل أحد الفلاحين جحا وسار معه إلى أن وصل منزله وقال لجحا:  
هل لك أن تسلفني حمارك اليوم فقط لأنقل عليه بعض السباح؟  
جحا: {هو} أنت لا تعرف؟  
الفلاح: {أعرف ماذا}؟  
جحا: في الواقع أن حماري مات {من} شهرين.  
الفلاح: بعد أن سمع نهيق حمار جحا - {يعني} الحمار لا زال حياً يا  
جحا ولم يميت!  
جحا: {يعني} تكذبني وتصدق الحمار!

Here the form هو in the phrase 'هو أنت لا تعرف؟' 'Don't you know' is used, not pronominally, as in Standard Arabic, but as an 'interrogative particle signalling surprise or mild disbelief' (Badawi and Hinds 1986: 918) as in Egyptian Arabic. Similarly ماذا أعرف adopts the word order of Egyptian Arabic أعرف أيه 'I know what' rather than the grammatically correct Standard Arabic ماذا أعرف. Finally, the use of يعني in the sense of 'You mean to say that' (etc.) is typical of Egyptian colloquial Arabic.

As might be expected, texts which make use of specifically colloquial elements also tend to make use of Standard Arabic forms which are compatible with the colloquial. In this example, for instance, the writer has used the phrase من شهرين, which is acceptable in both Standard and colloquial Arabic, avoiding the form منذ شهرين, which is only used in the Standard language.

It is also possible to find occasions where writers make use of forms which are not strictly speaking Standard Arabic in narration or other contexts where speech is not being represented. An example is the use of colloquial Arabic forms by يوسف إدريس in the first paragraph of the ST in Practical 3.1. This is reproduced here for convenience:

وحين كان يسترد أنفاسه لاحت له فكرة اللوكاندة ، ولكنه نبذها في الحال فهم اثنان ، وزبيدة حرمه ، وخطرة ، والحسبة فيها بالراحة خمسون ستون قرشا ، والحكاية على الله .

Here the colloquial Arabic elements الحكاية على , بالراحة , حسبة , حرمه , الله , etc. (cf. Practical 3.1 for the meaning of these) are used within a general context of Standard Arabic vocabulary and sentence structure. The result is a combination of intimacy, as though the reader is being made privy to the thoughts of الشبراوي, and emotional distance, in that the authoritative third-person 'Standard Arabic' voice of the author is still present.

From a translation point of view, the various approaches to the representation of spoken colloquial in written Arabic present a number of problems. In most cases, the translator is unlikely to want to render dialect by dialect for reasons discussed in § 12.4.1, although it would seem sensible to render forms which are dialectal or at least reminiscent of dialect in Arabic into fairly colloquial forms in English. In the case of the extract from يوسف إدريس which we have just looked at, it would seem very difficult to find any technique for relaying in a TT the effect produced by the incorporation of colloquial Arabic forms in a Standard Arabic framework.

Interesting problems also arise in cases where the writer uses Standard Arabic to represent spoken Arabic, and particularly where the form of Standard Arabic chosen is fairly distant from the colloquial. Here the context may be decisive. Consider the following, which has already been discussed in Ch.

## 4.2 (Montgomery 1994: 21):

« يفتح الله »  
 « عشرون جنيها يا رجل ، تحل منها ما عليك من دين ، وتصلح بها حالك  
 . وغدا العيد ، وانت لم تشتتر بعد كبش الضحية ! واقسم لو لا انني  
 اريد مساعدتك ، فان هذه النخلة لا تساوي عشرة جنيهات » .

TT:

‘No deal!’  
 ‘Look here my man, with twenty pounds you could settle your debts and  
 make your life a lot easier. The Eid festival is tomorrow and you haven’t  
 even bought a sacrificial lamb yet. As I would not ordinarily pay more  
 than ten pounds for a date palm like this, I would like to think that I am  
 being of some assistance to you.’

As noted in Chapter 4, the use of slightly stilted formal English here is motivated by rather formal nature of the Arabic, and by the fact that the rest of the Arabic dialogue in the story is in colloquial.

Elsewhere, the informality of the situation itself may in effect rule out anything but a highly informal translation in English. This is the case with regard to the extract from *النار والماء* in Practical 2.2.

In other cases, however, the situation is not so clear. This is partly because the choice of colloquial or Standard Arabic or something in between to represent speech in written Arabic is to a degree at least a matter of personal preference on the part of the writer. Some writers, such as نجيب محفوظ, have consistently refused to make use of colloquial Arabic in their works (نجيب محفوظ has described the use of colloquial as a ‘disease’; Somekh 1991: 27). By contrast يوسف إدريس uses colloquial Arabic to represent speech in some of his books but not others – and it is not always evident that there is a reason behind the choice (cf. Holes 1995: 303-9).

