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TRANSLATING ENGLISH EUPHEMISMS INTO ARABIC:

CHALLENGES & STRATEGIES

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Degree of Master of Arts in
English/Arabic/English Translation and Interpreting**

by

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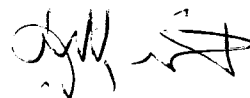
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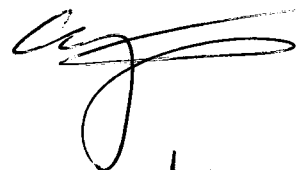
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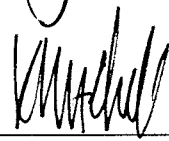
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ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to examine the theoretical and practical issues that arise in the translation of euphemisms from English into Arabic. Euphemisms are words or stretches of words used in various forms of discourse where the author intends to express a thought or an emotion, which if communicated bluntly, would cause the receptor embarrassment and/or emotional pain. Their usage is normally governed by the social, cultural, and religious norms of a given community during a given period.

By their very nature, the use of euphemisms involves a certain degree of conscious and deliberate distortion. In the case of political euphemisms, the distortion may rise to the level of willful deception. Following a review of the various ways in which euphemisms have been defined and the different contexts in which they occur, an attempt is made to determine which, if any, of the translation theories offer the most satisfactory account of how euphemisms should be translated.

Different types of euphemisms used in different contexts are analyzed. It is shown that some, those for which there is a one-to-one equivalency in both the SL and the TL, may be readily translated in a formally equivalent manner; others, for which there is no such equivalency, can at best be translated in a functionally equivalent manner; and yet for others, such as those that are culturally- or ideologically-laden, explication, interpretation,

and transformation become more relevant. Examples of political euphemisms will be further examined by analyzing the masterful way in which Orwell uses some of them in his novel, *1984* and how these have been translated into Arabic. As well, examples of euphemisms used in contemporary texts on Islam and Arabs written in the West are analyzed to determine the degree to which the Arab translator has to be visible in dealing with source text that is misleading, deceptive by design, and possibly detrimental to the interests of his community. The findings demonstrate that the issues that arise in the translation of euphemisms illustrate the need for more collaboration among the various approaches to deal with the translation activity as an intercultural human interaction.

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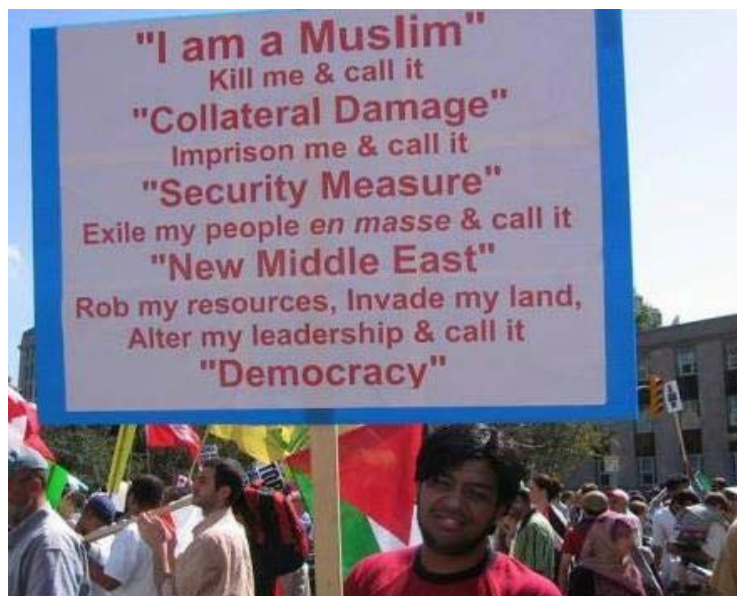
My warm thanks to my supervisor, colleagues and friends at work and to my loving parents and family.

Dedication:

To my dearest husband, Saleh, my beloved children, Maram, Abdulatif and Noor. To my loving parents, family and friends. You have all been very supportive and patient.

Chapter One:

INTRODUCTION



(Reference unknown)

When a reader/ receiver come across the above picture, a few questions would come to his/her mind. How would this reader interpret the above statements?

- a- Collateral Damage as kill me?
- b- Security measure as imprison me?
- c- New Middle East as exile my people en masse?
- d- Democracy as rob my resources, invade my land, alter my leadership?

All the above are instances of euphemisms in communication that sometimes the ordinary readers/receivers are not aware of.

According to Robert Burchfield, the editor of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, “a language without euphemisms would be a defective instrument of communication” (cited in Murphy, 1996: 16-18). As such, euphemisms are significant constituents of interpersonal communication, and at a broader level, euphemisms are inevitable in social, political, religious, business and health communication.

Euphemisms are generally defined as written or verbal utterances, words or stretch of words that stand for something else, with the objective of – consciously or unconsciously - reducing the impact of a certain effect/event, to hide something or to soften an idea expressed by the speaker/writer; yet they also are sometimes used purposely to lie about something or to deceive the receiver (Rees, 2006; Slovenko, 2005; Alkire, 2002; Partridge, 1965). From a translation perspective, such misleading or “deceptive” expressions with boundaries set beyond the mere denotative meanings, pose a real challenge for translators.

Translating euphemisms have been generally ignored in the field of translation as most translation theorists have pushed them to the realm of communicative language use. This thesis examines the nature of euphemistic expressions, their various categories and uses, and the reasons why (or the contexts in which) they are used by communicators.

More specifically, the thesis discusses the main difficulties encountered when translating a special class of euphemisms; namely, political euphemisms. Two versions of the Arabic translation of George Orwell’s *1984* are examined to illustrate the loss of meaning that might occur if the meta-linguistic aspects of euphemisms are not taken into consideration. Other examples of political euphemisms that occur in contemporary texts on Islam and the West are also used to demonstrate the special social, moral, and possibly religious challenges that confront the translator when euphemisms are used, particularly when there is an adversarial relationship between the source and target cultures.



There are two principles of translation. The translator can bring to his fellow countrymen a true and clear picture of the foreign author and foreign circumstances, keeping strictly to the original; but he can also treat the foreign work as a writer treats his material, altering it after his own tastes and convictions, so that it is brought closer to his fellow countrymen, who can then accept it as if it were an original work. (Attributed to Goethe – Venuti, 1995, p.104)

If the history of translation studies is seen as a continuum with theories that are preoccupied with a simplistic adherence to lexical, syntactical, and semantic structures of the source text (ST) on the one hand (X), and theories that focus on the meta-linguistic dimensions of the target text (TT) and the cultural needs of its interactive community on the other hand (Y), it will be shown that the translation of euphemisms could be located at various points of this continuum, with the majority falling towards the end that goes beyond lexical, semantic and syntactical meaning, and concerns itself with the target text and the semiotic genealogy in the host culture (Y). This is especially true of political euphemisms where the role of the translator is to expose the ideological content of such formulations for the benefit of the reader/listener in the receptive community.

1.1 Problem Statement / Hypothesis

Euphemisms, in general, and political euphemisms, in particular, are by their very nature intentionally distorted expressions. Their use in the source text is conditioned by elements of culture, time, and ideology. This poses special challenges for the translator since an over-occupation with lexical, semantic, and syntactic equivalence and fidelity could yield the opposite result – a loss in meaning and effect. More so than for other expressions, the translation of euphemisms requires the translator to capture the culture (meta-linguistics, semiotics, and genealogy) of an expression in the source text and find a word or stretch of words in the target language that performs the same function as in the original text. In other words, the translation of euphemisms is not just a question of fidelity, accuracy or equivalence. Rather, it is a matter of functionality and communicability across diverse cultures. It is based on the ability to understand, analyze and decode the connotative use of

the source text and communicating this in a manner that preserves the original but also explicates meaning and effect in the target language and culture.

1.2 Significance of the Research

Apart from the fact that little attention has been paid to the translation of euphemisms, the issues raised in such a discussion are relevant for a better understanding of the questions that are involved in translating any form of culturally- and ideologically-laden text at the practical level. This is especially true in the case of translating political euphemisms whose use in the SL may be designed to distort a reality in a manner that may not cohere with the cultural and political interests of the TL community, particularly in contexts where the two cultures are in some form of an adversarial relationship, politically or culturally. The view adopted in this thesis is that in such cases a more “ethical stance” is to expose the hidden meaning and the deception of euphemisms whereby ‘collateral damage’ for example, is rendered in away to indicate ‘loss of human life and livelihood’.

1.3 Outline of the thesis

This thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter one, this introduction, sets out the context of the thesis and outlines its structure. Chapter two provides various definitions of euphemisms, the purpose(s) for their use and the contexts in which they occur. Examples of how some euphemisms have been translated from English into Arabic will be given to illustrate some of the challenges facing the translator. Chapter three reviews relevant literature on translation studies showing how the gradual move away from a concern with the lexical and semantic aspects of the source text to the meta-linguistic, semiotic, and pragmatic dimensions provides better strategies for the translation of euphemisms. Chapter four outlines the conceptual, linguistic, and cross-cultural issues that arise in the translation of euphemisms. This is done in the context of a related network of rhetorical devices that include metaphors, idioms, doublespeak, newspeak and politically correct language. Chapter five is devoted to a specific analysis of the examples identified in George Orwell’s novel *1984* and their translation into two Arabic versions, in addition to examples from

contemporary political euphemisms. Chapter six concludes with a summary of the findings and recommendations for further research.

Chapter Two:

Euphemisms: Definitions, Categories & Uses

Those who call a spade a spade, said Oscar Wilde, are fit only to use one. A way to avoid calling a spade a spade is by a euphemism.

(Slovenko, 2005: 533)

2.1 Definition of Euphemisms

Etymologically, the word euphemism is derived from the Greek words, 'eit' for 'good' and 'pheme' for 'speech'. When combined, these words mean to speak with good words or in a nice manner.

Euphemisms are generally defined in terms of the substitution of a more pleasant word or phrase for something or someone that, if described blatantly, would be more offensive in some manner to the receptor or the social community of the receptor. The following examples of dictionary definitions will serve to show what is common to all euphemisms:

"a euphemism is the substitution of an agreeable or inoffensive expression for one that may offend or suggest something unpleasant"

Merriam Webster on line Dictionary (2008)

The act or an example of substituting a mild, indirect, or vague term for one considered harsh, blunt or offensive" or, it is "the deliberate or polite use of a pleasant word or expression to avoid the emotional implications of a plain term as in 'passed away' or 'passed over' for 'died'.

Freedictionary.com (2008)

A euphemism is the substitution of an agreeable or less offensive expression in place of one that may offend or suggest something unpleasant to the listener; or in the case of 'doublespeak', to make it less troublesome for the speaker", it may also be "a substitution of a description of something or someone rather than the name, to avoid revealing secret, holy, or sacred names.

Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia (2008)

“polite words or expressions that you use instead of a more direct one to avoid shocking or upsetting someone”

Longman’s 3rd Edition (1995)

In the more scholarly literature on the subject, the intention of the speaker/writer in using euphemisms and the effect this has on the hearer/reader are further elucidated. (Slovenko, 2005: 533), for example, defines euphemisms as “substituting an inoffensive or pleasant term for a more explicit, offensive one, thereby *veneering the reality*” (emphasis added). While preserving the standard definition of euphemisms, Slovenko’s draws attention to the elements of concealment and deception that are involved in the use of euphemisms – ‘veneering reality’. In this sense, euphemisms “are motivated by kindness, some by good taste,” but also “by commercial or political deception or obfuscation” (Ibid: 548).

Another technical definition reads: “a lexical substitution strategy for representationally displacing topics that evoke negative effect, sparing addressees the communicative discomfort” (M. S. McGlone et al., 2006: 261); for example, calling a blind person ‘visually impaired’ or using ‘downsizing’ for firing employees.

What all these definitions have in common is the fact that a word or a stretch of words is sometimes used, knowingly and willfully, to ‘distort’ a given reality so that the receptor is spared embarrassment, offense, or pain. However, not all users of euphemisms have benign intentions, and this is what is missing in some of these definitions. Euphemisms may be used to mislead the receptor into accepting a ‘reality’ that the speaker wishes to create and that would otherwise be resisted by the receptor. This is especially true of political euphemisms where something morally and legally wrong such as launching a war against a whole nation for unjustified reasons and causing considerable casualties among civilians may be referred to as ‘preemptive attack’, ‘protective reaction strike’ or simply an ‘intervention’.

Euphemisms are to be understood as a ‘social act’ that language users resort to in order to avoid embarrassment in certain situations, to maintain a level of formality in specific settings, or to avoid mentioning names or words as in social and religious taboos. Most

importantly, and in relation to the objectives of this thesis, euphemisms are at times used to delude the receptors in a way that serves the political hidden agenda of the speaker/writer.

For the purposes of this thesis, euphemisms are defined in a more comprehensive manner to refer to the use of words or phrases in a manner that conceals the true nature of the message and renders the receptor more likely to be accepting of the message, but also by sometimes getting the receptor to accept an interpretation of reality that serves the interests of the speaker/writer. This is a deviation from the standard use where the emphasis is placed on the interest of the receptor or the community of receptors by sparing them the embarrassment or the offense that would otherwise be taken.

2.2 A Network of Related Concepts

The use and nature of a euphemism may be further clarified by a brief description of a number of related concepts; namely, 'dysphemisms', 'cacophemism', and 'orthophemisms'.

Allan & Burridge define 'dysphemism' as the antonym of 'euphemism'. A dysphemism is "an expression with connotations that are offensive either about the denotatum or to the audience, or both, and [it] is substituted for a neutral or euphemistic expression for just that reason" (2006:31). Dysphemisms are used to describe or talk/write about something or someone the speaker/writer despises or intentionally disparages. In political settings, it is used by two opposing parties to criticize, ridicule, and mock each other. Terms such as 'totalitarian regime', 'so-called democracies', 'axis of evil', 'terrorists', and 'extremists' are classified as dysphemisms. The well known 'Abu Ghraib prison' scandal in Iraq has made the name itself a dysphemism which exposed the atrocities that were committed by the American soldiers in the sadistic torturing of Iraqis. So, in an attempt to reduce the negative effect of just mentioning the name of Abu Ghraib, it was changed to "camp redemption" which is a euphemism covering up the scandal.

Dysphemisms are usually motivated by hatred, anger, or fear and tend to be more colloquial and figurative; impolite or indecent behaviors are considered dysphemistic (Ibid: 31-2). In Wikipedia, dysphemisms are distinguished from another related concept,

‘cacophemism’, as follows: “dysphemism and cacophemism refer to the usage of an intentionally harsh word or expression instead of a polite one; they are rough opposites of euphemism. “Dysphemism” may be either offensive or merely humorously deprecating, while a “cacophemism” is usually deliberately offensive. Wikipedia.com (2008)

Allan & Burridge add a third term, ‘orthophemism’, to the family of euphemisms. Orthophemisms are words or phrases used as an alternative to a dispreferred expression, yet they are more direct and formal than euphemisms” (Ibid: 33). In grammar.about.com (2008), orthophemism is defined as “straight talk; direct or neutral expressions that are not sweet-sounding, evasive, or overly polite (euphemistic), nor harsh, blunt, or offensive (dysphemistic)”.

The following table provides comparative examples of the three terms:

Euphemism	Dysphemism	Orthophemism
Pee / water the garden	Piss	Urinate
Thrifty	Stingy	Careful

2.3 Arabic Euphemisms

In Arabic, euphemistic words and expressions serve the same purposes but in a different cultural context. The equivalent meaning of ‘euphemism’ in Arabic is given by the description “التلطيف اللغوي” or “التحسين اللفظي”. For example, ‘كريم العين’ is used instead of ‘أعور’ for a blind person, and ‘قضاء الحاجة’ instead of ‘التبول’ for urinate.

The Holy Quran is a rich source of euphemisms in Arabic. Farghal in his article *Arabic Euphemisms in English Translation* (2005:58), lists a number of examples of euphemistic expressions mentioned in the Holy Quran as in using words such as ‘لامستم النساء’ and ‘قضى منها’ to indirectly talk about sexual intercourse, a topic that is socially tabooed. Excretion functions are also euphemized by using more technical terms as in ‘الغائط’ for feces (Ibid: 59).

2.4 Categories and classifications of Euphemisms

Euphemisms are expressed in different forms, and are motivated by diverse reasons such as, taboos, fears, respect and politeness, fun or deception and obfuscation. Among these forms of construction are:

- Scientific Terms and Jargon: pull the plug for euthanasia/ mercy killing, thermal therapy for ice bags;
- Abbreviations and Acronyms: 'WMD' for Weapons of Mass Destruction, AIDS for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome;
- Abstraction: using it, the thing, the matter (to avoid the direct mention of something);
- Circumlocution: 'girl's rest room' for 'toilet', or 'terminological inexactitude' for 'lie';
- Remodeling: 'sugar' or 'shoot' for shit, 'darnation' for 'damnation';
- Hyperbole: using overstatements as in 'flight to glory' for 'death';
- Figurative Expressions: 'go to the happy hunting grounds' for 'die', or the "birth pangs of a new Middle East" used by Condoleezza Rice for the June 2006 Israeli war on Lebanon;
- Understatement: reducing the effect or impact: 'sunshine units' for contamination by radioactive isotopes, 'outgassing' or 'runoff' for pollution; and,
- Omission: deleting the whole thing, word or sentence by putting dots, dashes or exclamation marks.

