

Rethinking International News Translations: Toward a Foreignizing Approach to News Events Translations



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ABSTRACT: The present paper investigates the ideological manipulation that creeps in translated news headlines and falsifies the produced translated version since such process involves both the imposition of dominant ideologies and the negative portrayals of the other in mediated news. Thus, international news translation basically exploits and manipulates the original news events in such a way that misrepresents the image of otherness and creates a positive representation of patrons. In this vein, this paper brings to the fore the influence of extra-textual factors on the translation of headlines. Many strategies and translation techniques are utilized and translators do intervene to align produced headlines with the two networks' ideological affiliations and editorial policies. The present paper adopts descriptive approach where I attempted to compare translated news headlines and pinpoint the alterations and transformations undertaken over them, also it aims to call for rethinking strategies undertaken while translating global news in a cosmopolitan context where openness to the other and appreciation of difference are conducive to an effective cross cultural and linguistic interactions. Accordingly, it proposes foreignizing approach to global news translation because it retains the image of otherness which is essential in the original event.

KEYWORDS: international news translation, representation, otherness, foreignizing approach.

INTRODUCTION

The current 21st century is marking a heavy leap in the quantity of disseminated information. Presently, translation has a crucial role in this transmission of information and mass production. As Juliane House (2016: 10) claims that "translation today plays a crucial and ever-growing role in multilingual news writing for international press networks, television channels...many other globally and multilingually operating TV channels rely heavily on translations". Likewise, Van Doorslaer (2010: 181) states that "translation forms an integral part of journalistic work: a complex, integrated combination of information gathering, translating, selecting, reinterpreting, contextualizing and editing".

As a device that renders a message from one language to another i.e., from one context to another, translation paves the way to battle globalization and ideological fracas. Accordingly, the interest in translation of news headlines as a medium of ideological discourse has been highlighted recently. News translation includes transformation or a set of transformations and reshaping that result in the creation of a final product that is completely different from the original news event. These transformations are considered as processes in translation processes serving the demands of the target audience. As Bassnett (2006: 6) views the process of news translation as not strictly being a matter of inter-lingual transfer of text from text A to text B, but also necessitating the radical rewriting and synthesising of text A to accommodate a completely different set of audience expectations. Brook (2012: 38), on the other hand; states that news translation is unique because of the invisibility of both the texts and the agents involved, and its placement in the category of "open" or "reshaping" translation that is adapted to a new readership, explicitly according ideological reasons mediated by editors.

This paper suggests the technique of foreignization as an alternative strategy allowing targeted readers to get access to both the linguistic and cultural difference of the other. Unlike the strategy of domestication in international news translation that distorts the original reality of the other and hence instigating stereotypical portrays about other cultures, igniting cultural polarization and ethnocentrism.

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NEWS TRANSLATION HEADLINES

News headlines are eye catching; Chen (2009: 2) defines a headline as “a line of concise words outside a newspaper story or article, usually printed in various types and devised to summarize and make comments on the news content”. Khanjan, Amouzadeh, Rasekh and Tavangar (2013: 6) identify three components of a news headline. First, *the kicker* is a word or a short phrase that occurs before the major headline and usually editorializes about, provide orientation or disclose a source. Second, *the main headline* is the most important element of a headline, and it is the one that sets the focus and it is the one responsible for grabbing the attention of readers. Third, *the deck* in a headline refers to a short sentence that occurs after the main headline and summarizes the article. Noteworthy, a headline can only consist of the main headline, so the other two elements are optional.

International News Translation as a Form of Rewriting

Translation practices have increased more than ever before in the mediation of cultural and political discourse across cultural and linguistic boundaries (Bielsa: 2009). Likewise, translation has a pivotal role in the process of glocalization; its aim is to make local cultural products globally available in different languages via translation (House: 2016).

Mass media is not only used to disseminate information but also knowledge is shared and opinions are influenced. Of course there are a variety of media; print media, TV, radio, internet, and etc. Journalists are the main producers of mass media; they recontextualize an actual event at a particular time and place to a reported event, and this for sure involves transformations. Such events are transformed and rendered to the target audience in accordance with the ideological and political policies of a given news agency.

Journalists of news agencies must rewrite texts to make them suitable for their news context according to the rules, norms and practices of the news agency in which they work and perform their duties. This means that translated news headlines entail a host of adjustment and modification of texts in order to make them compatible with the ideological position of the newspaper. In this regard, Bassnett (2006: 6) notes that translational news production means “not strictly a matter of interlingual transfer of text A into text B, but also necessitating the radical rewriting and synthesizing of text A to accommodate a completely different set of audience expectations”. The result of this translational behaviour blocks and thwarts target readers from ever having full access to original event and it, in turn, enhances manipulation and authenticity of information. As Venuti (2008: 16) notes that the problems of adaptation in translation is of twofold: first by making the other falsely familiar, it ends up colluding the difference of the other to sameness. Second, it hides translation’s very intervention under the appearance of fluency and masquerades as true semantic equivalence when it in fact inscribes the foreign text with a partial interpretation.