Given this, the safest technique is probably to translate most Arabic representations of spoken language into contextually normal – and in most cases informal – TL forms in English. The obvious exception is where a representation of spoken language in Arabic is so obviously formal and distant from spoken colloquial Arabic that the writer is clearly using this distance for stylistic effect. In such a case it might be reasonable to use a similarly formal register in the English TT.

**PRACTICAL 12****Practical 12.3 Representation of speech in written Arabic, and tonal register***Assignment*

- (i) Discuss the strategic decisions that you have to take before starting detailed translation of the following text, and outline and justify the strategy you adopt, paying particular attention to issues of tonal register in the ST. The translation of this TT is part of a new translation of الشحاذ which you are doing to be published by Plover Books in its Nobel Prizewinners series.
- (ii) Translate the following text into English
- (iii) Explain the decisions of detail you made in producing your translation.

*Contextual information*

This text is taken from the novel الشحاذ by نجيب محفوظ (n.d.: 277–278). The text concerns a visit to a famous doctor called حامد صبري by a former schoolmate, عمر الحمزاوي, who is himself a prominent lawyer. The two have not met for many years.

*ST*

— أهلا عمر، تغيرت حقاً ولكن الى احسن!  
 — حسبتك لن تذكرني!  
 وتصافحا بحرارة.  
 — ولكنك عملاق بكل معنى الكلمة، كنت طويلاً جداً وبالامتلاء  
 صرت عملاقاً ..  
 وكان يرفع رأسه اليه وهو يحادثه فابتسم عمر في سرور وردد:  
 — حسبتك لن تذكرني.  
 — أنا لا أنسى أحداً فكيف أنساك أنت!  
 تحية كريمة من طبيب خطير. وكثيرون يسمعون عن الطبيب الناجح  
 ولكن هل يعرف المحامي الفذ الا أصحاب القضايا؟! وضحك الطبيب  
 وهو يتفحصه وقال:  
 — ولكنك سمنت جداً، كأنك مدير شركة من العهد الخالي ولا  
 ينقصك إلا السيجار.  
 ضحكت أسارير الوجه الاسمر المستطيل الممتليء، وفي شيء من  
 الارتباك ثبت نظراته فوق عينيه وهو يرفع حاجبيه الكثيفتين.  
 — إني سعيد بلقياك يا دكتور.  
 — وأنا كذلك وان تكن مناسبة رؤيتي ليست بالسارة عادة.  
 وتقهر الى مكتبه المختفي تحت أطلال من الكتب والأوراق ولا أدوات

المكتبية النفسية ثم جلس وهو يشير اليه بالجلوس:  
 — فلنوؤجل حديث الذكريات حتى نطمئن عليك.  
 وفتح دفترا وأمسك بالقلم:  
 — الاسم: عمر الحمزاوي، محام، والسن؟  
 وضحك الطبيب عالياً وهو يقول مستدركاً:  
 لا تخف، الحال من بعضه!  
 — ٤٥ عاماً.  
 — على أيام المدرسة كان الشهر يعتبر فارقاً في العمر له خطورته  
 أما الآن فيا قلبي لا تحزن [...] ]

#### Practical 12.4 Representation of speech in written Arabic, and tonal register

##### Assignment

- (i) Discuss the strategic decisions that you have to take before starting detailed translation of the following text, and outline and justify the strategy you adopt, paying particular attention to issues of tonal register in the ST. The translation of this TT is part of a new translation of الشحاذ which you are doing to be published by Plover Books in its Nobel Prizewinners series.
- (ii) Translate the following text into English
- (iii) Explain the decisions of detail you made in producing your translation.
- (iv) Consider the ways in which the tonal register of your translation of this text differs from the tonal register of your translation in Practical 12.3.

##### Contextual information

This text is also taken from the novel الشحاذ by نجيب محفوظ (n.d.: 404).



ST

استلقيت على ظهري فوق الحشائش رانيا الى الأشجار الراقصة  
بملاطفات النسيم في الظلام. أنتظر وإن طال الانتظار ، واذا بأقدام  
تقترب وصوت يهمس:

— مساء الخير يا عمر .

وانتصب شبح الى جانبي . ما اكثر الأحلام ولكنني لا أرى شيئا .  
وقال :

— كدت أياس من العثور عليك ، كيف ترقد هكذا ، الا تخاف  
الرطوبة؟

وجلس الى جانبي فوق الحشائش ومد يده ولكنني تجاهلته فقال :

— أنسيت صوتي ؟ ألم تعرفني بعد ؟

قلت متأوها :

— متى يكف الشيطان عني ؟

— ماذا قلت يا عمر ؟ ، بالله حدثني فأنا في غاية من الضيق .