2.5 Purposes and Uses of Euphemisms

Euphemisms by definition are a means of accommodation and deception at the same time. In certain social contexts, they are used to avoid embarrassment and the direct mention of social taboos. In other situations, they are used to give more importance and a higher status to certain individuals and events, i.e. calling the 'garbage collector' 'عامل نظافة' a

Euphemisms are also used to ameliorate the effects of consequences of certain acts or incidents as in, 'wife-beating' 'ضرب الزوجات' becoming 'domestic violence' 'عنف منزلي/أسري', 'marital discord' 'خلاف زوجي/عائلي', or 'spousal abuse' 'إساءة زوجية'. This form of amelioration is often employed in political and military discourse where facts that otherwise would be deemed to be unacceptable from a moral and/or legal perspective are made to look benign and innocuous. For example, terms or phrases such as 'tea party' 'حفلة شاي' and 'birthday party' 'حفلة عيد ميلاد' are used to refer to methods of torture, 'collateral damage' 'أضرار جانبية' for killing innocent civilians in war, an 'invasion' becomes a 'rescue mission' 'مهمة/عملية إنقاذ', and 'bombings' become 'protective reactions' 'رد فعل وقائي' or 'surgical strikes' 'إجراء/ضربات جراحية' (Allan & Burridge, 2006:230).

The same occurs in the business world where euphemisms are used by management to conceal a reality that would otherwise have a negative effect on the organization. Thus firing employees is described in terms of 'lay off', 'downsizing', 're-engineering', or 'involuntarily separated', and demotions are said to be 'vocational relocations'. Seemingly benign words are used to soften the shocking reality of being fired or demoted (Slovenko, 2005:545).

Rawson (1981:28-9) categorizes the usage of euphemisms into positive and negative euphemisms. The positive ones usually 'inflate' and 'magnify' facts whereas the negative ones 'deflate' and 'diminish' the reality being described. In the domain of political discourse, euphemisms can be employed for benign or malignant purposes. Rawson states that "when euphemisms are used to purposely conceal our inward anxieties, conflicts, fears, and shames, they become 'doubletalk' designed to mislead and are convenient words for people who lie about what they are doing" (Ibid:28). Rawson states that both parties of the communication, in using and accepting these misleading euphemisms, are parties to the 'conspiracy'. The conspiracy is that both interlocutors pretend that what such euphemisms stand for does not exist, and these are taken at face value (Ibid:29).

Euphemisms are often used in social and religious contexts, especially when this relates to collectively agreed upon taboos such as 'death', 'bodily functions', 'sex', and 'profanity'. In almost all societies, there is an implicit understanding that such topics are to be euphemized. For example, in both English and Arabic, there are functionally equivalent expressions that are employed to maintain face-saving and to avoid embarrassment, or to spare the listener feelings of discomfort. In English, for instance, 'pass away', 'depart', or 'met his maker' are used for 'die'. In Arabic, the same effect is obtained by using 'انتهى أجله' or 'انتقل إلى رحمة الله أو إلى الرفيق الأعلى' instead of the direct 'مات'.

In religious contexts, people tend to avoid the direct reference to God as a way of showing respect to their creator, e.g. in Christianity, Jesus is referred to as 'gosh' or 'gee', and in Judaism, God is called 'HaShem' instead of using 'Adonai'. This is not the case in Arabic. The name of Allah is always uttered and praised. Muslims are encouraged, even urged, to pray to Allah in direct ways but with praise, thankfulness, and respect. However, in cursing and swearing, Arabic users tend to avoid direct swearing by using techniques of alphabetical alteration as in 'نعل / ينعل' instead of 'يلعن / لعنة' for 'damn' because damnation is not a good deed to be practiced by Muslims. Similarly, in English 'darnation' is used for 'damnation'.

In the area of bodily functions, both English and Arabic employ euphemistic expressions to refer to things related to 'urination' 'التبول'; 'WC' or water closet reads as 'دورة مياه', 'bathroom' reads as 'الحمام' and 'toilet' reads 'تواليت' which is borrowed, etc. (Farghal, 2005:65). In the case of menstruation, a social/cultural topic usually tabooed in public discourse, expressions such as 'got period' or 'the cavalry's come' are used for the menstrual cycle. This topic is also similarly euphemized in Arabic by saying 'دورة' or 'عندي عذر' or even 'مضيوقة' to flag the monthly cycle.

Euphemisms are commonly used to camouflage behaviors that violate social norms and mores or 'political correctness'. Adultery, for example, is referred to as 'extra-marital sex', 'abusing the bed', 'having an affair', or 'an act of shame'. The same occurs in Arabic, where 'الزنا' is used to describe 'zina'. For bribery, the 'يقيم علاقة غير مشروعة أو علاقة حميمة' and 'خيانة زوجية' are used to describe 'bribery'.

Euphemisms are also used to soften descriptions of physical or social handicaps. A female who is not married is said to be a 'spinster' or 'bachelor girl' instead of the previously used description 'old maid' (Rees, 2006:28). In Arabic, 'عزباء' or the more colloquial expression 'بنت بنوت' are used instead of 'عانس' which is very blunt and offensive. Blind people are said to be 'visually impaired' whereas in Arabic 'كفيف' is used for 'أعمى'. The same applies when 'physically challenged' or 'differently able' are used instead of 'handicapped', which is considered a dysphemism. Similarly in Arabic, instead of saying 'شخص معوق', 'ذو الاحتياجات الخاصة' is used.

Political and military discourse is replete with euphemisms that often hide a brutal reality or are designed to create a reality that is far from the truth. Wars, political conflicts, and adversarial relationships are rich opportunities for coining and creating new euphemisms. Orwell aptly describes this in the following quotation:

In our time, political speech and writing are largely the defense of the indefensible.... Thus political language has to consist largely of euphemism, question-begging and sheer cloudy vagueness. Defenseless villages are bombarded from the air, the inhabitants driven out into the countryside, the cattle machine-gunned, the huts set on fire with incendiary bullets: this is called *pacification*. Millions of peasants are robbed of their farms and sent trudging along the roads with no more than they can carry: this is called *transfer of population or rectification of frontiers*. People are imprisoned for years without trial, or shot in the back of the neck or sent to die of scurvy in Arctic lumber camps: this is called *elimination of unreliable elements*. Such phraseology is needed if one wants to name things without calling up mental pictures of them. (Orwell, 1946:4)

More so than with other types of euphemisms, the elements of intentional deceit and concealment are more pronounced in the case of political euphemisms. They are by design devised to mislead the audience from getting an accurate picture of the events that are happening in areas of conflict and struggle. Therefore, facts are hidden and truth is not revealed (Laura From, 2007).

During the Vietnamese War, the Gulf War, and the War on Iraq, bodies or corpses of victims are termed 'body bags', 'human remains pouches', and 'transfer tubes'. The word death is totally avoided (John Leo, 2004). 'Collateral damage' is used for the killing and bombardment of innocent civilians who happen to be in a conflict or war zone. This term was frequently used in the Gulf War to justify the 'unintended killing of the local population' (Wilson, 2008). In Arabic, this term is translated into 'أضرار مرافقة أو جانبية' while more accurately it would read 'مذبحة' or 'قتل مدنيين أبرياء'. As Slovenko (2005:547) comments: "euphemisms provide clean words which are used to cover atrocious deeds". The word 'war' itself has been replaced by other cosmetic terms such as 'conflict', 'struggle', 'incursion' or 'intervention' to "euphemize the campaign of killing and soften it" (Poole, Unspeak, 2008). 'Friendly fire', rendered in Arabic as 'نيران صديقة', euphemizes the fact that soldiers are attacked and killed by their own allies. What would otherwise constitute criminal negligence is made to sound more acceptable; as if a horrific error committed by a friend ought to be forgiven (Morrison, 2003).

Nowhere are the intentionality of concealment and the distortion of reality better illustrated than in euphemisms that occur in political discourse designed to create a state of mind in the audience that is receptive to an impending act that would otherwise not be supported. Bush's infamous use of the 'axis of evil' to describe the alleged threat that is posed by Iran, Korea, and Syria is designed to create enemies and justify any 'preemptive' actions that may be forbidden by international law. 'The War on Terror' that, as a metaphor, is similar to 'the War on Poverty' is then made to be the basis for attacking other countries, changing regimes, and 'enforcing democracy'.

In this Chapter, an attempt was made to provide a working definition of euphemisms, identify their various uses and purposes, and give examples of them in English and Arabic. It is clear that unlike other fixed expressions such as idioms and metaphors, euphemisms involve an intentional element of concealment and deception. In some cases, this is done for benign reasons as when the receptor's feelings are being spared embarrassment and/or pain; in other cases, it is done for no other reason than to delude the receptor into accepting a reality that serves the purposes of the speaker/writer. It is also clear that euphemisms have a temporal and cultural genealogy. Their use is conditioned by social and

temporal factors. Euphemisms that serve a purpose at a given point in the life of a society may become obsolete later. Moreover, the use of euphemisms may be needed in some but not other societies.

The translation of euphemisms raises many of the issues that are normally covered in translation theory with respect to the translation of any type of text. In addition, their translation also involves special challenges that arise from the different conceptualizations of the same topic or event in different cultures. And, in the case of political euphemism, where deceit and distortion are involved, the challenge is of balancing fidelity to the original with the political and social needs of the target culture.

Chapter Three:

Translation Theories

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the definitions, categories, and uses of euphemisms, dysphemisms, and orthophemisms were discussed. In this chapter, a general review of the literature of translation studies will be undertaken as it relates to the issues that arise in the translation of euphemisms from English into Arabic. Consistent with the hypothesis of the thesis, special emphasis will be placed on the recent theories in translation studies that pay more attention to the meta-linguistic approaches that go beyond formal meaning and account for cross-cultural and ideological factors.

3.2 General Review of the Literature

It could be argued that the history of translation studies is a record of the various ways in which the issue of equivalency or non-equivalency has been handled. The debate has been described in terms of dichotomies such as word-for-word, sense-for-sense, form versus content, formal equivalence versus dynamic equivalence, syntactic and semantic versus communicative translation, and literal versus free translation. What seems to be no longer controversial is the emerging consensus that the earlier preoccupation with the formal structure of language – syntactics, linguistics, and semantics - has to shift towards a concern with the functional aspects of language. The work of John Austin *How to Do Things with Words* (1975) is considered to be a turning point in language theory. His notion stipulates that words and sentences very often do more than just describe reality in a manner that can be said to be true or false. They also perform acts. Their usage creates a social reality. For example, the use of the euphemism ‘collateral damage’ in a sentence does more than report the death of innocent civilians. It also performs the function of justifying or rationalizing the manner in which they were killed. In fact, most euphemisms are illocutionary acts as defined by Austin.

The functional dimension of language usage became important for the development of translation studies. If the source text does more than describe a reality and involves meta-linguistic considerations that relate to social and cultural practices and conditions, the equivalency or non-equivalency between the ST and TT becomes more problematic. In addition to searching for lexical and semantic equivalencies, the translator also has to capture meta-linguistic features that involve 'cultural' translation as well.

Early translation theorists did seem to be aware of the need to incorporate the illocutionary or performative aspect of language. Most of them recognized that the classical approach to translation resting on a concern with the lexical and semantic aspects of language was not adequate. The issue for translation theorists was to account for the nature of this additional characteristic of language usage.

This is evidenced in the work of Jakobson, one of the earlier theorists to formulate a systematic approach to translation studies. His tripartite classification of translation types remains at the core of all contemporary discussions of translation theories:

1. intralingual translation which is the rewording or paraphrasing of words and sentences within the same language;
2. interlingual translation which is the decoding of signs and words in one language and replacing them with similar signs or similar meanings in another language "translation proper"; and ,
3. the intersemiotic translation, which is the transfer of verbal signs into non-verbal sign systems (art/music), also called "transmutation"

(Baker, 2006:230; Gentzler, 2001:1)

Although the translation of euphemisms may be intralingual as when, for example, in English the euphemism 'spinster' may be replaced by the English words 'unmarried female', what is more relevant for the purposes of this thesis is the interlingual translation of euphemisms.

Jakobson anticipated a conclusion that is now widely accepted among translation theorists; namely, that "while messages may serve as adequate interpretations of code units or messages, there is ordinarily no full equivalence through translation" (Bassentt, 2002:22). This is mainly due to differences in language systems, the cultural conventions of the

languages involved, the lack of equivalent structures, expressions or signs in the target language, and the value systems of both the SL and TL (Ibid:29-30). Since then, theorists have struggled with the nature of non-equivalency and how it should be accounted for in the practice of translation.

A similar conclusion was arrived at by Eugene Nida who devoted much of his efforts to issues that arise in Biblical translation. He stated:

Since no two languages are identical either in meanings given to corresponding symbols, or in ways in which such symbols are arranged in phrases and sentences, it stands to reason that there can be no absolute correspondence between languages ... no fully exact translation ... the impact may be reasonably close to the original but no identity in detail.

(Nida, 1964 cited in Venuti, 2000: 126)

Except for very simple text where formal equivalency may be attainable, the process of translation will involve the translator in adjusting the ST so that it may achieve the same function in the TL. Dynamic Equivalence, defined as “the receptor’s response to the translated text should be the same as the original reader’s response to the original text”, is all that can be achieved under some circumstances. Since the meaning and functions of words are derived from their context and their associations in the ST, the TT should create the same effect on the receptor. Nida describes this under his principle of ‘equivalent effect’ which permits the translator to use such means as substitution, explicitation, and redundancy as long as this contributes to the receptor having the same response as that of someone in the source language. Examining the translation of euphemisms from Nida’s perspective entails looking at the “emotive /connotative” meaning of these expressions.

Another important contribution by Nida is his attempt to show how, when, and why equivalency and non-equivalency may arise in translation. First, the nature of the message may be such that either form or content is to be emphasized. In political discourse, for example the content of the message would normally be more important than the form in which it is delivered, whereas the reverse would be true in the translation of poetry. The second consideration is the reason or purpose why the translator chooses to translate a given text. Nida argues that although “it is assumed that the translator has purposes

generally similar to, or at least compatible with, those of the original author, but this is not necessarily so” (Venuti, 2000: 127). A fable translated for the reading pleasure of children may be different from one that is translated for ethnographic study. The third consideration relates to the decoding abilities and interests of members of the TL. In carrying out his task, the translator must be mindful of who will make use of the translated text, his knowledge base, linguistic and conceptual abilities, and his interests.

Nida’s analysis made a significant contribution to the cultural shift in translation studies. The emphasis he placed on the importance of the nature of the message, the purpose of the translation, and the decoding abilities of the receptor are all very relevant to the analysis of euphemisms whose usage is very distinctive in nature, where the purpose of translating them could vary depending on the personal agendas of the writer and the translator, and where social and cultural circumstances of members of the target community have a strong bearing on their ability to decode the text. This shift towards looking at ‘meaning’ as something that goes beyond linguistic analysis, and is generated by ‘language in use’ coincided with developments in linguistic theory and informed much of the discussion that was to follow in translation studies. Charles Morris, *Writings on the general theory of signs* (1971, orig. 1938) distinguished three areas in the study of signs: (1) syntactic, defined as the ‘formal relationship of signs to one another’; (2) semantics defined as the study of ‘the relationship of signs to the objects to which the signs are applicable’; and (3) pragmatics defined as the study of the relationship of ‘signs to interpreters’ (1938: 6). It was the last one that gave rise to the movement in translation studies known as Pragmatics. A number of translation theories were developed with a greater emphasis on departing from a purely linguistic approach that is based on syntactical and semantic analysis, towards a more interpretive functional approach, which disregards the surface structures of the text and highlights connotative meaning and pragmatic use.

In its simplest form, Pragmatics – focuses on “the study of the *purposes* for which utterances are used” (Hatim, 2001:232, emphasis added). Baker further explains that pragmatics is ‘the study of *language in use*’. It is the study of meaning, not as generated by the linguistic system but as conveyed and manipulated by participants in a *communicative situation*” (Baker,1992:217, emphasis added). For example, when a speaker utters the

following statement as he comes into a room full of smoke: “I am allergic to smoking”, the intended meaning needs not be a factual statement about the speaker’s health, but rather that he cannot stay in this room and should leave, or that someone should open the windows for fresh air, or even an indirect request that a person in the room should stop smoking. As Baker points out, the meaning of such a statement does not exist in the text, but in the situation where the statement is used. Similarly, J.R. Firth believes that “the meaning of an utterance has to do with what the utterance is intended to achieve, rather than merely the sense of the individual word” (Hatim & Mason, 1990:31).

The intentional/illocutionary dimension of the linguistic act and its function in the communication process has become central to translation theory. One school, the Functional Approach, argues that the translator must try to understand the intention/function behind the source text and encode this in the target language in a manner that is meaningful to the target language audience. Based on deciphering the intended function or intention, the translator will be able to decide how to translate the original text.

For example, in translating the euphemistic expression ‘collateral damage’ into ‘مذبحة أو قتل الأبرياء’ rather than ‘أضرار جانبية’, the translator would have decided that the intent of the source text should be made to draw attention to the devastating effect of an attack on innocent civilians. Had he chosen to use ‘أضرار جانبية’, his understanding of the intent of the original text would have been to make something morally and/or legally offensive appear to be less so. This raises the interesting question of the translator’s visibility in the translation process discussed later in the thesis: would the translator – by being ‘invisible’ - become an accomplice if the intention of the original text, if preserved in the target text, would be misleading or deceptive to the target community of which the translator is a member?