Along these lines, translation of news headlines involves a lot of “rewriting” i.e. transformations manifested in linguistic and cultural alternations of the original text (Lefevere: 1992). Also, the never-ending and ceaseless gathering and distribution of reports of international news events via translations involve, as it was already mentioned, a lot of transformations, rewriting, reshaping, and re-contextualization, whereby there is a display of an unbalanced power relations because some news events tend to be translated and advertised in mainstream media discourse, while others remain inferior, tacit, and unheard globally. These transformations are purposefully addressed to targeted readers and in accordance with ideological and political interest of the domestic newspapers.

Information, in the process of international news translation, related to political, cultural and religious aspects of reports are often re-examined, reframed and adjusted so that they fit appropriately and comfortably within the framework of the pre-existing narratives and agendas for a particular readership. As such, translation choices undertaken in the production of international news are not innocent, as Gentzler and Tymoczko (2002: xxi) argue in the same tone that “translation is not simply an act of faithful reproduction but, rather, a deliberate and conscious act of selection, assemblage, structuration and fabrication – and even, in some cases of falsification, refusal of information, counterfeiting, and the creation of secret codes in these ways, translators as much as creative writers and politicians, participate in the powerful acts that creates knowledge and shape culture”; rather, they are consciously manipulative tools for circulating particular stereotypes about the other, and subject to the dominant ideology.

International News Translations as a Manipulation of Discourses on Otherness

The extent of successful international news depends on translation since it has become an obligatory tool and a common practice in gathering, trading and distributing international news between media platforms. Translation is considered as a powerful device by placing some translated news headlines on the top and being accepted as the original facts, while others are excluded or incomplete by spreading different point of view from different angles of the same events, i.e. *fakefulness*. Such decisions, as Bielsa (2009) claims, are influenced by the ideological position of the newspaper and by the context in which that newspaper is produced. Thus, a complete transformation and a new produced text are created through the utilization of linguistic, stylistic and ideological principles, which mainly fit the news agency policies. So, the original reality is subject to loss and a new reality is being created

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and taken for granted by the target audience. As a result, translators displace and conceal the authentic image of the foreign since they always accommodate the domestic interests of the news agency, subjecting the news events; as Venuti (1998: 67) said: to “linguistic and cultural values that are intelligible to specific domestic constituencies”.

By nature, international reports are disseminated along with misrepresentations, ideologies and stereotypes about otherness. In this vein, the image of the other culture is frequently contrived and reshaped while different beliefs, values and practices that are implicitly imposed to be taken for granted as mere facts. This is due to the fact that “Media maintain both global and culturally specific orientations – such as by casting far-away events in frameworks that render these events comprehensible, appealing and relevant to domestic audiences; and second, by constructing the meanings of these events in ways that are compatible with the culture and the dominant ideology of societies they serve” (Gurevitch et al. 1991: 206). Accordingly, the adaption of news reports to the target audience inevitably results in the distortion and transposition of the culture of the other; however, decisions undertaken in translation of such political events automatically introduce ideological elements where each party tries to emphasize, familiarize and accustom their actions with the purpose of valuing oneself and denigrating and besmirch the other. Similarly, some news headlines are singled out to be translated and canonized in mainstream media discourses while others which are incompatible with the policy and agenda of the government are remained subaltern and unvoiced globally. These asymmetries are characterized by dominance and dependence.

Domestication versus Foreignization: A Perennial Debate

It is referred a perennial debate since it depends on whether a translator should seek to uproot traces of otherness in a text so as to reshape that text for home consumption in accordance with the norms and expectations that prevail in the target system, or whether to opt for a strategy that adheres more closely to the norms of the source system (Bassnett: 2005). Such debate is ideologically and politically motivated.

The production of global news demands a privileged translation strategy that serves the agenda of the news agency and that suits the needs and expectations of the target reader. According to Scammel (2018: 48), the term strategy in this context either refers to the overall approach taken to the translation of a text, or more usually to the translator decision at a word, phrase and sentence level. On the other hand, Gideon Toury (1995) names these strategies as translation norms that take account of regular rules and norms shared by community and idiosyncrasies valid to the translator. In this conjuncture, Chesterman (1997: 90) made a distinction between “global” strategy (the overall approach) and “local” strategy used to solve local problems. Besides, Davier (2013: 31) makes a distinction between macro and micro-level domestication in the context of news translation; he defines macro domestication as “rewriting”; whereas, micro domestication as “omission”.

Per contra, translation generally involves domestication and foreignization strategies. While the former usually adapts the work to the domestic audience, the latter; however, retains the foreign elements of the translated work. According to Bielsa and Bassnett (2009: 10), “in news translation, the dominant strategy is absolute domestication, as material is shaped in order to be consumed by the target audience, so has to be tailored to suit their needs and expectations”. The translation choice is confined within the vicinity of the news agency and hence it is ideologically and politically conditioned. Bielsa and Bassnett (2009) provide a summative overview of the general modification executed on the source text.