— من أنت ؟

— يا عجباً ! .. أنا عثمان خليل ..

— وماذا تريد ؟

— أنا عثمان ! لقد وقع المحذور وأنا مطارد ..

تحسست جسمه بيدي وقلت :

— ليس هذا بجسم سمير فماذا تعني هذه المرة ؟

— سمير ! إنك تخيفني ..

— ولكن لن اخاف ولن أعدو كالمجنون ..

فلمس ذراعي وقال :

— بالله حدثني كصديق و لا تدفع بي إلى اليأس منك .

— وماذا يهم ؟

— أصغ الي يا عمر ، اني في موقف خطير ، انهم يبحثون عني في

كل مكان واذا القوا القبض علي هلكت ..

# 13

## Textual genre as a factor in translation: *Supplement*

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### PRACTICAL 13

#### Practical 13.3 Genre

##### *Assignment*

Consider the differences between the following three texts: (a) *Kuwait Says it will not Give in to Terrorism* (concentrate on paragraphs 1 and 2 only), (b) *Kuwait Sets an Example* (concentrate on paragraph 1 only), and (c) اختطاف الطائرة .. اختطاف العقل (Practical 13.1). How does the presentation of the material in the three articles differ? Why do you think motivates these differences? What genres would you classify the three articles as?

##### *Contextual information*

The texts *Kuwait Says it will not Give in to Terrorism*, *Kuwait Sets an Example*, and اختطاف الطائرة .. اختطاف العقل relate to an incident in 1988 when Iranian-backed gunmen hijacked a Kuwaiti aircraft and demanded the release of 17 pro-Iranian prisoners from a Kuwaiti jail. The text *Kuwait Says it will not Give in to Terrorism* is from the Guardian (April 1988), and the text *Kuwait Sets an Example* is from the Washington Post (April 1988).

(a) From *The Guardian*, April 1988.

## **Kuwait says it will not give in to terrorism**

THE hijack of the Kuwaiti Jumbo jet entered its second week with no sign of either side modifying its position. The hijackers continued to demand the release of 17 prisoners from a Kuwaiti jail; the Kuwaiti Foreign Minister, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, said: 'Kuwait is unshakable. It will not bend to any pressure. We shall not give in to blackmail or terrorism.' The presence on the Boeing 747 of three members of the royal family 'will not influence our decision. The hijackers are mistaken if they think this way. In Kuwait we are all one family, with all citizens equal.'

The government of Cyprus, where the plane was finally allowed to land after being refused permission at Beirut, is caught in the middle. There were indications this Tuesday that the plane might be refuelled and go on to Algeria.

The affair began on Tuesday when the plane, on a flight from Bangkok to Kuwait, was taken over as it approached the Persian Gulf and forced to divert to Mashhad in Northern Iran. Eventually the foreigners aboard, including 22 Britons and 35 other nationalities, were released there, leaving 50 Kuwaitis still aboard. The Iranian authorities, after first refusing, agreed to refuel the plane, which left intending to land at Beirut. It circled for several hours, the pilot getting increasingly desperate as his fuel began to run out and the Syrian authorities in Lebanon told him the plane would be fired on if it tried to land.

The difficult choices before the Cypriot ministers are between giving in to the hijackers' demands by refuelling the plane and letting it fly on (a course adamantly opposed by the Kuwaitis) authorizing a bloody and unpredictable assault on the aircraft, and trying to carry on the talks without any negotiating leeway, a policy likely to result in more of the passengers being killed. One, a Kuwaiti security guard, was murdered on the Saturday, another, a 20-year-old Kuwaiti fireman, on Monday.

(b) From *The Washington Post*, April 1988.

## Kuwait Sets An Example

BEHIND the macabre drama of the latest hijacking lie the calculus and will of one gutsy country, Kuwait. A small place forever needing to balance off big neighbours (Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia) and diverse groups in its own population, Kuwait decided as the tumultuous '80s unfolded that it needed to add toughness to the suppleness which had long marked its policy. When pro-Iranian Shi'ites launched a wave of bombings on a single December day in 1983, killing five persons and wounding more than 80, the Kuwaitis braced themselves for the consequences and tried the perpetrators, handing down death and prison sentences on 17 men.

The consequences have included repeated acts and threats of violence from elements openly hostile to Kuwait's quiet conservative ways. What is in a sense worse, the Kuwaitis have also met subtle pressures from their supposed friends. The truck bombing of the US embassy in Kuwait had been among the terrorists' 1983 crimes. Nonetheless, the Reagan administration, ignoring its public solidarity with Kuwait's no-concessions policy, secretly undertook to induce the Kuwaitis to exchange the 17 convicts for Americans held hostage in Lebanon. This was a shocking, selfish, and unprincipled thing for a superpower to put before a small country confronting mortal threats from both internal forces and an avenging Iran. Kuwait refused to go along.