Another member of the Pragmatic school, the German linguist Koller, states “the translator is a ‘decision maker’ (cited in Munday, 2001:46-8). In translating a text, a decision has to be made about what would constitute a ‘functionally equivalent’ text in the target language. In some ways, the translator is ‘torn’ between fidelity to the original text, and the communicative, linguistic and extra-linguistic requirements of the receptor in the target

language. The best that can be hoped for is establishing a relative, but not an absolute, equivalency that takes into account contextual factors in the target language such as connotation, linguistic usage and norms, and other relevant socio-cultural and historical practices.

De Beaugrande (2008: 19) takes the dissonance that is created in the mind of the translator in his attempt to establish relative equivalency a step further by developing the notion of 'critical analysis of discourse via counter discourse'. The translation process becomes one in which the translator 'exposes' the extra-linguistic cultural and ideological content of the original text. The 'communicative features' of the original text should be negotiated to reach at the actual intentions of the source.

Juliane House (Munday, 2001:91-93) introduces the distinction between 'covert' and 'overt' translation to explain her definition of 'functional equivalency' as a process of re-contextualization. Covert translation is appropriate when the content and form of the source text can be translated in a manner that has the same effect in the TL as it does in the SL. The translator may create a 'new text' or a 'new original' in the TL as long as it preserves the function of the ST. This process involves the use of a 'cultural filter' that reflects the socio-cultural needs of the receptor community and without which the intentions and functions of the ST cannot be captured.

An overt translation, on the other hand, is appropriate when the content and form of the ST can be understood only in its 'native' context. The language and cultural needs of the receptor are 'overtly' ignored in favor of preserving the linguistic and cultural framework within which the source text occurs. The aim of the translator is to preserve the content and context of the ST to the largest degree possible and to allow the recipient to see the text from the 'outside'. Overt translation attempts to produce a TT that is equivalent at the level of text, register and genre. Examples of text where overt translation would be appropriate includes academic and scientific writing where the concern should be with rendering a functional equivalency that is as true to the original as is possible and where the receptor's needs are of little, if any, relevance.

Although House's distinction between overt and covert translation has been considered to be somewhat confusing (Munday, 2001:93), it is important for the translation of euphemisms in that such expressions are normally created to serve a function in the host culture and where the translator has to decide how to accommodate that function in the receptor's culture. This distinction is made clearer by the work of American cultural theorist, Lawrence Venuti, who devotes much of his attention to the manner in which the translated text 'enters' the TL. His main concern is to ensure that ideologically and value-laden text should not be translated in a way that hides its origin and function.

Venuti (1995:19-24), also cited in Munday (2001:146-8), makes an important distinction between 'domesticated' and 'foreignized' translations. In the former, the translator maintains an invisible role by presenting the ST in a manner so fluent and familiar in the TL that the reader might not be able to tell that it is a translation. In the latter, the translator is visible by ensuring that the receptor in the target community is aware that the text has a 'foreign' origin and is thus able to evaluate it critically as a 'cultural other'. He argues that unless a 'foreignization' strategy is used whenever the text in the SL is value or ideologically laden, the translator may become an accomplice in the process of cultural imperialism, especially when the ST represents a dominant culture. For Venuti, 'foreignization' is:

..not a transparent representation of an essence that resides in the foreign text and is valuable in itself, but a strategic construction whose value is contingent on the current target-language situation. Foreignizing translation signifies the difference of the foreign text, yet only by disrupting the cultural codes that prevail in the target language. In its effort to do right abroad, this translation method must do wrong at home, deviating enough from native norms to stage an alien reading experience-choosing to translate a foreign text excluded by domestic literary canons, for instance, or using a marginal discourse to translate it. (1995:20)

Venuti assumes that translation is interrelated with the "socio-cultural framework" and norms which include "domestic" values, beliefs, social representations and ideological forces" (Munday, 2001: 145). Therefore, translation is affected and determined by the various "players" in this chain. These 'players' have their own values, ideologies and positions, and are trying to impose or reflect them.

Venuti's concepts are very relevant to the translation of euphemism where cultural and political content tend to be pronounced. The translator has to deal with the effects that a euphemism, coined in a dominant culture, would have on members of the TL culture. He has to decide the conditions under which he is to be visible or invisible. In developing Venuti's position, Gentzler argues:

The translator seeks to reproduce those very features of the foreign text that 'abuse' or resist the prevailing forms and values in the receiving culture, thereby allowing the translator to be faithful to aspects of the source text, but still participate in effecting cultural change in the target language.

(2001:39)

Venuti's discussion of the primary role of the translator is based on an ideological position about the role of the translator; namely, that the translator is a culturally or politically 'interested' party in the chain of players that are involved in the process of translation. This, however, is but one possible role of the translator. Other roles may be determined by the purpose(s) of a given text. This multi-purpose approach has been taken up by what has come to be known as the Skopos theory of translation, advocated by Reiss and Vermeer.

Central to the Skopos School are the concepts of aim (skopos) and (commission). The process of translation constitutes an action. Actions have aims or purposes. Therefore, translational actions must have aims or purposes. The translator has to determine the aim of the ST, and then depending on his commission decide on how it is to be translated. As Vermeer puts it: "The aim of any translational action, and the mode in which it is to be realized, are negotiated with the client who commissions the action. A precise specification of aim and mode is essential for the translator" (Venuti, 2000: 221). The manner in which ST is to be rendered as a 'translatum' in the TL depends of the type of text, its purpose in the SL, and the commission of the translator. Reiss identifies three 'normal' text types:

- a. The communication of content-informative type
- b. The communication of artistically organized content-expressive type

c. The communication of content with a persuasive character-operative type

When text is informative, the translator must attempt to convey the sense and meaning of the original content in a way that maintains its invariant component. When the text type is expressive, the translator must 'identify with the artistic and creative intention of the author', and convey a comparable expressive mood in the *translatum*. Moreover, when the text type is operational, the 'desired impulses of behavior' in the original text must be conveyed in the *translatum* (Venuti, 2000: 163-167).

In other words, what governs the decision making process here is the target text cultural context and background. In this approach, "the purpose of the translation" determines which methods can be used to produce the "*translatum*" (Munday, 2001: 79). Reiss & Vermeer identify three possible purposes: the communicative (to persuade), the strategic (free rendering) and the general (anything that motivates the translator). So, the translator can choose any method, omission, faithfulness to the original ST, a formal word-to-word or addition depending on the "cultural conditions and the needs of the audience". They also stress the importance of 'intertextual coherence' which results from the translator's comprehension of the ST and interaction with the Skopos required by the TL. This ties in with their 'fidelity' rule (the message produced should be coherent with TT situation) and treating the ST as an 'offer of information' (Hatim, 2001:77).

The Skopos School also highlights the crucial role of the translator in the "intercultural communication" and maintains that different translations can be produced of the same ST depending on the "purpose" of the translation (Munday, 2001:80). Nord summed up this approach in the statement "the ends justify the means" (cited in Gentzler, 2001:70-1).

Another approach, which adopts "the communicative purpose of translation", is the 'translational action' introduced by the German functionalist Holz-Manttari where translation has an aim and is TL oriented with a message to be communicated interculturally. As Manttari puts it: "it is not about translating words, sentences or texts but it is in every case about guiding the intended co-operation over cultural barriers enabling

functionally oriented communication” (cited in Munday, 2001:77). The “translational action” here involves a number of “players” each has a “goal” working towards a Target Text that is functionally communicative for the receiver.

Moving further towards analyzing translation processes from a cultural point of view, Venuti comments that “the cultural studies trend brought a renewed functionalism to translation theory, a concern with the social effects of translation and their ethical and political consequences” (2004:325-6).

This shift in the translation paradigm has come to be known as the ‘cultural turn’ and is strongly represented by Andrea Lefevere and Susan Bassnett. This approach goes beyond language and highlights the interaction between translation and culture. Bassnett and Lefevere consider translation as a “shaping force dealing with problems of ideology, power relations and social change” (Hatim, 2001: 62). This model studies the factors governing the reception, acceptance or rejection of the literary text, i.e. power, ideology, manipulation, motivation, etc. It focuses on “organic linguistic entities within a network of cultural signs”. According to Lefevere, translation is a process of re-writing through a manipulative behavior to justify socio-cultural problems. With this manipulation of text, the register is shifted, hence the pragmatic effect of text is changed (Ibid: 62-3).

Bassnett claims that “translation is not just the transfer of texts from one language into another, it is now rightly seen as a process of negotiating between texts and between cultures, a process during which all kinds of transactions take place mediated by the figure of the translator” (Bassnett, 2002:6). Considering Bassnett’s understanding of the relationship between ST culture and TT culture, she cautions that forcing the values of the ST culture on the TT culture is “dangerous ground” and calls on translators to bear their “moral responsibility to the TL readers” as they are the writers of the TT (Ibid: 30).

The ‘Cultural Turn’ and the concept of intercultural encounters have a special bearing on the translation of text that relates to the encounters between the West and the Arab/Muslim world. As Faiq observes:

The culture of translating and the translation of culture between Arabic and Western languages require a serious reconsideration of the basis that the in-

between space need not come already formulated as a master discourse but as the space for negotiating a balanced understanding of the encounter through translation. (Faiq, 2007:6)

So that in translating text that is generated in a dominant culture and is then translated into the language of a less dominant culture, the translator has to be careful in how he handles ideologically- or culturally-laden text. He must ensure that a balance is maintained between fidelity to the source text and responsibility towards the ideological and cultural needs of the receptive community. This will prove to be very relevant in determining the role of the translator in translating political euphemism that serve the needs of the source culture but are injurious to those of the receptive culture.

The literature review has so far focused on developments in translations studies resulting from changes in language theory, and specifically shifts in the concept of 'meaning'. The insight that meaning is given not just by the lexical and semantic content of words but also by the context in which words are used, has become accepted in almost all translation theories. Increasing attention is now being paid to the analysis of how context - not just content – affects the formation, understanding, and translation of text. The more recent theories see translation as a 'transactional' process that involves more than a negotiation between two linguistic structures but also one that involves the translator in negotiating between two cultures. Words, stretches of words, even a whole text can be translated properly only if the cultural context of both the ST and TT are taken into account. Central to this new paradigm are the recently developed concepts of register, coherence and cohesiveness, implicature and the Cooperative Principle.

For the Australian School, led largely by M.A.K Halliday, the concept of Register is essential for a full understanding of text. Register is defined as "the clustering of semantic features according to situation type," and "can be defined as a configuration of semantic resources that the member of a culture typically associates with a situation type" (Halliday, 1978:111). Halliday further develops register analysis through the related concepts of field, tenor, and mode.

Field refers to the type of discourse that is being engaged in. The range of words used in a given context and the usage rules that apply are determined by the subject matter itself.

As Baker puts it: “...linguistic choices will vary according to whether the speaker is taking part in a football match or discussing football; making love or discussing love; making a political speech or discussing politics; performing an operation or discussing medicine” (Baker, 1992:15). In the case of translating euphemisms, the ‘field’ may be religion, sex, gender, politics, taboos, etc. each governed by a set of linguistic and meta-linguistic considerations.

Tenor refers to the social and cultural relationship(s) that exist between and among those involved in the discourse. Language choices and nuances, for example, could be influenced by whether the participant is a superior or a subordinate, teacher or student, parent or child, etc. Again these relationships are socially and culturally conditioned, and the translator needs to be aware of these formal, sometimes informal, relationships and how they influence language usage. “Getting the tenor of discourse right in translation can be quite difficult (Ibid:16) and, for example, in handling the formality of a parent/child relationship, “It depends on whether one sees a certain level of informality as ‘right’ from the perspective of the source culture or the target culture” (Ibid:16).

Finally, mode refers to the manner in which language is being communicated: written or spoken, in the form of a lecture, or an essay.

Within this Hallidayen approach, there is still a significant connection to grammar. Halliday stresses that “a discourse analysis that is not based on grammar is not an analysis at all,” and adds that “meanings are realized through wordings”. He explains this as “a theory of grammar” which he considers the only way to “uncover” or “reveal” the underlying interpretation of meaning (Hoey & Houghton in Baker, 2006: 49). In other words, Halliday gives as much importance to text analysis and grammar as he does to social interaction carried out by participants through formation and use of text.

Euphemisms, being part of a discourse uttered in a given situation in a cultural context with hidden intentions, can be closely examined within Halliday’s model of language.

The use of euphemisms usually occurs within a certain field – religion, sex, politics – and their translation into the TL will involve the same. The translator must be able to identify the

field, and must be familiar with its cultural and historical genealogy. Only then can he negotiate how the ST is to be translated into the TL. Similarly, understanding the tenor of a euphemism is essential for effective communication. Who is using it, for what purpose, and with what effect are questions that need to be answered before an adequate translation can be given. The mode of euphemism usage is perhaps less important, although if the euphemism is used in the context of simultaneous translation, the translator may not have the time or the opportunity to reveal the hidden meaning, unless he is already familiar with the euphemism.

Mona Baker develops some of these concepts by analyzing the challenges of formulating equivalency in translation at different levels: word, above-word, grammatically, textually, and pragmatically. At all levels, Baker recognizes that where there is cultural content, the translator is confronted with difficulties that go beyond just the linguistic ones. In discussing idioms, for example, she says: "Idioms and fixed expressions which contain culture-specific items are not necessarily untranslatable. It is not the specific items an expression contains but rather the meaning it conveys and its association with culture-specific contexts which can be untranslatable or difficult to translate" (Baker, 1992:68).

But it is Baker's discussion of pragmatics that is more relevant to the translation of euphemism, and in particular her use of the concepts of cohesiveness, coherence, and implicature.

According to Baker, "Pragmatics is the study of language in use. It is the study of meaning, not as generated by the linguistic system but as conveyed and manipulated by participants in a communicative situation" (Ibid: 217). For any text to be meaningful both in the original and in translation, it has to be both cohesive and coherent. Quoting Hoey, Baker defines the difference between the two as follows: "...cohesion is a property of the text and that coherence is a facet of the reader's evaluation of the text" (Ibid: 218). Cohesion refers to the surface meaning of a sentence to the extent that the sentence follows the lexical, syntactical, and semantic rules of a given language. For communication purposes, the cohesiveness of text is not sufficient for the purposes of communication. In addition, it must make sense to the reader/listener by fitting in with the conceptual and informational input

that the reader/listener contributes to the communication act. Cohesion is more objective and coherence is more subjective. It is the latter that presents the translator with the greater challenge:

The coherence of a text is a result of the interaction between knowledge presented in the text and the reader's own knowledge and experience of the world, the latter being influenced by a variety of factors such as sex, race, nationality, education, occupation, and political and religious affiliations. (Ibid:219)

Baker uses Grice's concept of 'implicature' to clarify further her discussion of coherence and cohesiveness. The normal expectation in the process of communication is that what is said or written is both cohesive and coherent, and says no more and no less than what is meant to be communicated. This is an application of what Grice calls 'conventional implicature'; that is, what is said implies what is meant. But sometimes, especially in conversational communication, what is said implies more or less than is communicated by the surface meaning of the words. In such instances the receptor, be he the listener/reader or the translator has to 'fill in the gaps' by making inferences about the implied but not stated meaning. Grice calls this the 'conversational implicature'.

Baker's discussion of cohesiveness, coherence, and implicature is clearly relevant to the translation of euphemisms. As a word or a string of words, euphemisms in the source text are normally cohesive, but only make sense – cohere – in the context of the cultural background of the language in which they occur. They are also conversational implactures because the intended meaning is more or less than the literal meaning. The translator then must understand the basis on which coherence is established in the SL and how the gap between intended and literal meaning is filled by the users of the SL, then accomplish the same in the TL. This is not an easy task as will be shown in the next chapter.

The degree to which conversational implicatures are involved in the analysis of any text is determined, in part, by Grice's Cooperative Principle. As a social phenomenon, communication rests on the assumption that people say what they mean and mean what they say. Language users are brought up to believe that what is expressed in language should be clear, sincere, brief, and appropriate to the situation. This is at the root of Grice's

Cooperative Principle which, in one of its formulations, is stated as follows: “Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged” (Grice, 1975:165-175).

Based on the Cooperative Principle, Grice formulates four conversational maxims. They are:

Quantity – the message should say no more and no less than is required

Quality – the message should be truthful and supported by relevant and adequate evidence

Relevance – the message should be relevant to the situation

Manner – the message should be clear, brief, organized, and free of ambiguity

Grice’s work has been criticized for, among other things, being guilty of over-generalization, ethno-centricity, applying to some modes of communication – conversational - but not others, and for not being exhaustive enough. For example, some have argued that politeness should be included as an additional maxim since in some cultures politeness may be more important than truthfulness.