1. Change of title and lead:
2. Elimination of unnecessary information
3. Addition of important background information
4. Change in the order of paragraph
5. Summarizing information

In this context, Stetting (1989: 371) coined the term “transediting” to encompass deletion, addition, substitution, and reorganization that usually change the make-up of a certain news event. With all that in mind, and for the purpose of this paper, it is necessary to halt at case studies that exhibit news headlines translations as a form of reshaping and rewriting with regard to political, ideological and social demands of the target readership. For the purpose of this paper, two examples are provided -of translated news headlines from the ST source text (Arabic) into the TT target text (English) by Aljazeera’ translators- to recognize how publishers of news and translators use headlines to deliver their intended ideological interests to their target readers. Such process is done after selection, transformation, editing and presentation.

Example 1: The US is making a huge error in backing this spoiled Saudi prince

ST: واشنطن إغزامينر: أميركا ترتكب خطأ فادحاً بدعمها لهذا الأمير المدلل

TT: Washington Examiner: America is making a huge error in backing this spoiled prince.

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This example illustrates how the Saudi Arabia is minimized and personalized by referring to its 'spoiled' crown prince. This indicates that the largest country in the Gulf is not viewed as a modern state with functioning institutions, but as an entity that is run by an inexperienced young prince.

Example 2: The Qatari hack cements the Middle East as the worst region in the world for fake news.

ST: الإندبندنت: الإمارات خدعت شعبها لتبرير حصار قطر

TT: The independent: UAE deceived its people to justify the blockade on Qatar.

The example illustrates the negative image that Al Jazeera is constructing about the members of the Arab alliance, especially the UAE and Saudi Arabia. Al Jazeera portrays the UAE as a dictatorship that deceives its citizens and hence downgrades their legitimacy.

Throughout the two examples, domestication is well recognized. The negative side of domesticating approach to news translation is the high risks of misrepresenting the foreign as well as the possibility of departing from the source news text. This strategy obscures translation itself and the linguistic as well as the cultural reality the news event originates in. It thus conceals the enviable translator voice in translated speech (Herman: 1996). Also, it limits the reader awareness and understanding of important cultural and linguistic differences. By denying the reader access to the foreignness of the source culture, it limits the potential for readers to acquire, through the experience of reading the news, the intercultural competence (Robertson: 2010) necessary to living in a cosmopolitan world. Moreover, domestication raises the possibility of igniting ethnocentrism, stereotype and prejudice where one is rendered as exotic at the expense of the domestic values.

Domestication = the domination of the target culture, thus constituting a canonized model which other translated works should comply with. The examples illustrate the negative image that Al Jazeera is constructing about the members of the Arab alliance, especially the UAE and Saudi Arabia. Al Jazeera portrays the UAE as a dictatorship that deceives its citizens and hence downgrades their legitimacy.

FOREIGNIZING APPROACH AS A FORM OF OPENNESS TO OTHERS IN GLOBAL NEWS TRANSLATIONS

Foreignizing approach is argued for in this research as an alternative translation strategy of international news discourses because it helps retain the image of otherness and pave the way for intercultural dialogue with the other. Living in a well-bred world where dialogue between cultures as well as openness to and interaction with others occupy a primary role forces us, as Beck (2006: 89) points out, to "develop the art of translation and bridge-building. This involves two things: on the one hand, situating and relativizing one's own form of life within other horizons of possibility; on the other hand, the capacity to see oneself from the perspective of cultural others". In this context, translation processes should be rethought so as to accomplish this type intercultural interaction. As such foreignizing approach to news translation can be conducive to disclosing the strangeness of others to the receiving audience, paving the way for cultural dialogue and mitigating cultural hatred.

Foreignizing translations are gateways and access to the original news events occurred worldwide. That is, it is through foreignization that the image of the foreign is rendered in a way that does not deny its fundamental strangeness. News translation in which a trace of the difference of the other and their voices are retained is a building-bridge to cultural dialogue. In other words, Foreignizing approach to news translation can be essential for openness to otherness because it helps retain the essence of the foreign as well as paves the way for knowing what is always obscured and harboured in domesticated news texts. As Bielsa (2009) states that what is at stake is no longer the fact that news are fundamental in generating a consciousness of the world as a whole, but *whether the news can create spaces of cosmopolitan openness to the world and to others.*

Foreignization= keeps the image of otherness intact and undamaged—which is essential for achieving cross-cultural coalescence and pollination via translation. Also, appreciation of differences and diversity exists.

CONCLUSION

This piece of work is surely incomplete because it does not provide a thorough study on the topic under enquiry. However, I believe that this is an interesting research topic which could be developed in due time.

In a nutshell, news translations have played a significant role in disseminating and gathering news reports across the globe. Translation processes reconstruct news production and circulation in compatibility with the ideological as well as political interests of some particular news agencies as well as in accord with the readers' expectations. These translation strategies are then influenced by the policy of the news agency. As a result, the image of otherness in news event is accentuated and naturalized in ways that obscure its difference. Therefore, this paper is an attempt to draw on political news reports translations to figure out this kind of alteration and transposition undertaken when translating a foreign news report that is consciously tailored to fit the

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receiving audience. However, based on this caveat of domesticating the other, this paper opts for foreignizing approach to news translation as an alternative strategy to communicate the difference as well as to pave the way for cultural dialogue.

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