Given the record, it's no surprise that Kuwait has so far refused to yield up the 17 to a gang, that, to free them, hijacked a Kuwaiti flight out of Thailand last week. First the terrorists flew to Iran, their evident spiritual home. There the authorities, professing aversion to terrorism, proceeded to fail the two essential tests that lie before a country in that situation. The Iranians did not find a way to engage the hijackers in protracted negotiations. They allowed the plane to be refuelled so that it could continue on and, by the drama and progress of the flight, reap the sort of media coverage that terrorists seek in order to increase their bargaining leverage. A Kuwaiti newspaper reports, moreover, that on the ground in Iran the terrorists were able to smuggle aboard more accomplices and arms.

By Tuesday this week the terrorists, having forced their presence upon Cyprus, had tortured and killed two persons and were subjecting others on the plane to a frightful ordeal, pausing only to assert their claim to be acting in a 'humanitarian' way. Cypriots and others were negotiating. And – it could change, but we hope it doesn't – the Kuwaitis were holding steady.

# 14

## Translating technical texts: *Supplement*

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### 14.1.1 Cultural commonality vs. cultural non-commonality

It is useful to make a basic distinction between two types of technical texts: culturally common technical texts, i.e. those technical texts whose basic notions are shared by both the SL culture and the TL culture; and culturally non-common technical texts, i.e. those technical texts whose basic notions are not shared by both the SL culture and the TL culture. (It will, of course, be possible to find texts which fall some way between these two types; the distinction is, however, useful for practical purposes.)

Examples of culturally common texts are natural-scientific and mathematical texts; these involve notions which are (or are considered to be) universal, and therefore properly speaking independent of particular cultures. Another example of a culturally common text would be a text detailing the rules of football (soccer); the notions involved here are common to both the English-speaking world and the Arab world; though not universal in the sense that mathematics and the natural-sciences are taken to be universal, they are culturally shared.

The main problems which arise translating culturally common technical texts are likely to relate to technical terms, although there may also be difficulties relating to genre. Quite a lot of translation takes place between European languages in the natural sciences and associated technical areas. Although English has become the predominant global language in these areas, enough is still written in French, German, Spanish and other European languages to make this an area in which professional translators can specialize. In Arabic, on the other hand, one is unlikely to come across primary research in the natural sciences, and fairly unlikely to come across highly technical

technological material. It is much more likely that the professional translator will be called upon to translate government documents and other official material from Arabic to English, which while not technical in the full sense, contain enough technical material to require specialist knowledge on the translator's part.

Good examples of culturally non-common texts, where the basic notions are not shared between the SL and TL cultures, are texts in the traditional Islamic disciplines such as exegesis – whether Qur'anic (تفسير) or poetic (شرح), Islamic Jurisprudence (فقه), and traditional Arabic grammar (نحو) and rhetoric (بلاغية). Another example is texts in the modern discipline of Islamic Finance, which draws centrally on Islamic Jurisprudence. A professional translator is not likely to be asked to translate texts on traditional Arabic grammar (although some academics do so). He or she is also relatively unlikely to be asked to translate texts in Islamic Jurisprudence, although there is a market for such translation amongst non-Arabic speaking Muslims, and there exist several organizations in Britain, the United States and elsewhere devoted to promoting such translation. With the rapid growth of Islamic banks over the past few years, however, it is quite likely that Islamic Finance will become an area in which specialized translators are in demand.

As is shown by the examples of the three types of lexical problem discussed in § 14.2, access to up-to-date specialist dictionaries and databanks is essential for technical translators working in scientific and technological fields. Of course, even the most recent materials will by definition lag slightly behind innovations and new coinages, because all scientific and technological fields are constantly developing. In any case, even the best reference material does not always give a single, unambiguous synonym for a particular technical term. This means that the normal caveats concerning use of dictionaries apply also to technical translation, but in particularly acute form. That is, translators can only select the appropriate TL term from those offered by the dictionary if they have a firm grasp both of the textual context and of the wider technical context. The problem is not lessened, of course, by the fact that some of the context may remain obscure until the correct sense of the ST terms has been defined! This brings us to the two conceptual reasons why technical texts may be difficult to translate.

### 14.3 CONCEPTUAL PROBLEMS IN TECHNICAL TRANSLATION

As noted in § 14.3, conceptual problems in technical translation may arise from ignorance of underlying knowledge taken for granted by experts, but not understood by non-specialists and not explicit in the ST. We may term this kind of conceptual problem a Type 1 conceptual problem. However, conceptual problems may also arise from ignorance of what might be called the 'logic' of a discipline – methods of argumentation, the development of

relations between concepts. We may term this kind of conceptual problem a Type 2 conceptual problem.