What is important for the purposes of this thesis, however, is Grice’s notion that people make certain assumptions about the intentions of others in the communication process, even though these may vary from one culture to the other. Flouting any of Grice’s maxims results in ‘conversational implicatures’ (Baker, 1992:227). Whenever there is a breach of one of these maxims, there is an implied meaning that should be sought by the translator to reach an adequate understanding and translation of the ST, especially when translation takes place between two adversarial cultures and completely different linguistic systems (Hatim in Baker, 2006: 181). In euphemisms, for example, the maxim of ‘Politeness’ is sometimes preserved whereas the maxims of ‘Relevance’ and ‘Quality’ may be flouted for social, religious, or other culturally-based purposes. Unless the translator is aware of these, he may fail to capture the full meaning of the message. As Baker puts it:

Politeness is a relativistic notion and different cultures therefore have different notions of 'polite' behavior. They also have different ideas about what is and what is not a 'taboo' area...In some translation context, being polite can be more important than being accurate....A translator may decide to omit or replace whole stretches of text which violate the reader's expectations of how a taboo subject should be handled- if at all – in order to avoid giving offence. (Baker, 1992: 234)

3.3 Conclusion

The literature review and the review of specific concepts in translation studies undertaken illustrate the gradual move away from an over occupation with the ST to an emphasis on the linguistic and cultural needs of the reader/listener in the TL. Mary Snell-Hornby summarizes this aptly: "...the range and type of difficulties encountered will not so much depend on the ST itself as on the significance of the translated text for its readers as members of a certain culture, or of a sub-group within that culture, with the constellation of knowledge, judgment and perception they have developed from it" (Ibid:222). The role of the translator also shifts from one who is primarily concerned with linguistics to one who is also concerned with culture and inter-cultural communications. He "takes on the role of mediator between different cultures, each of which has its own visions of reality, ideologies, myths and so on" (Hatim and Mason, 1990:236).

The translation of euphemisms indeed confirms the need for this shift. Euphemisms contain and are used in contexts that are heavily invested in culture. The more culturally bound the content is, the greater is the translator's challenge. As Gutt notes: "the more relevant the sociocultural differences are to the communication act, the less successful translation will turn out to be" (2000: 64).

The next chapter will deal with the challenges that the translator faces in translating euphemisms from English into Arabic.

Chapter Four:

Translating Euphemisms

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the difficulties of translating euphemisms are discussed. An analysis of how euphemisms are related to other similar rhetorical devices such as metaphors and idioms is carried out. The nature and use of political euphemisms are elucidated through an examination of Orwell's concepts of 'doublespeak' and 'newspeak', as well as the more recent notion of 'politically correct language'. The chapter concludes by showing that the difficulties encountered in the translation of euphemisms can be met only if they are understood in meta-linguistic terms. This includes the intent of the original author, the semantic and cultural genealogy of the euphemism in the source culture, the relevant semantic and cultural issues in the target culture, and the brief or commission of the translator.

4.2 Words that do not mean what they say

Euphemisms belong to a class of words or stretch of words whose literal meaning is not the real or intended meaning. In this respect they share a feature that is common to other rhetorical linguistic devices such as metaphors, politically-correct expressions, and doublespeak. The latter was made popular by Orwell who, in *1984*, wanted to show the way in which language can be formulated and used to create reality, shape thought, and brainwash people into a manufactured ideology. In what follows, these related linguistic devices will be analyzed to further clarify the nature of euphemisms but more importantly identify the challenges that they create for the translator.

4.3 A Network of Rhetorical Devices

Euphemisms have much in common with other rhetorical devices that have been referred to as 'fixed expressions'. Baker defines fixed expressions as "frozen patterns of language which allow little or no variation in form and, in the case of idioms, often carry meanings which cannot be deduced from their individual components" (Baker, 1995:63). They include such linguistic devices as metaphors, proverbs, and idioms.

Like fixed expressions, euphemisms normally allow little variation in form at both the word and stretch levels. Unlike fixed expressions, however, they can change over time due to social and cultural changes and may even turn into dysphemisms or orthophemisms. Like idioms, the meaning of euphemisms is not always given by the individual words and has to be derived from an understanding of the social and cultural context in which they occur.

In terms of form and function, euphemisms come closest to metaphors. The word 'metaphor' is derived from the Greek 'metaphora' meaning 'transference' (Answers.com). Metaphors have been generally understood as figurative expressions which interpret a thing or action through an implied comparison with something else" as in 'the lip of a cup', 'let's get to the heart of the matter' and 'the walls have ears'. Hatim and Mason point out "...metaphorical use of language invariably conveys additional intended meaning. It is the semiotic status of the metaphor which will be the crucial factor in deciding how it is to be translated" (1990:69). In other words, metaphors are loaded with layers of meaning and should be analyzed semiotically, trying to establish how meanings are formed through the signs of the language system and their interrelations with other signs in their cultural context. This is similar to what has to be done in translating euphemisms which are often expressed in metaphorical form; e.g. "go to the happy hunting ground" or "promoted to glory" for 'die' (Allan & Burridge, 2006:226).

Baker also classifies proverbs as fixed expressions. Wolfgang Mieder defines them as "a short, generally known sentence of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, morals, and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed and memorisable form and which is handed down from generation to generation" (cited in Wikipedia online). Mieder's definition stresses the main functions of proverbs. They provide wisdom, truth, and give moral lessons from real

life. He also identifies the characteristics of these proverbs as being full of metaphors, the expressions are fixed and easy to memorize because of their internal music and rhetorical style. Proverbs are also culture bound expressions that are deeply rooted in the language system and the cultural structure of a given group or community. For this reason, proverbs and euphemisms are alike in that they both are culturally bound expressions.

Baker also considers 'Idioms' to be fixed expressions. "...idioms are fixed patterns of language of multi-word units often carrying meanings which cannot be deduced from their individual components". She further states, "in the case of idioms, one cannot change their order, cannot delete from them, cannot add to them, cannot replace a word for another, and cannot change their grammatical structure" (Baker, 1992:63). Likewise, euphemisms carry meanings and connotations that cannot be inferred from their surface lexical formations and require a deeper analysis of their textual and situational features. They are vulnerable to change over time and new euphemisms are coined to replace older ones - sometimes referred to as the "treadmill of euphemisms", while idioms are fixed patterns and become part of the language system.

Euphemisms and their opposites, dysphemisms, may then be treated as a special subset of fixed expressions, sharing with idioms, metaphors, and proverbs the characteristic of having an implied meaning that goes beyond the lexical and syntactical structures. Like other fixed expressions, euphemisms are culture bound and their usage reflects the society's values and belief system. Yet, euphemisms deviate from this group in that their usage and meaning may change over time. They may even lose their euphemistic attribute.

Related to the study of euphemisms, are the notions of irony, face saving and politeness. Euphemisms being a form of softening up the use of language in a given situation in order to be polite in certain social settings or to save the face of the interlocutors, whether it is being the sender or the receiver, are much similar to the notions of politeness and face saving. Equally, the use of irony in language has similar purposes to these of the use of euphemisms.

Irony is defined as "the use of words to mean something very different from what they appear on the surface to mean" (The American Heritage New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy,

2005). Irony also means “the use of words to convey a meaning that is the opposite of its literal meaning” (Dictionary.com). Hence, the main feature of irony is “an indirect presentation of contradiction between an action or expression and the context in which it occurs... with an emphasis placed on the opposition between the literal and intended meaning of a statement; one thing is said and its opposite implied” (Ibid). Comparing these definitions and features to the ones presented earlier on euphemisms shows that euphemisms, irony and face saving expressions share almost similar aspects. That is; they reflect discrepancy between literal and intended meaning, as well, they are culturally bound expressions. This eventually entails that in translation, such rhetorical devices and use of language pose the same kind of problems which are related to the ability to identify the ironical use, the relation between the source text author and his audience versus this relation to the target text reader, the meta-linguistic factors, etc.

Among the prominent views in this area is that one presented by Hatim (1997). Hatim emphasizes that the misunderstanding taking place in translating irony happens due to the inability to appreciate and handle ironical meaning in the ST, and realizing what constitutes the non-literal meaning in ironical expressions (1997:186). Hatim’s view is based generally on achieving “a balance between effectiveness and processing effort”, and it combines Gutt’s relevance theory and Sperber and Wilson’s notion of relevance. These state that “relevance is a balance between processing efforts and communicative or contextual effects” (Hatim, 1997:194).

Hatim also bases his view on Grice’s maxims and how irony flouts some of these maxims, yet he adds that if the use of irony in English leads to flouting the maxim of quality, in Arabic, the case is different. The use of irony in Arabic flouts the maxim of quantity. Hatim explains this within the different nature of the two languages involved. English uses irony as an effective tool of verbal behavior, so it intends to say less and keep parts of the meaning unsaid. This means that the inference of hidden meanings is left to the receiver to work on. However, Arabic goes in the opposite direction; it says more and expresses more to avoid opaqueness, and this can be expressed by means of motivated redundancy, motivated overstatement and circumlocutions. For example, Hatim suggests that when translating irony from English into Arabic, it may be amplified to give the receiver a clue to infer the irony and to express the ‘attitudinal meaning’ (Ibid: 195-6).

The crucial assumption here is that the translator should be able to analyze the ST meaning pragmatically and semiotically and convey this meaning to the TT, i.e. the irony of the ST should be communicated and has to create the same effect at the target reader. Similarly, the irony should not be explicit but clues can be given to help the TT receiver reach at the implied sense of irony in the ST. Hatim supports this by saying "... preserving irony becomes a problem not only of reception but of production too" (1997: 196).

Considering the above aspects and views with relation to the use of euphemisms and their translation, it may be said that a similar approach can be adopted here; especially that both irony and euphemisms are defined almost in the same way. So, the euphemistic use of language should be preserved and the TT receiver should be able to figure out the implied meaning. However, in literary use and general writings, this can be applicable, but in the case of political euphemisms as will be shown later in this thesis, would this be the same? Would it be acceptable to keep the hidden malicious intentions of the communicator in order to preserve the euphemistic use and assume that the ordinary target reader has the ability to understand the implied meaning or has enough world knowledge to help him decipher these implicit meanings?

4.4 Forms of Political Discourse: Newspeak, Doublespeak, Political Correctness

One of the concerns of this thesis is to focus on the translation of euphemisms as they occur in political discourse since in addition to being culturally-laden, they are also ideologically laden and as such create additional problems for the translator. Euphemisms and dysphemisms have been strongly linked to other forms of political speech such as doublespeak, doublethink, newspeak, sweet-talking and political correctness. In this section, political euphemisms will be analyzed in the context of similar linguistic devices that are used to conceal a political reality through allusions, wordplay, insinuations, and implicatures. The guiding principle in dealing with political euphemisms in this thesis is the acceptability of the target reader/receiver.

Political discourse tends to be ideological in that it presupposes a certain view of the world (ideology) and uses language to promote it. As such, political discourse is usually

value-laden and prescriptive in nature. As Schaffner (2004: 131-2) puts it, "...the textual features [of political discourse] need to be linked to the social and ideological contexts of text production and reception. In other words, texts and discourses are framed by social and political structures and practices". The translator has to be very aware of this feature of political discourse as he attempts to convey the intended meaning in the TL. Schaffner goes on to say:

It is through translation that information is made available to addressees beyond national borders; and is very frequently the case that reactions in one country to statements that were made in another country are actually reactions to the information as it was provided in translation.
(Ibid: 120)

To illustrate her view, Schaffner uses an example from one of J.W. Bush's terms, 'War on Terror'. European politicians preferred using 'fight' to 'war' as it is less dramatic. Changing one word could affect the manner in which meaning is understood or interpreted by the receptor. Another example that shows how words convey a political point of view or an ideology is the use of the word 'terrorists'. In the West, Palestinians killed in the process of launching attacks on Israel are described as 'terrorists' while they are called 'martyrs' by most of the Arab media depending on their political line. Although the literal translation word into Arabic is, 'انتحاريون' or 'إرهابيون', the Arab translator may have to translate it as 'استشهاديون'.

Perhaps no writer has done more to show how language is used to create, shape, and even distort reality than George Orwell. His novel, *1984* was written, in part, to show in a fictional way how a language – Newspeak in the novel - can be manufactured to distort reality through manipulation of words, ambiguity, contradictions, and false allusions. In "*Politics and the English Language*" (1946), he says: "Political language ... is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind". 'Newspeak', has come to be associated with other forms of language distortions that occur in discourse that means less or more than what is expressed in words; in particular, double speak and political correctness.

Doublespeak has much in common with euphemisms in that both are intentionally designed to distort reality and create a calculated response. Laura From (2007) defines

doublespeak as “a deliberately constructed language that is used to disguise thought... it is usually deliberately misleading or deceiving; it is used to create more favorable and flattering expressions”. Her concept of doublespeak is similar to some of the ways in which euphemisms are used. Doublespeak, according to Lutz (2008), performs the following functions:

- it misleads and distorts facts, as in ‘voluntary severance’ for being fired from a job, pretends to communicate, as in ‘elimination of unreliable elements’ for killing imprisoned people without trials.
 - turns bad things to good things, as in ‘friendly fire’
 - avoids responsibility, as in ‘protective reaction strikes’ for ‘war and bombardment’
 - turning negative things to positive things, as in ‘senior citizen’ for ‘old’
 - limits, conceals, corrupts and prevents thought, as in ‘national defense’ for ‘military’.
- (cited in www.damronplanet.com)

Political correctness (PC) is normally taken to be less harmful than doublespeak in that the intention of the user is to reduce embarrassment. Laura From (2007) quoting Katamba defines PC as “a term used to describe language, ideas and policies that minimize offence to racial, cultural or any other identity group”. Andriy Sytnyk in his PHD thesis: *Argumentative euphemisms, political correctness and relevance*, defines PC as neologisms that “are often viewed as replacing biased judgmental expressions devaluating individual’s race, sex, sexual orientation, age, health condition, social status and appearance with neutral units, which do not possess negative connotations, by means of introducing changes on the lexical level”, e.g. ‘chairperson’ for ‘chairman’, ‘people of color’ for ‘black, darkie and nigger’.

Allan & Burrige, on the other hand, do not see PC in as good a light. For them, PC is “a brainwashing program ... politically driven, a form of censoring... it reflects and seeks to enforce social change, manipulating people’s thought and changing their linguistic behavior” (2006:90). This is partly true in that the use of politically correct expressions is not always sincere. It does not necessarily reflect the true beliefs and attitudes of the speaker. The fact that someone uses the title ‘Ms’ may be politically correct but it does not necessarily reveal his views on gender equality. Allan & Burrige, even argue that political correctness has contributed to ‘trivializing’ major issues such as racism, feminism and other controversial

political issues by shifting the focus to minor linguistic matters instead of the core issues (Ibid:93).

Having defined the various forms of political discourse in relation to the central topic of this thesis, it is evident that this network of related concepts (doublespeak, newspeak, political correctness, and euphemisms) share, more or less, the common feature of using language as a means of manipulating and shaping thought and emotions, and/or social behavior and political attitudes.

4.5 Challenges Posed by Euphemisms in Translation

The translator of euphemisms faces the same challenges as he would in translating any other text, and especially text that is culturally bound. These challenges have been well summarized by Wilss' (1996:166):

The success of translators to come to grips with their translation tasks depends on various factors such as their mental disposition, experience, the congeniality (or uncongeniality) of the textual input, the correlation (or non-correlation) of the degree of difficulty of the pertinent text to be translated and the translator's competence level.

The challenges of translating euphemisms, however, are further compounded by the very nature of euphemisms and similar linguistic devices that tend to be culturally laden and where, by definition, the literal meaning is not the intended meaning. As stated earlier, euphemisms or euphemistic expressions are produced in a culture that has its own belief and value system expressed in such things as religion, taboos, traditions, prohibitions, and regulation of social practices and hierarchies. It should be noted that a topic that might be tabooed in one culture is not necessarily tabooed in another. Similarly, the experiences and the world knowledge of one society may not be the same for other societies. These differences in meta-linguistic factors shape and inform the language idiosyncrasies of a given culture over time. They also determine the manner in which members of that culture understand, use, interpret, and react to a culturally-laden linguistic expression. Since euphemisms are created with a certain 'hidden agenda' in mind, the translator has to decide what his role in the translation process is. Is he to expose the 'hidden agenda' of the

expression or is he to be complicit in perpetuating the 'hidden agenda' in the target text and the receiving culture?

In her book *In Other Words*, Baker (1992:65-70) discusses the difficulties that a translator encounters when translating such fixed expressions as idioms, many of which can be adapted to describe the difficulties that arise in the translation of euphemisms. Among these are the following:

1. Difficulty in recognizing that an expression constitutes a euphemism in the ST;
2. Difficulty in understanding the linguistic genealogy (form) of the euphemistic expression in the ST;
3. Difficulty in understanding the cultural genealogy of the euphemistic expression in the ST;
4. Difficulty in finding an equivalent (formal or functional) equivalency in the TL; and,
5. Difficulty in determining what to do when the 'deceptive' content of the euphemism in the ST, if not revealed in the TT, would have an adverse effect on the members of the TL community.

The first challenge for the translator of euphemisms is to decide when a stretch of words constitutes a euphemism in the source text. This is more difficult than it appears to be. The translator may be very adept at giving a formal equivalency without recognizing that the word or stretch of words under consideration constitutes a euphemism in the ST. As such, the translated text may or may not create the same effect in the TL as in the original. Unless the translator has a thorough knowledge of the linguistic genealogy of the expression and its place in the source text, much can be lost in the translation.

The translator also needs to know the cultural genealogy of the linguistic expression in the source text in order to decipher its meaning. Among other things, this requires the translator to have a working knowledge of the original culture including its religion, social and cultural norms, politics, and history. Otherwise, the translator will not be able to understand the reason(s) for the 'concealed' content of the euphemism. As Bahameed (2007) reiterates Wilss in his paper on "Hindrances in Arabic English Translation", the translator is a reader in the first place, and without a proper conceptualization of the 'Other' culture, understanding will not be fulfilled.

The translator must have the ability and competence to initiate himself mentally into the source culture trying to figure out why there is a euphemism in the first place, analyze the structure of its lexical and semantic formulation, decipher the intended but hidden meaning, determine the communicative function it is supposed to perform, and assess the relationship between the sender and the receiver in the source culture.