Conceptual problems are particularly well illustrated by culturally non-common texts, although they can also be evident in culturally common texts. Consider the following text by the person considered to be the father of traditional Arabic grammar, سيبويه (1975, vol. 1: 34). Here سيبويه discusses the use of the word order VERB-OBJECT-SUBJECT in Arabic taking as an example sentence ضَرَبَ زَيْدًا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ, as opposed to the more normal VERB-SUBJECT-OBJECT word order, as illustrated by ضَرَبَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ زَيْدًا which he has just discussed.

*ST*

فَإِنْ قَدَّمْتَ الْمَفْعُولَ وَأَخَّرْتَ الْفَاعِلَ جَرَى اللَّفْظُ كَمَا جَرَى فِي الْأَوَّلِ وَذَلِكَ قَوْلُكَ «ضَرَبَ زَيْدًا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ»، لِأَنَّكَ إِنَّمَا أَرَدْتَ بِهِ مُؤَخَّرًا مَا أَرَدْتَ بِهِ مُقَدِّمًا وَلَمْ تُرِدْ أَنْ تُشْغَلَ بِأَوَّلِ مَنْهُ وَإِنْ كَانَ مُؤَخَّرًا بِاللَّفْظِ [...] كَأَنَّهُمْ إِنَّمَا يُقَدِّمُونَ الَّذِي بَيَّانَهُ أَهَمُّ لَهُمْ وَهُمْ بَيَّانَهُ أَعْنَى

It is worth giving a fairly literal translation of this text first, in order to make the Arabic material, which is quite difficult to follow, more comprehensible. A fairly literal English translation of the *ST* is as follows:

*Literal TT*

If you prepose the object and postpose the subject, the utterance will be the same as in the first example; this is your saying, ضَرَبَ زَيْدًا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ, because you only intend by having it postposed what you intended by having it preposed. You did not intend to cause government in something which came first, even if it is postposed in the utterance. [...] It is as if they prepose that whose presentation is more important to them and what they are more concerned to present.

A more idiomatic translation of this, which attempts to respect some of the conventions of academic writing in English is as follows:

*Idiomatic TT*

If the direct object is preposed and the subject postposed – i.e. when the form ضَرَبَ زَيْدًا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ is used – the utterance will be essentially the same as in the previous example (i.e. ضَرَبَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ زَيْدًا). This is because the denotative meaning of an utterance containing a postposed subject is the same as that of an utterance containing a preposed subject; it is not intended that the verb should govern something which comes before the subject, even if the subject is postposed in the utterance. [...] Rather, it seems to be the case that the Bedouin Arabs prepose the element whose presentation is more important to them and which they are more concerned

to focus on.

This text contains a number of examples of Type 1 conceptual problems, i.e. those which arise from ignorance of underlying knowledge taken for granted by experts, but not understood by non-specialists and not explicit in the ST. The following are examples:

- (i) In traditional Arabic grammar different syntactic-sentential (cf. *Supplement*, Chapter 8) word-orders are described in terms of ‘movement’ of elements. Thus, in a word-order VERB-OBJECT-SUBJECT, the object is said to be ‘preposed’ (مقدم), and the object ‘postposed’ (مؤخر), as compared to what is regarded as a more basic word order VERB-SUBJECT-OBJECT. Even in this more basic VERB-SUBJECT-OBJECT word order, however, one can talk about the subject being preposed (as in the phrase ما أردت به مقدماً in this text).
- (ii) The word لفظ, which is given in Wehr as ‘sound-group, phonetic complex; expression; term; word; wording’ (etc.), has here a technical sense which seems to comprise not only the forms of the words in question, including in particular the case endings which the subject and object take, but also the denotative meaning (Chapter 5).
- (iii) The phrase ما أردت به in this context must be taken to refer to denotative meaning, rather than the kind of meaning which has to do with predictability of information, theme and rheme, etc. (Ch. 9.2.2).
- (iv) The verb تُشغَل is being used here to refer to the notion of ‘government’. In traditional Arabic grammar verbs are said to govern nouns; that is to say, nouns – and particularly direct objects – have the case endings which they have (in the case of direct objects normally (L)) because of the ‘government’ or ‘working’ (إشغال) of the verb.

This text is also rendered extremely difficult to translate by the pervasiveness of Type 2 conceptual examples, i.e. those involving the ‘logic’ of the discipline – methods of argumentation, the development of relations between concepts. The following are examples of these:

- (i) The entire argument is based on the notion of the reader as listener (لأنك، أخرت، قدمت). This directness was well motivated in an oral context in which a scholar directly addressed his students, as was the case in Classical Arabic culture. However, such a direct address to the reader is atypical of modern academic writing; and if an attempt is made to render this text into a style which is at least reminiscent of such modern writing a more impersonal style (involving such things as widespread use of the passive) is required.
- (ii) Classical Arabic often made rather vague use of pronouns and other items whose reference could only be deduced from consideration of



elements within the wider text. English tends to be more specific. Thus, the phrase *في الاول* has been translated in the idiomatic TT as ‘in the previous example (i.e. *ضَرَبَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ زَيْدًا*)’ – with the original Arabic phrase included in brackets. Similarly, in the phrase *ما أردت به* the idiomatic TT makes explicit that the pronoun suffix *هـ* refers to a postposed subject, by using the noun phrase ‘postposed subject’. Finally, in the Arabic ST, *كأنهم* refers back to a fairly distant reference to *العرب* (which in the case of Arabic grammatical writing normally means the Bedouin Arabs who had retained the older, ‘purer’ forms of Arabic, and were therefore felt to be the most reliable sources for correct Arabic forms). In the English translation, the noun phrase ‘The Bedouin Arabs’ has been used, in contrast to the Arabic pronominal *هم*.

As these examples show, conceptual problems are the most intractable of all those that face the technical translator. Non-specialists are always likely to reach a conceptual impasse from which no amount of attention to syntax or vocabulary can rescue them. In that case they have only two options: to learn the concepts of the field in which they wish to translate, or work in close consultation with experts. In practice, trainee translators generally do both these things, quickly becoming experts themselves with the help of specialist supervisors. The best qualification for a technical translator is perhaps a combined technical and foreign language degree. However, not even people with that kind of qualification can expect to keep abreast of all the latest research, for instance in a natural science, while at the same time earning their livings as translators, and they will sooner or later come up against problems that can only be solved by consulting other experts or, where possible, the author of the ST.

## PRACTICAL 14

### Practical 14.3 Semi-technical translation

#### *Assignment*

- (i) Consider the strategic problems confronting the translator of the following text, and outline your own strategy for dealing with them. You are to translate this article for a pilot English-language version of *المجلة العربية* magazine, aimed mainly at expatriate English speakers working in the Middle East.
- (ii) Translate the *second and third paragraphs* (from *من المعروف* to *كوحدة واحدة*) from the following Arabic text *المادة المظلمة* into English. The first paragraph and the title are provided in order to give contextual information only.
- (iii) Explain the decisions of detail which you made in producing your TT,

especially those relating to technical questions.

### *Contextual information*

This Arabic article comes from the June 1994 edition of the Kuwait magazine *العربي*, which is aimed at the general educated reader and covers cultural and scientific topics. Properly speaking therefore, this is not a piece of technical translation, but rather what is sometimes termed popular scientific writing. The text does, however, contain some technical concepts, and therefore provides practice in some of the problems typical of technical translation.

Included after the Arabic text are a number of footnotes, covering technical terms and concepts which you will not be expected to be find in a standard Arabic>English dictionary (such as Hans Wehr).

## المادة المظلمة<sup>1</sup> لغز الكون

بقلم: رءوف وصفي

تختلف المادة المظلمة عن أي شيء نعرفه أو حتى نتخيله، وتحتاج لفهم جديد تماما لكل مكونات الكون، ولسبر كنه أسرارها تبني الفلكيون وغيرهم من العلماء كثيرا من الأساليب لحل لغز المادة المظلمة وهم يجمعون الأدلة ويفحصونها ويستخدمون قدراتهم على الاستنتاج للتوصل إلى حل مقبول.

من المعروف أن الكون يتكون من وحدات أساسية هي المجرات التي تعرف بأنها تجمع هائل من النجوم والسدم والكواكب والأجرام الفضائية الأخرى والغازات الكونية، تتخللها مجالات كهربية ومغناطيسية جبارة، وخارج مجرتنا «الطريق اللبني» توجد آلاف الملايين «بلايين» المجرات الأخرى، وهي ليست موزعة بانتظام في الفضاء وإنما توجد في حشود قد تتضمن آلاف المجرات ويطلق عليها العناقيد المجرية.<sup>2</sup>

وأول دليل على وجود المادة المظلمة جاء من ملاحظات لعناقيد المجرات<sup>2</sup>، ففي عام ١٩٣٣ قاس الفيزيائي الفلكي السويسري «فيرتزويكي»<sup>3</sup> حركة المجرات في العنقود المجري «الذؤابة»<sup>4</sup> وتبين له أن المجرات الفردية تتحرك بسرعات كبيرة جدا، بحيث لا تظل المجرات متجاورة لفترة طويلة من الزمن، ولا<sup>5</sup> بد أن تؤدي حركة كل مجرة في العنقود إلى ابتعاد أجزاء المجموعة عن بعضها البعض، إلا أن عملية الرصد الفلكي تؤكد أن العنقود المجري لا يزال متماسكا كوحدة واحدة.