Once a euphemism has been recognized and located correctly in its cultural and linguistic genealogy in the source culture, the translator faces the challenge of finding a formal or functional equivalency in the TL. Because euphemisms are culturally and linguistically bounded expressions, equivalencies in both SL and TL are not readily available for the majority of them. In some cases, it may be possible to find a semantically and functionally equivalent expression in both the SL and TL. This would be the case when there is commonality in cultural experiences such as content that relates to death. In other cases, there will be functionally, but not semantically, equivalent expressions in both the SL and TL in which case a gloss translation can be given without much loss in meaning. Yet in other cases, neither a functionally nor a semantically equivalency is available, and the translator has to coin a new expression in the TL, borrow a foreign expression, or simply omit the euphemism.

The success of all this depends on the translator's ability and competence in analyzing the expression culturally, symbolically and contextually. It assumes a good grounding in the linguistic and cultural knowledge of the translator's own culture and that of the 'other'. But even if the translator succeeds in all this, there is still the difficulty that arises when the 'hidden' content of the expression is ideologically-laden, and serves the interests of the source culture but is harmful in some manner to the target culture. This is especially relevant in the translation of political euphemisms where there may be an adversarial relationship in the political interests of the two cultures involved. Examples of these will be discussed in the next chapter, especially the translation into Arabic of English euphemisms that were coined in the context of the Gulf War, the so-called War on Terror, War on Iraq, and War on Afghanistan. The main issue here relates to the moral responsibility of the translator towards the target audience. If, for example, a political euphemism has the function of distorting reality for members of the original or source community by vilifying

some aspect of the culture into which the euphemism is being translated, then how should a translator, who belongs to the target culture, deal with such a situation? Does he take the side of the author and thus become complicit in the act of deception or does he take the side of the reader/listener and expose the camouflaged meaning?

This last difficulty goes to the heart of one of the more important questions in translation studies; namely, the role of the translator. Had translation been confined to the lexical, syntactical and semantic features of the source text, then the meaning belonged to the text and role of the translator would have been clear; precisely, to render it equivalent in the target language to as great a degree as possible. With Pragmatics and Functional Theories becoming more accepted, the role of the translator has become more active and intrusive. The translator has come to be seen as someone who (interprets controls, negotiates, mediates, investigates, substitutes, replaces, reflects, and represents); all aspects of intercultural communication and mediation.

The following quotations provide a good summary of the emerging and more proactive position on role of translator:

the translator is a special kind of user, intervenes in this process of negotiation, to relay it across linguistic and cultural boundaries. In doing so, the translator is necessarily handling such matters as intended meaning, implied meaning, presupposed meaning, all on the basis of the evidence which the text supplies. (Hatim & Mason, 1990:33)

Lefevere points out the role of the translator as:

The translator's task is precisely to render the source text, the original author's interpretation of a given theme expressed in a number of variations, accessible to readers not familiar with these variations, by replacing the original author's variation with their equivalents in a different language, time, place and tradition.... Particular emphasis must be given to the fact that the translator has to replace all the variations contained in the ST by their equivalent. (Lefevere, 1975:99)

The more intrusive the role of the translator is, the more careful he has to be in ensuring that justice is done to the original text. Interpreting intentions and implicatures is a more subjective process than giving a formal translation in which there are more objective

rules that govern the lexical, syntactical, and semantic aspects of the text. This is true of the translation of euphemisms, and more so in the case of political euphemisms where issues of ideology, politics, and cultural conflicts are involved.

This chapter has focused on the difficulties that arise in the translation of euphemisms. It was shown that euphemisms are linguistic expressions where the literal meaning is by design different from the implied meaning. To convey the meaning and function of the source text, the translator has to deal with the formal issues that are involved in any translation but must also be thoroughly aware of the contextual issues in both the source as well as the target culture. In the next chapter, an analysis of euphemisms, political euphemisms, and 'Orwellian' euphemisms will be undertaken to identify the appropriate strategies for their translation.

Chapter Five:

Data Analysis

5.1 Introduction

This chapter examines a specific set of political euphemisms as they occur in Orwell's novel *1984* and as they are translated in two Arabic versions of the novel. The chapter also examines a set of political euphemisms, especially those found in recent Western discourse on Arabs and Muslims. In the process, it is shown that several strategies for translating euphemisms are needed and that a more eclectic, multi-disciplinary approach to translation theory is necessary.

5.2 Data and Methodology

5.2.1 Data

5.2.1.1 English Source text: *1984* by George Orwell

In this section, examples from George Orwell's *1984*, along with their Arabic translations in two versions, are examined and analyzed. The first translation (AT1) is published by The Arabic Cultural Center and translated by Anwar Al Shami in 2006, and the second translation (AT2) is published by Dar Al Anwar, Lebanon/Morocco and translated by Amani Diab in 2005. The Arabic translations are compared against each other and against the source text in terms of the degree and type of equivalency, translation strategy used, and social and political context in both SL and TL.

Author, Background & Summary

Eric Arther Blair, known as George Orwell, was born in 1903 in India and died in 1950. He was an English essayist, journalist, and a political writer whose main concern was to defend justice and freedom of thought, and expose the misgivings of dictatorial and totalitarian regimes. He was a socialist and strong critic of imperialism, colonialism, fascism, and communism in all their forms. His opposition to Fascist regimes, especially Hitler's dictatorship and Stalin's Communism, motivated him to write about the damage that such regimes inflict on citizens. Among his literary works are *Animal Farm* and *1984*, both of which are considered to be politically charged parodies. A particular interest of his was to show how totalitarian regimes use or abuse language to brainwash citizens and strip them of their ability to know and think. His essay, *Politics and the English Language* (1946), has become a classic on the use and abuse of political language. Ironically, his name has become an adjective for words that are contradictory, misleading, deceptive, and defy reality.

1984 – The Novel

In an article entitled *Doublespeak and the War on Terrorism*, Timothy Lynch (2006) makes the following observation about Orwell's *1984*:

One of the central insights in Orwell's classic novel *1984* concerned the manipulative use of language, which he called 'Newspeak' and 'doublethink', and which we call 'doublespeak' or 'Orwellian'. Orwell was alarmed by government propaganda and the seemingly rampant use of euphemisms and half-truths- and he conveyed his discomfort with such tactics to generations of readers by using vivid examples in his novel. Despite our general awareness of the tactic, government officials routinely use doublespeak to expand, or at least maintain, their power.

Written in 1949, Orwell's *1984* is a dystopian novel that presents a fictional account of what could happen in an authoritarian society. His main aim is to alert the reader to the dangers of authoritarianism and the harm that it can inflict on citizens. In particular, he wants to show how language can be used as a means of control, a tool for manipulating ideas, and a mechanism for creating and shaping reality. Government agencies such as ministries are given names that are the complete opposite of what they do: the Ministry of Love is in charge of torture, the Ministry of Peace for war affairs, and the Ministry of Truth

for propaganda and promoting the Party's doctrines. A new language is created with a syntax and vocabulary that is intentionally designed to reduce understanding and thought so that mind, body, history, emotions, and desires are all controlled and have one purpose only; namely, to blindly accept and willingly serve the party in power, its ideology, and its leader.

The events of *1984* take place in the State of Oceania (London). Winston Smith, the protagonist, is a low-class party member working for the "Ministry of Truth" where historical events are reversed and counterfeited to serve the Party's political ideology. Winston leads a very miserable life as any other member of the Outer Party except for those high ranked members of the Inner Party. All citizens of Oceania live within the strict grip of "Big Brother" and the Party. In Oceania, free thought, personal freedom, sex, and privacy are not allowed. All are spied on via the "telescreens" which are spread throughout the country, even in people's bedrooms. 'Big Brother' is always watching citizens and monitoring their behavior.

The main objective of the Party is "to barrage its subjects with psychological stimuli designed to overwhelm the mind's capacity for independent thought" (Sparknotes.com). Winston falls in love with a co-worker and has an intimate relationship with her secretly. Sex is considered a crime and is only allowed for getting children. Those children become members of the Junior Spies Organization and are looked after and brainwashed by the Party. Winston holds rooted hatred for the Party and Big Brother. He attempts to rebel by buying a diary to write down his 'criminal thoughts', away from the eyes of the Party and tries to join the "Brotherhood", a revolutionary party. The novel ends with the authorities discovering Winston's love affair and his opposition to the Party and 'Big Brother'. He is tortured mercilessly for months until he gives up his love (Julia) and accepts the Party's conventions and love of 'Big Brother'.

5.2.1.2 Contemporary Euphemisms

In this section, a set of current political euphemisms identified in different sources such as the Internet, newspapers and magazine articles, and political speeches will be analyzed and translated (when there is no available translation) to demonstrate the challenges that the Arab translator encounters when translating political euphemisms that have one or more of the following characteristics:

- Are ambiguously formulated to conceal a hidden political agenda on the part of the original author;
- Occur in the context of an adversarial political or cultural relationship between the West and the Arab/Muslim East;
- Involve the translator's own ethical, ideological, and cultural mindset;
- Are influenced by the purpose and commission of the translation; i.e. for whom, by whom, and at what time.

The examination of the above examples demonstrates that the translator, in some cases, should transcend the barriers of the linguistic patterns, their syntax and semantic formations, and analyze the purposes or functions of these expressions within their situational, textual, and socio-cultural framework. The translator, as a decision maker, should decide what is the best strategy or approach to employ when translating politically and ideologically laden euphemisms.

Note: Most of the examples studied in this section are taken from website articles, TV programs and news, and the public domain of politics.

5.2.2 Methodology & Levels of Analysis

The analysis in this chapter is based on an eclectic approach where different theories are considered to reach the most suitable translation decision. Views such as Nida's formal vs. dynamic translation, Venuti's domestication vs. foreignization distinction, the Gricean maxims, House's overt vs. covert translation, Skopos, and Baker's pragmatics are applied to demonstrate that the translation of euphemisms cannot be limited to a single approach due to the fact that they involve various meta-linguistic elements of culture, time, ideology, and

audience. Likewise, various techniques such as explication, substitution, omission, specification, generalization, borrowing and coining neologisms are adopted in the process.

The examples used are examined as they occur in the source language - denotatively and connotatively- their euphemistic function, and their contextual setting. The translations of these examples are then analyzed and compared in terms of any discrepancies, inadequacies, losses, and misrepresentations that may be involved. Where necessary, other suggested translations are provided. In the process, the use of different strategies for translating euphemisms is elucidated.

5.3 Analysis

5.3.1 Euphemisms in *1984*

In *1984*, Orwell sets out to show the Whorfian view that language determines the manner in which members of a given community come to form their view of 'reality'. The purpose of 'Newspeak', the fictional language of Ingsoc in *1984*, "was not only to provide a medium of expression for the world-view and mental habits proper to the devotees of Ingsoc, but to make all other modes of thought impossible" (Orwell, 1949: 146-7). Once adopted, it "made any thought that disagreed with the principles of Ingsoc literally unthinkable, at least so far as thought is dependent on words. Its vocabulary was so constructed as to give exact and often very subtle expression to every meaning that a Party member could properly wish to express, while excluding all other meanings and also the possibility of arriving at them by indirect methods". Of more relevance to this thesis is the way in which Orwell makes use of euphemisms in this process. In describing the structure of the new language, he says:

No word in the B vocabulary was ideologically neutral. A great many were euphemisms. Such words, for instance, as *joycamp* (forced-labour camp) or *Minipax* (Ministry of Peace, i. e. Ministry of War) meant almost the exact opposite of what they appeared to mean. (Ibid:146-7)

In evaluating how some of these euphemisms have been translated into Arabic, the following observations must be kept in mind:

1. The author is deliberately using euphemisms, in fact exaggerating their use, to show how the vocabulary and syntax of a language may be employed to shape, distort, reality. For the most part, these euphemisms are artificial linguistic neologisms that do not belong to the English language, although a few have entered the language since they were first introduced in the novel. In other words, this is different from the normal context in which euphemisms occur when their usage is not made all that obvious;
2. The translation of artificial linguistic constructions poses greater difficulties for the translator in that a formal or functional equivalency is not likely to occur naturally in the target language and may even be difficult to coin;
3. In the original, Orwell includes an appendix on Newspeak which makes it easier for the English reader to understand both the purpose and the vocabulary of the 'new' language. Unfortunately, this appendix is not included in either of the two Arabic translations thus denying the Arab reader additional information that may have been helpful in understanding the novel. This omission would have made it necessary for the translators to include more explication in the course of the translation.

Some euphemisms have been selected for analysis. The order in which they have been analyzed is somewhat arbitrary, but an attempt has been made to cluster them where they are related. In each case, the euphemism is listed and then analyzed as it occurs in the original and in two Arabic translations, one by Al Shami (AT1) and the other by Diab (AT2).

Source Text	AT1	AT2
Newspeak	اللغة الجديدة	اللغة الحديثة

The language of Ingsoc is 'Newspeak', a neologism for a language that is contrasted with the old language, English, but simplified in grammar and vocabulary to achieve one that 'gets smaller every year' and thus reduces thinking and knowledge. This neologism has

entered the English vernacular and has come to mean ‘propagandistic language marked by euphemism, circumlocution, and the inversion of customary meanings’ (Merriam-Webster dictionary.com). In the novel, Newspeak is meant to denote the name of a language but also to euphemize a language that is full of contradictions and whose vocabulary means the opposite of what is said.

In AT1, Newspeak is translated as اللغة الجديدة and اللغة الحديثة in AT2, neither of which seems to convey the original meaning in the novel nor the meaning that the word has come to communicate for users of the English language. While ‘اللغة الجديدة’ does seem to capture the denotation of the word, it does not convey its connotation; ‘اللغة الحديثة’ does neither. In back-translation, the latter would be ‘the modern language’ which is clearly not equivalent in form or content to the original. The two translations fail to give either a formal or functional equivalency because both focus on a literal translation of the morphemes that make up the stretch - ‘new’ and ‘speak’- but fail to convey the author’s intention which is more contrastive in nature and which is designed to add to the literal meaning the elements of ideology and brain-washing. ‘اللغة الجديدة’ could have worked had the translator included a translation of the Appendix or at least a footnote that explained the connotative meaning of the word. Alternatively, a more functionally equivalent translation could have been found such as ‘اللغة المصطنعة / المختلقة / المغلوطة’ since at the very least it could suggest to the Arab reader the connotative meaning of the word.

It is also worth noting that the reader’s knowledge can be a factor in determining the degree to which the original text has to be explicated. The word ‘Newspeak’ has become almost idiomatic for the native English speaker. This is an instance of non-equivalency that Baker describes as arising from the fact that “the source-language concept is not lexicalized in the target language” (1992:21). So that when an English-speaking person is reading Orwell for the first time, he is probably already familiar with the nuances of the vocabulary used. This is not necessarily the same for the reader of the translated text.

Source Text	AT1	AT2
Duckspeak	يوقوق – يجعجع مثل البطّة وتحمل معنيين السباب و الثناء	كلام البط – تعني أن يتكلم الإنسان بسرعة كزبيط البط

The new language was also intended to influence the manner in which people spoke and thought. The euphemism for this is 'Duckspeak' which in Newspeak means 'speaking without thinking'. Its meaning is explained in the Appendix to 1984 as follows:

Ultimately it was hoped to make articulate speech issue from the larynx without involving the higher brain centres at all. This aim was frankly admitted in the Newspeak word *duckspeak*, meaning 'to quack like a duck'. Like various other words in the B vocabulary, *duckspeak* was ambivalent in meaning. Provided that the opinions which were quacked out were orthodox ones, it implied nothing but praise, and when *The Times* referred to one of the orators of the Party as a *doubleplusgood duckspeaker* it was paying a warm and valued compliment. (Orwell, 1949:147)

And in the Novel,

There is a word in Newspeak,' said Syme, 'I don't know whether you know it: duckspeak, to quack like a duck. It is one of those interesting words that have two contradictory meanings. Applied to an opponent, it is abuse, applied to someone you agree with, it is praise. (Ibid:25)

Duckspeak is translated as 'يوقوق – يجعجع مثل البطّة وتحمل معنيين السباب و الثناء' in AT1 and 'كلام البط – تعني أن يتكلم الإنسان بسرعة كزبيط البط' in AT2. Again, the omission of the Appendix in both translations makes it necessary for more explication. In AT1, the translator manages to find a semantically and culturally idiomatic equivalence in Arabic, although it is not clear how the explication 'يوقوق – يجعجع مثل البطّة' shows that when the 'quaking' is supportive of the party it is good, and when it is not, it is bad. As well, the Arabic 'يوقوق – يجعجع مثل البطّة' refers more to the sound made whereas the idea behind 'duckspeak' is the neutralization of any kind of intellectual mental activity. AT2 is literal and shallow supported with a very domesticated

Source Text	AT1	AT2
Doublethink	التفكير المزدوج / الازدواجي	التفكير المزدوج

Newspeak also has an effect on the way people think. ‘Doublethink’, a euphemism that has entered the English vernacular, means the “simultaneous belief in two contradicting ideas” (The Merriam-Webster dictionary.com). In 1984, its intended meaning is captured by the following quotation:

Winston sank his arms to his sides and slowly refilled his lungs with air. His mind slid away into the labyrinthine world of doublethink. To know and not to know, to be conscious of complete truthfulness while telling carefully constructed lies, to hold simultaneously two opinions which cancelled out, knowing them to be contradictory and believing in both of them, to use logic against logic, to repudiate morality while laying claim to it, to believe that democracy was impossible and that the Party was the guardian of democracy, to forget whatever it was necessary to forget, then to draw it back into memory again at the moment when it was needed, and then promptly to forget it again: and above all, to apply the same process to the process itself. That was the ultimate subtlety: consciously to induce unconsciousness, and then, once again, to become unconscious of the act of hypnosis you had just performed. Even to understand the word 'doublethink' involved the use of doublethink. (Orwell, 1949:16)

‘Doublethink’ is translated as ‘التفكير المزدوج/الازدواجي’ in both AT1 and AT2. This literal translation does not capture the full meaning of the original phrase. A back-translation of it would be something like ‘being of two minds’, which is more neutral than the intended meaning of ‘simultaneously holding two contradictory ideas’ or ‘being illogical’. However, the reader can capture the intended meaning because the neologism is explained by the author of the source text (see quotation above). Had there not been this explanation, ‘التفكير

Source Text	AT1	AT2
Reality Control	الاستحواذ على الحقيقة	السيطرة على الواقع والتفكير المشترك

‘Reality Control’ is another euphemism that is related to the control of the mind so that it can no longer differentiate truth from falsehoods, and develop a reality that is shaped and controlled by the Party. AT1 translates it as ‘الاستحواذ على الحقيقة’ whereas AT2 translates it as ‘السيطرة على الواقع والتفكير المشترك’. Although السيطرة is a closer translation of ‘control’, ‘الاستحواذ’ is a better rendition since it captures the implied meaning of the euphemism which relates to the creation of a fabricated reality.

Source Text	AT1	AT2
Big Brother	الأخ الكبير	الأخ الكبير

Much the same applies to the translation of the euphemism ‘Big Brother’ although it is not literally a neologism. In the novel, ‘Big Brother’ is the enigmatic leader of the ruling party who demands blind loyalty and knows everything. The literal translation, ‘الأخ الكبير’, in both AT1 and AT2, seems to miss both the denotation and the connotation of the original. A more accurate back-translation of الأخ الكبير would be ‘older brother’, which is clearly not what is intended. The fact that Orwell sometimes uses capitalization or an abbreviation –BB for ‘Big Brother’ – does help the English reader figure out that the literal is not the intended meaning, but not so in Arabic where capitalization is not available. The cultural specific associations of the expression are also different in both the source and target language. ‘Big Brother’ has become lexicalized in English in such a manner to almost lose its Orwellian

This is not the same in Arabic, where the big brother is someone who supports, cares, and protects. In Arabic, الأخ الكبير creates a different effect from the one intended in the ST; i.e., a positive rather than a negative one. What is lacking in both translations is the use of House's concept of a 'cultural filter' whereby a 'new original' has to be created in order to create a similar effect on the receptor in the target language. In such a case, the translator must fill in the cultural gap, either by a literal translation of the phrase coupled with a notation, or by finding a phrase in the target language that is less neutral and more expressive. This may be accomplished by using 'الأخ المراقب/ الرقيب / الزعيم', although such a translation may remove the euphemistic characteristic of the original. Using this approach would be an example of what Baker refers to as 'translation by cultural substitution'; i.e., "replacing a culture-specific item or expression with a target-language item which does not have the same propositional meaning but is likely to have a similar impact on the target reader" (1992:31).

Source Text	AT1	AT2
Ministry of Peace = Minipax	وزارة السلام تعنى بشؤون الحرب	وزارة السلم مختصة بالحرب
Ministry of Truth = Minitruth	وزارة الحقيقة – مينيترو في اللغة الجديدة	وزارة الصدق - فنفير كما يقال في اللغة الرسمية
Ministry of Love = Miniluv	وزارة الحب مسؤولة عن حفظ النظام وتطبيق القانون	وزارة الحب تراقب عملية تطبيق القانون والنظام
Ministry of Plenty = Miniplenty	وزارة الوفرة ترعى الشؤون الاقتصادية	وزارة الخير والوفرة مسؤولة عن شؤون اقتصادية

Several neologisms in 1984 are used to name the functions of government departments by their antonyms to conceal their real function. The four major ministries of Oceania are euphemistically referred to as: Minipax for the Ministry of Peace that is concerned with ensuring a perpetual state of war which focuses the attention of the citizens on external threats; Minitruth for the Ministry of Truth that is concerned with the dissemination of

propaganda, half-truths and lies; Miniluv for the Ministry of Love where 'deviants' are investigated and tortured; and Miniplenty for the Ministry of Plenty whose mandate is to keep the population in a state of economic hardship. In using these euphemistic neologisms, Orwell's aim is to show how political and bureaucratic vocabulary is used to conceal deception and intention, and to create a false impression in the mind of the citizen. Interestingly enough, this is not far from reality. In many countries, for example, what used to be known as the Ministry/Department of War has now become the Ministry/Department of Defense.

The Ministry of Peace is translated as وزارة السلم مختصة in AT1 and وزارة السلام تعنى بشؤون الحرب in AT2. Both translations attempt to capture the euphemistic meaning by explicating the real function of the Ministry. In back-translation, AT1 would read Ministry of Peace concerned with war affairs, and AT2 would read Ministry of Peace specializing in war. Neither of these translations captures the real meaning of the name; i.e., a Ministry whose main function is to perpetuate a state of war so that citizens are united around a common enemy. A better translation may have been وزارة السلام المعنية بإعلان الحرب الدائمة. 'Minipax' which is a combination of two Latin words, *mini* for small and *pax* for peace, is transliterated in AT1 as 'مينيبيـاكس' which means very little to the Arab reader, and completely omitted in AT2. 'السلام المصغر' may have done the job.

The Ministry of Truth (Minitruth) which is concerned with propaganda is translated as 'الحقيقة' in AT2. 'وزارة الصدق - فنفير كما يقال في اللغة الرسمية' in AT1 and 'وزارة الحقيقة - مينيترو في اللغة الجديدة' in AT2. 'الحقيقة' is closer to 'truth' than is 'الصدق' which is closer to 'honesty'. The explication 'مينيترو في اللغة الجديدة' of the abbreviation also fails to add any useful information since 'اللغة الجديدة' does not capture the meaning of Newspeak as stated earlier.

The Ministry of Love (Miniluv), ostensibly concerned with law and order, is dedicated to ensuring love for Big Brother through intimidation, fear, torture, and brainwashing. In both AT1 and AT2 - وزارة الحب تراقب عملية تطبيق القانون والنظام and وزارة الحب مسؤولة عن حفظ النظام وتطبيق القانون - the harmful functions of its operations are downplayed. Adding 'التي تزعم' may at least make the Arab reader more aware of the sinister aims of this Ministry.

Finally, the Ministry of Plenty (Miniplenty) whose aim is to keep the population in a state of perpetual poverty and need, is translated as وزارة الوفرة ترعى الشؤون الاقتصادية in AT1 and وزارة الخير والوفرة مسؤولة عن شؤون اقتصادية in AT2. In this case, the truncation, miniplenty, is more revealing of the contradictory nature of the name of the Ministry. Both translations make the harmful functions of this Ministry appear to be less so by AT1 using the word ترعى in its explications and الخير in AT2.

Source Text	AT1	AT2
Fictional Department -Ficdep	دائرة الإثارة	دائرة القصة
Pornosec	بورنوسك – قسم يعمل على إنتاج المواد الإباحية	دائرة فرعية تنتج الصور الخليعة

Departments within ministries are also described euphemistically to conceal their true function. The Department of Fiction, also known by its truncated name as ‘Ficdep’, is part of the Ministry of Truth and has responsibility for the production of machine-generated novels and other propaganda materials. Within Ficdep is also the sub-department of ‘pornosec’ which produces “cheap pornography for distribution among the proles. It was nicknamed Muck House by the people who worked in it” (Orwell, 1949:61).

The Department of Fiction is translated as ‘دائرة الإثارة’ in AT1 and ‘دائرة القصة’ in AT2. Clearly, the latter translation, while literal, misses the intended meaning of the original which is designed to communicate the ‘fictitious’ nature of the Department’s function. In back-translation, AT2 would be the Department of the Novel/Story which is an unsatisfactory translation. AT1 attempts to go beyond the denotative meaning of the original but is guilty of a reduction in the quantity – to use a Gricean concept – of the meaning. ‘دائرة الإثارة’ captures only one aspect of this Department’s function; namely, the pornographic work that is performed by, Pornosec, one of its sub-units. It, however, misses the more general function of the Department which is to ‘manufacture’ novels and other propaganda materials for the rest of the population. A better translation may be دائرة فبركة أو ‘حبك القصص’.

AT1 translates pornosec as 'بورنوسك' with the explication 'قسم يعمل على إنتاج المواد الإباحية' as in Arabic it is difficult to abbreviate words or titles in the same way English does, accordingly, borrowing was the way out to overcome this difference in the linguistic systems of both the SL and the TL. The explanations provided later respects the reader's need to know what this term stands for. AT2 translation 'دائرة فرعية تنتج الصور الخليعة' is somehow narrowing the role of this department to one product, that is photos.

Source Text	AT1	AT2
War is peace	الحرب هي السلام	الحرب هي السلم
Freedom is slavery	الحرية هي العبودية	الحرية هي العبودية
Ignorance is Strength	الجهل هو القوة	الجهل هو القوة

In 1984, the Party has three slogans that are phrased in a self-contradictory manner, yet are supposed to make sense in Newspeak. Both AT1 and AT2 give the same translation for all three: 'War is Peace' is translated as الحرب هي السلم /السلام; 'Freedom is Slavery' as الحرية هي العبودية; and 'Ignorance is Strength' as الجهل هو القوة. But as in the original, the literal phrasing of the slogans succeeds only because they are explained through further text in the original. For example, the slogan 'War is Peace' is further explained as follows:

The object of the war is not to make or prevent conquests of territory, but to keep the structure of society intact ...The very word 'war', therefore, has become misleading. It would probably be accurate to say that by becoming continuous war has ceased to exist. ...A peace that was truly permanent would be the same as a permanent war. (Orwell, 1949:94)

And is translated into Arabic as,

.. ولم يعد هدف الحرب هو الاستيلاء على الأراضي أو الحيلولة دون ذلك، وإنما الحفاظ على بنية المجتمع سليمة على ما هي عليه. ومن ثم فإن كلمة "الحرب" ذاتها باتت مضللة ولا تؤدي المعنى ، وإذا شئنا الدقة يمكننا القول بأن الحرب لم تعد حربا بعدما صارت إليه من ديمومة واستمرار". (الشامي، 2006: 234-235)

.. وغرض هذه الحرب ليس احتلال الأراضي أو الحيلولة دون هذا العمل، بل هو الإبقاء على كيان المجتمع سليما لا يمسه أذى. فكلمة "الحرب" نفسها أصبحت إذا مضللة وإذا توخينا الدقة فلربما من الأصح أن نقول أن الحرب بعد أن أصبحت مستمرة قد زالت من الوجود". (ذياب ، 2005: 147)

The literal translation of the three slogans works because of the additional explanation that is provided by the author.

Source Text	AT1	AT2
Thoughtcrime	جريمة الفكر	جريمة الفكر
Thought police	شرطة الفكر	شرطة الفكر
Facecrime	جريمة الوجه (تبدو عليه حركات الارتباك والارتباك)	جريمة الوجه (حركات وإشارات وتعابير الوجه)

Three euphemisms related to crime are: ‘thoughtcrime’, ‘thought police’, and ‘facecrime’. ‘Thoughtcrime’, ‘the essential crime that contained all others in itself’, is committed when one simply has a thought or feels a desire that is contrary to the principles of Ingsoc. Both Arabic translations render it as ‘جريمة الفكر’ which if back-translated would literally be ‘the crime of thinking’. This seems to fail in capturing the intended meaning or function of the euphemism. ‘Thoughtcrime’ is meant to ‘criminalize’ thought even if it is purely innocent. Any thought, innocent or natural, is being made criminal because it is not in line with the ideology of the Party. A good example is the Party’s view of sex and sexual relationships. Thinking of sex for its own sake or for pleasure is forbidden and is deemed a criminal act. In Ingsoc, the only way to think of this natural human instinct is in terms of begetting children without any sense of pleasure.

Another way of translating thoughtcrime to capture its function in its context in 1984 could be ‘الفكر المجرم’ or ‘جريمة الفكر المحرم’ or ‘جريمة الفكر الممنوع’ or ‘تجريم الفكر’ which relates to an external power working on analyzing thoughts and turning them into criminal ones. While these move away from the literal translation of the word, they perform a similar function as in the original for the Arab reader.

‘Facecrime’ is a euphemism that refers to all the subtle physical manifestations that may betray a ‘thoughtcrime’, “a nervous tic, an unconscious look of anxiety, a habit of muttering to yourself -- anything that carried with it the suggestion of abnormality, of

having something to hide” (Orwell, 1949:28). Both Arab translators used a literal translation of the original (جريمة الوجه) and followed the ST in explaining what the term means, which in AT1, it is:

..فأهون الأشياء يمكن أن تودي بك حتى لو كانت حركة عصبية صغيرة أو نظرة قلق لا إرادية أو مهمة اعتادها الفرد أو أي شيء يوحي بنقص في الولاء.....إن ظهور تعبير انفعالي غير لائق على وجهك كأن تبدو عليك علامات الارتياح...هو مخالفة تستوجب عقاباً" (الشامي، 2006: 74)

And in AT2:

..“نقرة بالإصبع تدل على عصبية ونظرة قلق غير واعية وتمتمة بل وأي حركة تنطوي على الإيحاء بأنك لست في حالة طبيعية، قد يخونك وجهك إذا اكتسب تعبيراً غير لائق .. إن هذه الحركات والإشارات والتعابير جرائم يعاقب عليها الإنسان". (ذياب، 2005: 50)

Given that the original text provides an explanation of what a ‘facecrime’ is, the Arabic translations have attempted the same.

The ‘Thought Police’ is introduced in the novel without much of an explanation. The implied meaning in the original is understood. They perform the function of a ‘morality squad’ who spy on people and report any action or ‘criminal idea’ that deviates from the party line or expectations. In both Arabic translations, ‘Thought Police’ is translated as ‘شرطة’ in AT1 and AT2, a literal translation that does not seem to convey the sinister implication of their role. But AT1 used also ‘شرطة الرصد’ which sounds closer to the original euphemism and more expressive of what is the real function of this group.

Source Text	AT1	AT2
Goodsex	صناعة الطفل / واجبنا تجاه الحزب	صنع الأطفال / واجبنا تجاه الحزب

Sex is one of the more tabooed topics in most societies. Many matters associated with it are more easily discussed by the use of euphemisms. Orwell illustrates this dimension very well in 1984 by showing how the ‘plusgood’ person engages in ‘goodsex’ which does not involve personal pleasure but is rather the obligation of producing children for the good of the Party. Any personal pleasure associated with sex would constitute a ‘sexcrime’ and would be severely punished. The sexual act can only be described euphemistically as ‘making a baby’ or ‘the duty to the party’. AT1 translates this as صناعة الطفل / واجبنا تجاه الحزب and AT2 as صنع الأطفال / واجبنا تجاه الحزب. The translators here selected a formal equivalence that

Source Text	AT1	AT2
Unperson	لا تشيروا إلى أشخاص	لا توجد ترجمة

The ‘unperson’ is a Newspeak euphemism for someone who has committed a serious crime against ‘Big Brother’ or the state or even just suspected of ‘heretical tendencies’. He becomes an ‘unperson’ because records of his existence are eliminated and his whole existence is wiped off from memory. It is as if the person never existed. In AT1, ‘unperson’ is translated as ‘لا تشيروا إلى أشخاص’. AT2 omits it completely when it first appears on page 32, but then tries translating it on page 35 rendering it as ‘كما أنه يشير إلى أشخاص لم يوجدوا مطلقاً’. Neither one of these translations captures the meaning of the original. Each gives more information than is needed flouting the Gricean maxim of quantity. A better translation may have been “إنسان انتفى” or ‘لا شخص’ which sounds neutral and much like Newspeak , or ‘لا إنسان’ or ‘لا موجود’ which may sound emotive in the sense that the translator is trying to convey the notion of dehumanizing people under this ruling system.

Source Text	AT1	AT2
Goodthinkful	التفكير الصالح = الولاء للحزب	لا توجد ترجمة

As opposed to the ‘unperson’, the ‘goodthinkful’ person is one who is fully loyal to the Party and does not deviate in thought or action from what is expected of him. AT1 translates this Newspeak adjective as ‘التفكير الصالح = الولاء للحزب’ while AT2 omits it. AT1 does capture the denotative meaning of the original but fails to give the play on language usage that was intended in the original.

Source Text	AT1	AT2
Vaporized	تمت إزالتهم من الوجود	حذف أسماء من تبخروا من السجلات ليصبحوا في خبر كان

One becomes an ‘unperson’ by being ‘vaporized’, a word that is used euphemistically to refer to people who have been terminated or killed and whose names have been deleted so that there is no record of their existence. They have become ‘unpersons’, and just as water vanishes by vaporization, so do unpersons. AT1 translates the word as ‘تمت إزالتهم من الوجود’, and AT2 as ‘حذف أسماء من تبخروا من السجلات ليصبحوا في خبر كان’, neither of which is satisfactory, too much detail that misses the metaphorical meaning and would not have the same effect on the reader as in the original. The metaphorical allusion may have been better captured by something like ‘تبخر وجودهم / تلاشوا’.