## Notes on technical terms and notions appearing in ST

1. المادة المظلمة: 'dark matter'.
2. عنقود المجرات, عنقود مجري: A distinction is made in astronomy between galaxy clusters and galactic clusters. Galaxy clusters are clusters of galaxies (i.e. clusters consisting of galaxies), and it is this which seems to be meant in the Arabic both by العناقيد المجرية and by عناقيد المجرات (para. 3, sentence 1). Galactic clusters are a type of star cluster. Galactic star clusters – or open star clusters – contrast with globular star clusters. Open star clusters are much less compact than globular star clusters, and are concentrated towards the plane of the galaxy – hence their alternative name 'galactic clusters'.
3. فريتز زويكي: 'Fritz Zwicky'.
4. الذؤابة: 'Coma' (from Greek, lit. = 'wisp of hair'; cf. under ذؤابة in Hans Wehr).
5. In respect of the section:

لا تظل المجرات متجاورة لفترة طويلة من الزمن، ولا بد أن تؤدي حركة كل مجرة في العنقود إلى ابتعاد أجزاء المجموعة عن بعضها البعض، إلا أن عملية الرصد الفلكي تؤكد أن العنقود المجري لا يزال متماسكا كوحدة واحدة

consider the following from an article about dark matter entitled *The Dark Side of the Universe* (Economist Magazine, June 23, 1990):

The idea that most of the universe is invisible follows from the strange behaviour of the parts that are not. Galaxies, for example, spin too fast. If they were nothing more than the shining whirlpools of stars seen from earth, they would not be heavy enough to hold themselves together; centrifugal force would tear them apart. Since they are not falling apart, they must be heavier than they look. Some hidden mass must provide enough gravitational attraction to hold them together. Similar arguments apply to the arrangement of the galaxies. Their clustering can only be explained if the weight of a cluster is more than that of the bright galaxies it contains.

# 15

## Translating constitutional texts: *Supplement*

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### **PRACTICAL 15**

#### **Practical 15.3 Constitutional translation**

##### *Assignment*

- (i) Discuss the strategic decisions that you have to take before starting detailed translation of the following text, and outline and justify the strategy you adopt. You are to translate the text for a Lebanese political group which intends to use it as an official translation when dealing with the English-speaking world.
- (ii) Translate the text into English.
- (iii) Outline the decisions of detail which you made in producing your translation.

##### *Contextual information*

This proposed constitution was drawn up in the 1970s by عصام نعمان, a lawyer and lecturer in constitutional law at the Lebanese University (نعمان 1979: 141–2). The text bears an interesting resemblance to the Indian Constitution discussed in this chapter. Where it is possible to make use of words and phrases which appear in the Indian Constitution in order to translate elements of this text, you should do so.

## مشروع دستور جديد للجمهورية اللبنانية

### مقدمة

نحن الشعب اللبناني ،  
وقد صممنا على أن نجعل من لبنان جمهورية علمانية ديمقراطية  
ذات سيادة ، وعلى أن نكفل لجميع المواطنين :  
حرية الفكر والتعبير والعقيدة والدين والعبادة، وعدالة اجتماعية  
واقصادية وسياسية ،  
ومساواة امام القانون وفي المراكز والفرص ،  
وعلى ان ننمي بينهم جميعا أواصر المحبة والاخاء ضمانا لكرامة  
الفرد ووحدة الوطن والشعب ،  
وعلى ان نشارك اشقاءنا العرب الامة وأمالهم انطلاقا من وحدة  
التاريخ والمصير ،  
وعلى ان نتابع مقيمين ومغتربين ، دورنا الحضاري في نشر المعرفة  
وتعزيز قيم الحرية والعدالة والسلام ،  
نعلن ونمنح انفسنا هذا الدستور .

### الباب الاول

#### المقومات الاساسية

- المادة ١ - لبنان جمهورية عربية علمانية ديمقراطية ذات وحدة لا  
تتجزأ وسيادة تامة.  
المادة ٢ - حدود الدولة هي تلك المعترف بها دوليا المبينة في  
الدستور اللبناني الصادر في الأول من ايلول سنة ١٩٢٦.  
المادة ٣ - عاصمة الدولة مدينة بيروت .  
المادة ٤ - لغة الدولة هي اللغة العربية .  
المادة ٥ - علم الدولة أحمر فابيض فاحمر اقسامها افقية ، تتوسط  
الارزة الخضراء القسم الابيض المساوي حجم القسمين الاحمرين معا.