Source Text	AT1	AT2
Memory Holes	قبور الذاكرة	حفر الذاكرة

The records of unpersons, along with any undesirable documents, are destroyed by being placed in “memory holes’ which are found everywhere.

They existed in thousands or tens of thousands throughout the building, not only in every room but at short intervals in every corridor...When one knew that any document was due for destruction, or even when one saw a scrap of waste paper lying about, it was an automatic action to lift the flap of the nearest memory hole and drop it in, whereupon it would be whirled away on a current of warm air to the enormous furnaces which were hidden somewhere in the recesses of the building. (Orwell, 1949:17)

The use of ‘memory holes’ in Newspeak is designed to conceal their true function which is destroy forever any document that contained information that was harmful to the state or ‘Big Brother’. The translation in AT1, قبور الذاكرة, captures the concealed/implied meaning more so than does the literal translation, حفر الذاكرة, in AT2. By using ‘قبور’, AT1 displays a deeper understanding of the original and provides a more functional and communicative

Source Text	AT1	AT2
Telescreens	شاشة الرصد	الشاشة الالكترونية

To ensure that citizens are observing the rules of the Party, ‘telescreens’, which double up as a television and a monitoring device with two-way communication, are not used only to transmit programs (party propaganda) but also to keep party members under constant surveillance. AT1 translates ‘telescreen’ as شاشة الرصد and AT2 as الشاشة الالكترونية. AT1 is a better translation than AT2 because it manages to capture, communicate, and evoke the intended effect in the original even though it is not formally or semantically equivalent to the original.

Source Text	AT1	AT2
Room 101	الغرفة 101	الغرفة 101

When citizens are convicted of behaving or even just thinking in a manner that is not acceptable to the party, they are brought to ‘Room 101’ where they are tortured until they abandon their evil thoughts and get ‘reintegrated’ into the expectations of the Party. The mere mention of “Room 101” inspires fear. For the citizens of Oceania, it has come to mean what ‘Abu Ghraib’ and ‘Guantanamo’ means to the world today. Both translations give a literal equivalent by using ‘الغرفة 101’. In this case, the literal translation works because the euphemistic value is achieved in context. In other words, the text of the novel brings out the sinister associations of the word. Had the translators used ‘غرفة التعذيب’, for example, which describes what happens in the room, the element of fear and revulsion that the original is supposed to evoke would have been lost.

Source Text	AT1	AT2
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The Book	أشاروا إليه باسم الكتاب	لم يكن الكتاب يحمل اسم بل يشيرون إليه
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Something similar occurs in the translation of the ‘The Book’. In the original, the word is designed to evoke an emotion of fear and secrecy, because the contents of the book are forbidden reading materials. The book, allegedly contains heresies have been written by the archenemy of the State, Emmanuel Goldestein. It is considered a crime to refer to it in any other way but obliquely as ‘The Book’.

AT1 translates it as أشاروا إليه باسم الكتاب and AT2 as لم يكن الكتاب يحمل اسم بل يشيرون إليه. AT1 seems to communicate the element of secrecy and taboo better than AT2 which may lead the reader to think that the book, as a matter of fact, did not have a title but reference was made to it. It may have been better to give the translation as the book in inverted commas – “الكتاب” and as with “Room 101”, allow the text of the novel to communicate its sinister character.

The remaining euphemisms are all from what Orwell includes under the ‘A Vocabulary’. They are linguistic constructs that describe words of daily and business life specially coined to reduce ambiguity and complexity and follow grammatical rules that minimize the different parts of speech, reduce the number of words, and thus reduce the need to engage in any kind of complex thinking. The translation of such euphemisms is interesting because in some ways they reveal some of the difficulties that arise in the translation of foreign words or neologisms that have been lexicalized in the source but not in the target language.

Source Text	AT1	AT2
Doubleplusungood	خاطيء جدا جدا	غير مرض أبدا
Plusgood – plusplusgood	جيد جدا – جيد جدا جدا	جيد+ / جيد ++

For example, the word ‘doubleplusungood’ in Newspeak is derived from the negative of bad (ungood), and very bad, (plusungood), and superlatively bad (doubleplusungood). AT1

translates it as 'خاطيء جدا جدا' and AT2 as غير مرض أبدا which in back-translation would be 'very very wrong' and 'not acceptable at all' respectively. Neither of these translations captures the intended effect because both choose an Arabic equivalent that has a regular and common form and content. Something like "مرتین خاطيء وزاید" may have captured the intended effect better. The same is true of 'plusgood' and 'plusungood' but here AT2 attempts to capture the intended effect by using the sign "+" after جيد for 'plusgood', an interesting improvisation that fails to communicate the intended meaning.

5.3.2 Translating Contemporary Political Euphemisms

The examples of euphemisms discussed above were essentially 'made-up' words and stretches of words designed to show how language can be abused by the use of such linguistic devices as euphemisms. In fact, reality is more truthful than fiction. Recent political and military discourse is replete with euphemisms that mislead citizens and justify actions that may not otherwise be as defensible. No better examples can be found than in the language that has been used to justify the actions of the U.S. and 'its allies' (a euphemism used to make it look as if the U.S. was only a participant in and not the main party to the conflict) in the so called 'War on Terror' 'الحرب على الإرهاب' (also a euphemism used largely to describe those who are 'not on our side').

The current part of this chapter analyzes the translation of a number of recent political and military euphemisms. Examples are extracted mainly from current or backdated on-line documents and random newspaper articles dealing with political and military affairs in the Middle East, and used by high-ranking politicians or military officials to describe or rationalize decisions and actions that they have taken or about to undertake to members of their community. In other words, the originator of the ST (English) is deliberately using euphemisms to make indefensible decisions or actions more palatable to members of the SL community/audience. In such cases, the Arab translator has to decide what his ethical responsibility is towards the audience of the target culture to which he belongs. Does he preserve the hidden 'malicious' intentions of the original author/speaker and thus mislead and deceive the TL receptors or does he reveal the distortion and by doing so fail to provide an accurate translation of the original text and run the risk of allowing his personal biases to

affect the outcome? This is especially problematic when there is an adversarial relationship between the two cultures/communities involved.

A good example of how a political document may have very serious consequences due to the use of euphemisms is the Balfour Declaration. Drafted in 1917, the document reads as follows:

“.... His Majesty’s government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a **national home** for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate Nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of **existing non-Jewish communities** in Palestine” (emphasis added).

The Arabic translation as found in (Wikipedia.org):

"إن حكومة صاحب الجلالة تنتظر بعين العطف إلى تأسيس وطن قومي للشعب اليهودي في فلسطين، وستبذل غاية جهدها لتسهيل تحقيق هذه الغاية، على أن يفهم جلياً أنه لن يؤتى بعمل من شأنه أن ينتقص من الحقوق المدنية والدينية التي تتمتع بها الطوائف غير اليهودية المقيمة الآن في فلسطين، ولا الحقوق أو الوضع السياسي الذي يتمتع به اليهود في البلدان الأخرى."

English Source Text	Given translation	Proposed translation
National home	وطن قومي	و يقصد بها دولة اسرائيل
Existing non-Jewish communities	الطوائف غير اليهودية المقيمة الآن في فلسطين	أي الشعب الفلسطيني أو العربي المقيم في فلسطين

This document was drafted at a time when there was much concurrent clandestine and conflicting commitments being made to both Jews and Arabs by the British. While British politicians were favorably inclined towards the establishment of a Jewish State, they were concerned about promises they had already made to the Arabs after the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. All they could support in writing was the establishment of what they referred to as a ‘national home for the Jewish people’, a euphemistic expression for what would eventually become a state. In this manner, they made something that would otherwise have been objected to by the Arabs and the international community more palatable. The true intent of the authors of the declaration is further revealed by the use of another euphemistic expression in the same document. It refers to the Palestinians, who

were the majority and who had lived on the land for hundreds of years, by the euphemism 'existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine'.

How then is someone translating this document to treat the hidden meanings that are contained in the euphemisms used? Would an English Arabist working for the British Foreign Office, for example, translate the document in the same way as a Palestinian writing a history book for Arab schoolchildren? Both the Gricean maxims and the Skopos translation approach are relevant in answering this question.

It is clear that the original text fails to satisfy at least two of the Gricean maxims: quality and manner. The text falsely and deliberately characterizes the legitimate natives of the land as marginal and a minority. It is also vague and obscure by design in that it downplays both the nefarious demands of the Zionists for a Jewish State and the self-serving interests of the British in disposing of a land that did not belong to them.

The Skopos approach is relevant for establishing the role of the translator - both the purpose and the commission of the translation have to be established. If, for example, the purpose of the translation is documentary in nature and commissioned by the United Nations, then the translation should be as close as possible to the original without the need for explication or annotation. 'National home' would be translated as 'وطن قومي' and 'existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine' would be translated as 'الطوائف غير اليهودية المقيمة في فلسطين' or 'الجماعات الغير يهودية الموجودة في فلسطين'. Fidelity to the source text is required, misleading and deceptive as it may be. It would be up to commentators to explicate the hidden meaning(s) of the Declaration. However, had the text been commissioned by the Palestinian Department of Education for inclusion in a school textbook, it may be that the translator has to negotiate a translation that ensured a proper understanding of the ambiguities and hidden meaning of the text. For example, the translator could add an annotation or comment in brackets such as 'الوطن القومي' after 'ويقصد به دولة إسرائيل' and 'أي الشعب الفلسطيني أو ' 'الطوائف غير اليهودية المقيمة في فلسطين' after 'العربي المقيم في فلسطين'.

Orwell's *1984* was designed, among other things, to show how political euphemisms can be used to create reality. Wars have always been a rich source for such a use of language. Because of the brutality and inhumanity that is involved, the use of euphemisms serves to

lessen the harsh reality of war. This may be useful when the war is justified; i.e., when declared in self-defense with a clear enemy and an imminent threat. There are times, however, when wars are declared in the absence of such conditions and for hegemonic and self-interested purposes. Many would argue that Bush's War on Iraq and Israel's recent attack on Gaza are such instances.

English Source Text	Given translation	Proposed translation
the Axis of Evil	محور الشر	حسب وصفه / كما يطلق عليها / ما يسمى بمحور الشر

In such cases, politicians use euphemisms to lessen the reality of an unnecessary or unjustified war; i.e., try to create a political reality that defines and justifies their actions and even their political careers. 'The War on Terror', an expression repeatedly used by President Bush, created a loosely defined and invisible enemy whose defeat became the justification for all kinds of actions that made more acceptable the violation of international law and human rights. Sometimes this was accomplished by the use of a dysphemism instead of a euphemism as in Bush's use of "the Axis of Evil" 'محور الشر' to characterize the regimes of Iran, Syria and North Korea. Such an expression is dysphemistic in that it creates an image of the other that is totally negative and renders the listener/reader less capable of seeing the good and the bad in others. Incidentally, the same effect was generated for the Iranian people when Khomeini called the U.S., 'The Evil Empire' 'امبراطورية الشيطان / مملكة الشر'.

How then does the Arab translator who sees through the deceptive and misleading nature of a dysphemistic euphemism such as the 'Axis of Evil' translate it in a manner that does not lead the Arab reader to conclude this to be a true description of the countries involved? The most common translation of this phrase has been 'محور الشر' which is a literal rendition of the original, but whose use also gives the impression that the three countries referred to are in fact evil. At the very least, this would require 'intervention' on the part of the translator. One possible way in which this can be done is to mention the three countries by name and then add, "described by Bush as the 'the Axis of Evil'" 'حسب وصفه / كما يطلق عليها'. The translator then shows that he is not in agreement with the characterization or the

English Source Text	Given translation	Proposed translation
War of Liberation / Operation of Iraqi freedom	حرب تحرير العراق	احتلال العراق
Freedom Fighters / liberators	مقاتلي الحرية	جيش الاحتلال الأمريكي / الغزاة

In the same way, Bush called his war on Iraq a ‘War of Liberation’ sometimes translated as ‘حرب تحرير العراق’, an expression that is now used euphemistically to refer to the ‘occupation of Iraq’, and the U.S. army as ‘liberator or freedom fighter’ when, in fact, it is an ‘invading and occupying force, ‘جيش الاحتلال الأمريكي’. In most of the world media and some of the Arabic media, such expressions were used to ‘beautify’ the actions and the real intentions of this war. However, nothing on the ground showed that this war aimed only at liberating Iraq from its own regime. For many people, including Iraqis themselves, this war deceptively claimed to liberate them from the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein, but ended up replacing him as an occupying force.

Another example of the way in which language in general and euphemisms in particular are used to manufacture political reality is the recent military attack on Gaza. Using the pretext of sporadic rocket attacks on Israeli towns close to Gaza, actions that in isolation would be deemed to be morally unacceptable, Israel mounted a barbarous attack that was months in the planning on the people of Gaza in an attempt to destroy Hamas, the de facto authority in Gaza, and one that has been defiant in its defense of Palestinian rights and aspirations. Needless to say, the US fully supported the actions of Israel, even though in any other context such military operations would arguably be deemed to constitute war crimes.

English Source Text	Given translation	Proposed translation
Arab moderate countries	دول الاعتدال العربي / معسكر الاعتدال أو دول متوازنة / متخاذلة	دول الاعتدال وفق التسمية الأمريكية / ما يسمى بمحور الاعتدال العربي

What is relevant to the purposes of this thesis is the manner in which the propaganda machine of Israel and the West used euphemisms to create divisiveness in the Arab/Islamic world and to make it difficult for anyone to criticize what amounted to a very destructive attack on innocent civilians and public infrastructure. For example, Arab countries who – against the wishes of the great majority of their own people – sided with the position taken by the US and some of its European allies in their support of Israel were referred to as the ‘moderate Arab countries’. Many would have argued that ‘moderation’ was a euphemism for Arab regimes who sided with the U.S. out of self-interest and self-preservation and had little to do with moderation. Yet characterizing such countries as ‘moderate’ in political discourse and the Western media creates a positive effect towards such countries on the part of the listener/reader in the West. It also gives more credibility to the political position taken by the West.

If the Arab translator and many in his community see through the political machinations of the use of such a euphemism, then translating ‘moderate Arab countries’ as “دول الاعتدال العربي” while linguistically equivalent and value-free will not have the same effect on the reader/listener as in the original. If anything, it might have the opposite effect in that contrary-minded members of the target community may react more negatively to the regimes in question. In fact, this is what occurred in some of the Arab media when these same countries were referred to as ‘دول متواطئة أو متخاذلة’; i.e., countries that are complicit in the invasion.

In such instances, the translator cannot be invisible and neutral unless his commission was to translate an official document that contained such an expression for archival or historical purposes. But in translating for public purposes, the translator owes it to his community to be more intrusive while not abandoning his professional responsibilities as a translator. This he can do by using a strategy of explication. ‘Moderate countries’ could be translated as “دول الاعتدال وفق التسمية الأمريكية”, the explication being ‘as described by the US’; or, if he wished to make the explication more general, he could translate the expression as ‘ما يسمى محور الاعتدال العربي’, the explication being ‘so called’. It should be noted that these translations leave open the question of whether or not it is accurate to describe the

The following 'dressed-up' quotation from a thesis paper by (YingYu, 2007) illustrates how a translator has to make choices in translating political text that is euphemistic in nature:

"... for the aim of humanitarian intervention (euphemism for war), we [Americans] pacified the area (euphemism for attacked). By using the air option (air strike), air support (euphemism for bombing) and one-way mission (euphemism for suicidal attacks), we softened up the resistance (euphemism for killed) and finally the enemy's defense was neutralized (crushed), although we also made collateral damage (civilians casualties) when we engaged in hostilities and in combat".

A literal translation that 'conspires' in being party to the intentional obfuscation that exists in the original text may read as follows (T1):

"من أجل تحقيق هدف التدخل البشري، قمنا بتهدئة الوضع في المنطقة من خلال اللجوء للخيار والدعم الجوي والمهام ذات الاتجاه الواحد. وقمنا أيضا بتخفيف أو التقليل من أثر المقاومة حتى تمكنا من تحييد أو تجميد دفاعات العدو. كما أننا تسببنا في حدوث خسائر جانبية أثناء انخراطنا في الأعمال العدائية والصراع."

A more intrusive translation that captures the descriptive but explicates the euphemistic content of the original may read as follows (T2):

"لقد قام الجيش الأمريكي بشن حرب حيث هاجم المنطقة باستخدام الضربات الجوية والقصف واستخدم أسلوب العمليات الانتحارية. وقام الجيش أيضا بضرب المقاومة ومهاجمتها حتى تمكن مؤخرا من سحق قوة العدو الدفاعية. وقد أدى هذا العدوان أيضا إلى مقتل العديد من السكان المدنيين العزل المتواجدين في منطقة الهجوم."

The effect of T2 on the Arab reader will be different than T1 which tends to 'sanitize' the violent nature of the attack and the heavy costs incurred by innocent civilians. A back-translation of T2 into English would read as follows:

"The American army had launched a war where it attacked the area by using air strikes, bombings, and tactical suicidal attacks. The army had also attacked and bombed the resistance until it had finally liquidated / terminated/crushed its defense forces. This

aggression had also led to the killing of many disarmed civilians who happened to be in the targeted areas”.

English Source Text	Given translation	Proposed translation
The birth bangs of a new Middle East	آلام مخاض شرق أوسط جديد ولادة شرق أوسط جديد	خارطة سياسية جديدة / إعادة صياغة أو تقسيم الشرق الأوسط

Something similar occurs in a speech given by Condoleezza Rice commenting on the Lebanon War in 2006: “What we are seeing here is, in a sense, is the growing – *the birth bangs of a new Middle East*, and whatever we do, we have to be certain that we’re pushing forward to the new Middle East, not going back to the old one” (Bromwitch, 2008, www). In numerous newspapers headlines at that time, the ‘birth bangs of a new Middle East’ was translated as ‘ولادة شرق أوسط جديد’ or ‘آلام مخاض شرق أوسط جديد’.

The statement was said in the context of justifying the U.S. decision to abstain on a U.N. resolution forcing Israel to a cease fire in South Lebanon. In some ways, it is the intended effect of the whole statement that is both metaphoric and euphemistic. The listener/reader is being asked to believe that the attack on civilian life, the destruction of civil infrastructure, and the occupation of land are all acceptable because like the ‘bangs of childbirth’, the pain and suffering is worth the final outcome; i.e., the birth of a New Middle East. In this manner, something that is morally objectionable is made to sound less so through the use of a euphemism, albeit a metaphor as well.

English Source Text	Given translation	Proposed translation
Collateral Damage	خسائر جانبية / أضرار مرافقة	قتل السكان العزل / مدنيين أبرياء / خسائر بشرية في منطقة الهدف

Other instances of political euphemisms occur when politicians attempt to conceal a morally or legally questionable action they have taken – a war atrocity, for example - by using a word or stretch of words that diminish the emotional impact on the reader/listener and thus make their action less objectionable or more acceptable. A good example of this is the use of the euphemism ‘collateral damage’ to explain or justify the killing of innocent

civilians during an act of war. The use of 'collateral damage' is not limited to war. In medicine, for example, collateral damage is used to describe the bad but necessary effects of a procedure, as in 'chemotherapy treatment causes significant collateral damage'.

A review of Arabic articles and press releases of how this expression was translated into Arabic shows that the common translation is 'أضرار مرافقة' or 'خسائر جانبية'. This translation is consistent with the literal meaning of the original, 'جانبى/ثانوى/مصاحب' for collateral, and 'إصابات / خسائر / أضرار' for damage. But when 'collateral damage' is used to describe the deliberate bombardment of a village or a residential area packed with defenseless civilians under the pretext of getting at the military targets of the enemy, as in Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine, it takes on a very different meaning. In such cases, the unintended consequences are not simply 'أضرار مرافقة' as in the use of chemotherapy, but actions that could and should have been avoided had there been more respect for human life. In fact, it is not uncommon for the attacker to diminish the humanity of the 'enemy' by branding the civilians as 'sympathizers of terrorism' 'متعاونين / متعاطفين مع الإرهاب', once again making it easier to justify killing them. It would be difficult for the Arab translator to be invisible in such a situation; otherwise, he would be complicit in a deceitful act. Being true to the original text can only be at the expense of his moral responsibility to members of his own community. At the very least, the translator should use annotations and commentary to make the reader/listener aware of the ideological and moral issues that are hidden by the use of the euphemism. In the case of translating 'collateral damage', 'أضرار مرافقة' could be used but then should be annotated by the addition of something like 'meaning 'قتل السكان العزل' or 'خسائر بشرية مدنية في منطقة الهدف'.

The danger in the 'visibility' of the translator in such instances is the imposition of his own personal ideology and values on the reader/listener. Once again, identifying the purpose and commission – as per the Skopos approach – will help alleviate such concerns. Commissioned to do the translation by the US Department of Defense, the translator is likely to find an Arabic equivalent that performs the same function and creates the same effect in the TL. But commissioned to do the translation for Al Jazeera, the translator is under no obligation to be complicit in a linguistic act that deceives his own people. The

same analysis is true of the next example, except that the moral failure is more pronounced because the actions are intentional and deliberate.

English Source Text	Given translation	Proposed translation
Systematic interrogation abuses / professional interrogation techniques	إساءات منتظمة وسائل الاستجواب بطريقة مهنية	تعذيب

Signatories to the Geneva Convention are forbidden from using torture to extract information from prisoners of war or noncombatant civilians captured during war, yet this convention is and has been regularly violated. One way in which this violation has been rationalized is by using euphemisms that make the act of torture appear to be benign and necessary. Instead of torture, such euphemisms as ‘systematic interrogation abuses’, ‘enhanced coercive interrogation technique’, and ‘professional interrogation techniques’ have been used to characterize actions against prisoners of war that have included waterboarding, sexual humiliation, and the use of attack dogs. For example In a Newsweek article entitled ‘Truth about Torture’ which appeared on November 7, 2005 in English and then appeared in the Arabic version of the newspaper on November 8, 2005, ‘systematic interrogation abuses’ was translated as ‘إساءات منتظمة’ and ‘professional interrogation techniques’ was translated as ‘وسائل الاستجواب بطريقة مهنية’.

Both Arabic renderings seem to perpetuate the deceit by referring to torture simply in terms of ‘abuse’. ‘Abuse’, according to the Merriam Webster Dictionary is “improper or excessive use or treatment” or “physical maltreatment”, whereas ‘torture’ is defined as “the infliction of intense pain to punish, coerce, or afford sadistic pleasure” or “something that causes agony or pain”. At the word level, ‘abuse’ - ‘يُسيء أو إساءة’ - sounds less cruel and obfuscates the reality of ‘torture’ ‘تعذيب’. The above terms whenever used by US army officials or the CIA were meant to diminish the fact that they were practicing ‘torture’ to elicit confessions from prisoners, a practice that is internationally prohibited by law. By using ‘abuses’ they protect themselves from legal and moral accountability, and they project to their own community an image that is more sanitized than it really is.

If such distortions in meaning and form are then maintained in the translation process, say through a literal translation, apart from the fact the translator would become complicit in the act of deception, the text would be 'rejected' by members of the target culture. Their world-view would lead them to the conclusion that it is more than 'interrogation' 'استجواب' and abuses 'إساءات' had taken place and nothing less than 'torture' 'تعذيب' had occurred. In other words, a literal translation of such phrases would not cohere with the reader's cultural or political background. So, opting for the more specific and emotive term 'تعذيب', especially in the context of torturing Arab and Muslim prisoners as in Iraq and Palestine, will make more sense and would fit in with the reality of the situation and the needs of members of the receptive community.

The examples of political euphemisms discussed above raise issues in translation theory that are not unique to them but also to any text that is intentionally deceptive and misleading. Many times, a euphemism that is coined and used repeatedly in one context gains a 'reality' of its own and is then used in other contexts. 'Moderates' is one such example. It is now a common euphemism used in any context to refer to those 'who agree with us'. Its opposite, 'extremists', is a common euphemism for those who may oppose what we want or that for which we stand. Instead of describing the situation in terms of real ideological conflicts or political disagreements, the opponent's position is undermined by abusive language and 'guilt by association'.

The translator is morally bound to expose such deceit unless his commission and the purpose of the translation are archival or documentary in nature. He can do this through the use of annotation, explication, inverted commas, footnotes, or whatever it takes to make the reader/listener aware of the deception involved. The risk in doing this is that the translator may become guilty of the offense he is trying to correct because of his own ideological or political leanings. But just as the linguistic quality of a translation may be assessed, the ideological additions of the translator may also be assessed, making the difference between a good and a poor translation.

5.4 Discussion

The examination of the euphemistic expressions in Orwell's *1984* and the sample of contemporary political and military euphemisms prove that their translation into Arabic dictated a deep consideration of the meta-linguistic factors and the cultural, political and ideological contextualization of such expressions. As there is a consensus that translating from and into different languages is a human intercultural activity that transcends the limitations of linguistic and semantic systems; it is essential to apply deeper analysis of the broader picture. This includes the cultural, ideological and contextual genealogy of the expressions, and matching their interpretation with meanings that are intelligible, realistic and transparent to the target culture audience.

In the attempt to reach at meaningful and acceptable translations, it is evident from the previous analysis that adopting one strategy will fail in fulfilling the purposes of the translation activity. Hence, arouse the need to adopt an eclectic approach, i.e. resorting to different techniques and theoretical frameworks in producing a translation that is void of vagueness, deception and bias. This requires a thorough understanding of socio-cultural, political and ideological differences, TL community needs and expectations as opposed to SL community needs, and conversant world knowledge on the side of the translator. The analysis equally highlighted the translator's dilemma in making a decision whether to maintain fidelity to the ST and its author or being faithful to the target community. Using a 'relative equivalence' is a way to compromise this dissonance within the translator in which he preserves the originality of the ST, yet provides an accountable translation that is void of deception and manipulation.

The above discussion of the examples under study was based on taking the target reader/receiver into consideration when dealing with the translation of euphemisms from English into Arabic. This may fit the notions of cultural transplantation, Skopos, domestication and receiver's acceptability, etc.

Chapter Six:

Conclusions & Recommendations

The primary objective of this thesis was to investigate the theoretical and practical issues that face the translator when translating euphemisms from English into Arabic. The thesis attempted to establish a practical framework for the translation of euphemisms. This was accomplished by adopting an eclectic approach whereby different theories were examined to determine the most appropriate strategy for the rendering of various types of euphemisms. It was demonstrated that euphemisms are linguistic devices whose intended meaning does not correspond to their literal meaning. They intentionally flout Grice's maxims by being less than truthful (quality), ambiguous (manner), and sometimes giving more or less information than is required (quantity). When used in a benign manner, euphemisms are used to shield the listener/reader from a reality or an emotion that could prove to be embarrassing or hurtful. When used in a malicious manner, and especially in the context of political discourse, the use of euphemisms may rise to the level of willful deception and a distortion of reality.

The thesis highlighted the difficulties posed by these culturally and ideologically loaded expressions. Such difficulties arise from the fact that culturally, socially, religiously and ideologically laden terms function differently in different contexts. These functions may not apply in the same manner in the target culture or language as in the original. Hence, adopting a formal or literal approach in translating them would fail in capturing the right function as it was intended in the original text. More specifically, in the case of political euphemisms, whose main function and intention in the source culture are to manipulate thought, deceive people and manufacture reality, the decision making process on the part of the translator proved to be more challenging. This is mainly due to the fact that he is torn between his loyalty to the original text and its author on the one hand, and his ethical/moral responsibility towards his own audience and culture on the other.

A major question throughout the study was whether the translator should uncover the deception and expose the underlying reality of a euphemism or adhere to the author's deceptive presentation of reality, and thus become complicit in the act of deception. This is especially true when the relationship between the source culture and the target culture is one of adversity and animosity.

The thesis proceeded in the following manner. Chapter one established the perimeters of the thesis, its hypothesis and the outline of its structure. Chapter two provided various definitions of euphemisms, the purposes and categories of their uses, and the contexts in which they are employed. Examples of euphemisms and their translations into Arabic were also presented to show some of the challenges created by this type of a social linguistic device. Chapter three reviewed the literature of translation studies and theories with specific relevance to the shifting of the translation paradigm from the lexical-semantic level to the pragmatic, contextual and cultural level. In the fourth chapter, the conceptual, linguistic, and cross-cultural concerns that arise in the translation of euphemisms were analyzed. This was achieved in the context of analyzing other related concepts of linguistic rhetorical devices such as metaphors, idioms, doublespeak, and political correctness. Chapter five was divided into two sections. The first was dedicated to examining and analyzing examples of 'artificially-created' euphemisms in George Orwell's novel *1984* and their translations into two Arabic versions. The second examined a selection of contemporary political euphemisms, their translation into Arabic, and the special challenges they create for translators.

This thesis revealed the following findings and conclusions:

- 1- Euphemisms are a linguistic social act that people use to spare the reader/listener any sort of embarrassment or pain. More importantly, they are sometimes used as a means of serving hidden political agendas of language users to distort realities, delude people, and create specific desired perceptions of world facts.
- 2- Euphemisms are used in almost all languages, yet they create and cater for different functions and intentions in each language that result from major differences in the

conceptual realizations of similar content in the originating culture and the hosting culture. Hence, special difficulties arise in translating them.

- 3- Given the complicated and dynamic nature of euphemistic expressions in general and political euphemisms, in particular, it was shown that it is imperative to move away from the conventional practices applied by translators, and consider the holistic meta-linguistic features of these expressions. This can be fulfilled through finding more culturally equivalent expressions that satisfy the cultural and ideological needs or interests of the target community.
- 4- To reach a meaningful rendering of euphemisms in the target language, the translator should be able to decipher, analyze and understand the real intentions behind these expressions in the source language, and how this relates to the understanding and world knowledge of the target audience. The analysis of such examples as 'collateral damage' and 'national home' for Jews in the Balfour Declaration were relevant in this context.
- 5- To solve the problem of dissonance within the translator, that is fidelity to the source text and loyalty and accountability to the target audience, he should attempt to provide a "relative equivalency" based on negotiating the meta-linguistic features of the source language euphemisms and the manner in which to "expose" these features in the target text.
- 6- The translation activity is a multi-purpose process that involves different parties who have different interests. The translator is one of the main players in this process. In the case of euphemisms, there is the question of who uses them, why, in which context, when and where, who commissions the translation, and for what audience. The strategies adopted to translate these expressions depend on how these questions are answered.
- 7- Since euphemisms are expressions where the surface meaning of the words does not correspond to the actual meaning or intentions of the text, both the translator and the receptor have to fill in the gaps caused by this difference in meaning. In other words, meaning should be inferred by considering the situational, contextual, cultural and ideological aspects of the source text and integrating them in the target culture in a meaningful manner.

- 8- Euphemisms are a subset of fixed expressions such as idioms, proverbs and metaphors in the sense that the denotative meaning of the separate linguistic units does not convey the actual meaning of the expressions. Therefore, deeper analysis of the underlying meaning through analyzing the meta-linguistic features is required to produce a more coherent translation.
- 9- The translator must be knowledgeable about the source language, culture, and linguistic system. He should also be able to identify the euphemistic expressions and how, where, and when they are used in order to be able to produce an appropriate translation.
- 10- It is difficult for the translator to remain unbiased when it concerns the translation of politically and ideologically laden expressions as such subjectivity is decided by how much he is well versed in the source language, its culture, and the kind of relationship that exists between the source and target cultures.
- 11- As euphemisms by their nature are loaded with layers of meaning and hidden intentions, it proved unfeasible to adopt one single approach or strategy of translation. Euphemisms can be translated differently depending on the translator's perceptions and decisions by applying one or more of the following strategies:
- a. Translation by literal equivalence.
 - b. Translation by dynamic/functional equivalence.
 - c. Translation by cultural equivalence.
 - d. Translation by substitution (cultural, religious, ideological, etc.)
 - e. Translation by explication, paraphrasing and lexicalization.
 - f. Translation by omission.
 - g. Translation by borrowing.
 - h. Translation by using more general terms or less emotive ones.
 - i. Translation by neologisms (coining and creating new terms in the target language when there is zero equivalence in the source language).
- 12- For the translator who belongs to the target culture and is fully aware of the deception or the cultural insensitivity practiced against members of his own culture by the source culture, it is very difficult to maintain neutrality when it involves

euphemisms that are meant to mislead people and create self-serving realities. It should be expected that such renderings will be subjective to a certain extent. This is especially true when commission (translating the text), the commissioned (the translator), the commissioner (who requests the translation) and the client (the target audience) all belong to the same target culture, follow the same ideology, and have similar political stands.

Based on the above findings, the question of translating euphemisms remains one that requires further examination and research. This thesis does not claim to have undertaken an exhaustive study of this area, as the main focus was on translating euphemistic expressions from English into Arabic with particular emphasis on politically and ideologically laden expressions.

It would be useful to investigate how Arabic euphemisms are translated into English or other Western languages and whether translators from these Western cultures would deal with them in the same manner or approach that is adopted by Arab translators. What kind of strategies will they apply especially with the culturally and religiously laden terms? Will they approach these terms with a sense of superiority and dominance? Will adversarial relations affect their decisions in making choices about which words and expressions are to be used?

It would have also been beneficial to seek other translators' opinions (professionals and students of translation studies) of the current and the suggested translations of euphemistic examples as provided in this thesis in order to enhance the conclusions reached above.

At the theoretical level, translation, as a human activity, should not be confined to a specific theory or a fixed methodological approach. On the contrary, the translator should competently and efficiently choose the best strategy that will serve the target audience's interests and meet their expectations, as they are the main reason behind the act of translating. That being said, the translator is also held accountable for preserving the originality of the source text and conveying its content in the most appropriate form that is functionally and culturally relevant to the target culture. The main reason is that in culturally-laden genre, the translator can never be an objective agent, a disinterested party,

or invisible to his reader. Knowingly or not, he gives an interpretation, reconstructs a 'construct', sometimes adding and sometimes subtracting, but always influenced by his 'world-view', in addition to his mastery of the source and target language. It is in this sense that the translator becomes a cultural intermediary, negotiating meaning for members of his own community. A translator, however, should not become a new author. He, as in some adversarial political text, may interject through explication, annotation, and footnotes, but he should not intentionally re-write the text in a manner that misleads his reader into thinking that this is what was said in the original.

The questions that need further analysis are: With this cultural and ideological contextualization, to what extent can the translator be the decision maker in the translation process and how far can the translator go in interpreting and changing the intent of the original text for the benefit of his reader? Why should the translator assume that he speaks for the reader? Should not the reader be given the opportunity to decode for himself? How can the quality of his translation, interpretation of meaning, and negotiations be measured and judged? If the translator is at liberty to 'negotiate' meaning, what criteria are to be used for evaluating the manner in which the negotiation has happened?

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