# 16

## Translating consumer-oriented texts:

### *Supplement*

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#### 16.4 GENRE-MIXING IN CONSUMER-ORIENTED TEXTS

The following extracts from three different recipe books in English amply illustrate potential variations of style in English-language recipes, and therefore problems of choice in translating recipe material. Thanks to their manifest consumer orientation, the extracts are also clear concluding reminders that every text – and therefore also every translation – is made for a specific *purpose* and a specific *audience*.

#### BOUILLABAISSÉ

NOTE: This, the most famous of all fish soups, is made chiefly in the South of France, different districts having particular recipes. It is a kind of thick stew of fish, which should include a very wide mixture of different kinds of fish. The original French recipes use many fish not available in Great Britain. The following recipe is adapted to use the available fish. In order to get a wide enough variety a large quantity must be made.

[Ingredients listed]

Clean the fish, cut them into thick slices and sort them into 2 groups, the firm-fleshed kind and the soft kind. Chop the onion, slice the leek, crush the garlic, scald, skin and slice the tomatoes. In a deep pan make a bed of the sliced vegetables and the herbs, season this layer. Arrange on top the pieces of firm-fleshed fish; season them and pour over them the oil. [...]

(Beeton 1962: 119)

#### ZUPPA DA PESCE

It doesn't matter whether you call it bouillabaisse, cippolini, zuppa de pesce, or just fish stew; whether it has lots of liquid, or, like this, is

simmered in its own richly aromatic juices. It's not just good, it's wonderful. To put it in the oven is somewhat illegitimate, but you are less apt to overcook it. Serve with Spanish rice (for the hearty ones), tossed green salad, French bread to sop up the juices.

[Ingredients listed]

Put the olive oil and garlic in a warm, deep casserole and heat. Place the large fish on the bottom, then the mussels and shrimp. Season, and sprinkle the parsley over all. [...] Baste from time to time with the juices, using an oversized eyedropper called a baster. Serve in deep hot plates.

Serves 6 generously. Time: 45 minutes.

(Tracy 1965: n.p.)

### FISH CAKES

[Ingredients listed]

1. Chop the parsley with both hands, one on the knife handle and one on the top of the knife blade. This chops the parsley smaller and keeps your fingers safely out of the way of the knife.
2. Put the potatoes on one plate and mash them up with the fork. Add the fish and mash it up too. Add the butter, parsley, salt and pepper. Mix them all together.
3. Turn the mixture out on to the board and make it into a roll with your hands like a big sausage. Cut off rounds with the knife.

[...]

(Anderson 1972: 26)

## PRACTICAL 16

### Practical 16.3 Translation of consumer-oriented texts

#### Assignment

- (i) Discuss the strategic problems confronting the translator of the following text, and outline your own strategy for dealing with them.
- (ii) Translate the text into English.
- (iii) Explain the decisions of detail which you made in producing your translation.

#### Contextual information

This recipe is from the same set of recipe-cards *أكالات تونسية* as the recipe *مقرونة في الكوشة* (Practical 16.2). Your brief is the same as for the recipe above. See also the *Contextual information* for *مقرونة في الكوشة* for glosses and other information. The following terms, which are also found in this text, are probably not guessable by native English speakers (although the first of them might be accessible to someone who also knows French):

*فريينة* flour (from French *farine*). What is intended is possibly a particular kind of flour (as distinct from the more standard *دقيق*). We have

not, however, been able to ascertain this, and 'flour' fits the context perfectly well.

معدونس 'parsley' (the more normal form in Standard Arabic, and in many dialects is بقدونس).

ST

## مبطن بروكولو

مدة التهيئة: 20 د ق

مدة الاعداد: ساعة وربع

مقومات لاربعة اشخاص

رأس بروكولو حجم متوسط

250 غ لحم عجل

2 دسل زيت زيتون (12 م.أ.)

2 م.أ. معدونس مقطع

6 م.أ. معجون طماطم

1 م.أ. هريسة

5 م.أ. فرينة

2 بيض

1/2 م.أ. فلفل أحمر

1/2 م.أ. تابل

1/2 م.أ. فلفل أسود

الاعداد :

تحمى 3 ملاعق زيت. نضع اللحم مقطوعا قطعاً متبلاً بالتابل والفلفل الاسود والملح. نضيف الطماطم والهريسة والفلفل الاحمر محلولاً في مقدار كأس من الماء نترك للطهي على نار متوسطة مدة 40 دقيقة. يُفْرغ البروكولو ويغسل ويطبخ في الماء مع الملح مدة 15 دقيقة نركض البيضتين مع الفرينة. نغمس فروع البروكولو في الخليط حتى لفها ثم نقلها في الزيت المحمي.

نضيف الى الصلصة ملعقتين من زيت القلي ونضع فروع البروكولو المقلية. نضيف مقدار كأسين من الماء ونواصل الطهي مدة 15 دقيقة.

يقطع المعدونس والبصل قطعاً دقيقاً للتزويق.



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