

SAUDI TRANSLATION PROJECT (2000-2015):  
A HISTORIOGRAPHICAL BIBLIOMETRIC  
STUDY

by

Ajayb A. Al-Otaibi

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of the  
American University of Sharjah  
College of Arts and Sciences  
In Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements  
For the Degree of  
  
Master of Arts in  
Translation and Interpreting (English/Arabic/English) (MATI)

Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

October 2015



## Approval Signatures

We, the undersigned, approve the Master's Thesis of **Ajayb A. Al-Otaibi**

Thesis Title: Saudi Translation Project (2000-2015): A Historiographical Bibliometric Study

**Signature**

**Date of Signature**  
(dd/mm/yyyy)

---

Dr Said Faiq  
Professor in Arabic and Translation Studies  
Thesis Advisor

---

Dr Ahmed Ali  
Associate Professor in Arabic and Translation Studies  
Thesis Committee Member

---

Dr May Zaki  
Assistant Professor in Arabic and Translation Studies  
Thesis Committee Member

---

Dr Ronak Husni  
Department Head

---

Dr James Griffin  
CAS Graduate Programs Director

---

Dr Mahmoud Anabtawi  
Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences

---

Dr Khaled Assaleh  
Director of Graduate Studies

## Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Dr. Said Faiq, my advisor, for his guidance, advices, encouragement, and support in completing this thesis and during the MATI program. I am very grateful to my family, without their continued efforts and support I would have not been able to complete this program. I would like to extend my thanks and gratitude to all my professors on the MATI program.

I would like to thank the following respected officials who provided me with vital information for this thesis:

- Mr. Waleed AlSagabi, Director of Translation Unit at the Grand Mosque of Makkah
- Mr. Emad Baaqil, Translation Unit at the Grand Mosque of Makkah
- Mr. Saleh I. Al-Qorishi, General Secretariat of King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz International Award of Translation.
- Mr. Saud Al-Quraini, General Secretariat of Saudi Association of Languages and Translation.
- Messrs in Information Unit of the project of translation in the Ministry of Higher Education.
- Dr. Rimah Al-Yahya, Dean of the College of Women at Prince Sultan University.
- Dr. Dina Al-Dakhs, Translation Center at Prince Sultan University.
- Dr. Heba Bakr Khoshaim, Vice-Dean, Deanship of Admissions and Registration at Prince Sultan University.
- Mr. Khen Rozi Gul, King Fahad National Library.
- Mr. Abdullah Al-Dosary, Director of Administration of Studies in the Ministry of Labor.
- Messrs in Higher Education Statistics Center.

## **Dedication**

To my father

To my mother (may Allah rest her soul in peace)

## **Abstract**

This thesis discusses the Saudi Translation Project during the period 2000-2015. The discussion considers historiography, culture and identity in relation to Translation Studies, as well as the genealogy of translation in Saudi Arabia and its dominant ideology. The major translation projects and translation academic programs are assessed. Statistical and bibliometric analyses are provided to measure improvements of translation activity in Saudi Arabia. The analysis of available data was augmented by information obtained through a questionnaire about translation obstacles. Recommendations are suggested for possible developments of the translation enterprise in Saudi Arabia.

**Search Terms: Saudi Arabia, Translation Historiography, Bibliometric, Hegemonic culture, Ideology.**

## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	6
List of Figures.....	9
List of Tables .....	10
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	11
1.1. Overview.....	11
1.2. Historiography of translation.....	11
1.3. Culture and translation.....	12
1.4. Translation and Identity.....	12
1.5. Thesis Questions.....	13
1.6. Time frame and data resources.....	13
1.7. Organization of the thesis.....	13
Chapter 2: Translation genealogy in Saudi Arabia.....	15
2.1. Overview.....	15
2.2. Translation genealogy in Saudi Arabia.....	15
2.3. Definition, description and identification of the Saudi Translation project....	16
2.4. A Summary of previous studies about translation in Saudi Arabia (1932-1999) .....	18
2.5. Theory of power and ideology in The Saudi Translation Project.....	20
2.6. Conclusion.....	24
Chapter 3: Major Translation Projects (2000-2015).....	25
3.1. Introduction.....	25
3.2. Live interpretation of the two Holy Mosques sermons.....	25
3.3. King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz International Award for translation.....	27
3.4. Saudi Association of Languages and Translation (SAOLT).....	30
3.5. Translation Project of the Ministry of Higher Education.....	32
3.6. Conclusion.....	34
Chapter 4: Academic translation institutions.....	35
4.1. Introduction.....	35
4.2. Translation at Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University.....	35
4.3. Translation department at Prince Sultan University.....	37

4.4.	College of Languages and Translation at Princess Noura University.....	37
4.5.	Conclusion.....	38
Chapter 5: Official Statistics and Bibliometric Study of Translation Production in Saudi Arabia.....		39
5.1.	Introduction.....	39
5.2.	Official Statistics .....	39
5.3.	Bibliometric Study of translated books in Saudi Arabia.....	43
5.4.	Conclusion .....	46
Chapter 6: Data Analysis.....		47
6.1.	Introduction.....	47
6.2.	Translation students and translators in the job market.....	47
6.3.	The questionnaire.....	47
Chapter 7: Conclusion and recommendations.....		52
References.....		55
Vita.....		57



## **List of figures**

Figure 1: Total number of translators in the private sector in 2013, 2014 and 2015...	42
Figure 2: Topics of translated books (2000-2009).....	46
Figure 3: Answers to question 6.3.1 .....	48
Figure 4: Answers to question 6.3.2.....	49
Figure 5: Answers to question 6.3.3 .....	49
Figure 6: Answers to question 6.3.4.....	50

### **List of tables**

Table 1: Statistics of translated books into Arabic in Saudi Arabia from 1955 to 1999 (Khatib, 2005).....	19
Table 2: Statistics of the nominations for the award (1-7).....	29
Table 3: Nominated works, winners, translation languages and countries of nominees.....	30
Table 4: Books published by the Institute of Translation and Arabization.....	36
Table 5: Total number of graduate students from Colleges of Languages and Translation in 2009.....	40
Table 6: Total number of graduates from colleges of languages and translation in Saudi Arabia for 2010-2015.....	41
Table 7: Total number of translators working in the private sector.....	42
Table 8: Total number of translated books published in Saudi Arabia in the years 2000 to 2015.....	43
Table 9: Answers to question 6.3.5: Suggestions to develop the performance of translators.....	51

## Chapter 1: Introduction

### 1.1. Overview

As one of the rapidly developing countries, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia still needs bold moves to reach the rank of developed countries. These moves might include developing national projects that guarantee a successful interaction with global events and trends. One of these projects is translation. A national translation project is a massive political, educational and anthropological process and undertaking, which essentially relies on the various facets of Translation Studies. Translation Studies itself is interdisciplinary in orientation that no longer involves mere trans-coding phonological sounds and written characters semantically, but involves an epistemological process where historiography, culture and identity are equally vital for a successful and productive national translation project.

### 1.2. Historiography of translation

What is historiography? What is the difference between historiography and history? How does historiography relate to Translation Studies? Why is it important in Translation Studies?

According to Delisle (2008) *historiography* has three different meanings: "a) the art of writing the history; b) the collective historical works produced in a specific period of time or within a specific discipline, in this case Translation Studies; and c) the historical view of this production, using research methods applied by historians and modeled on the way in which history is written (Delisle, 2008,p.82 as cited in López, P., & Pinilla, J. 2013, p.2). Lambert (1993) distinguishes between historiography and history, "historiography deals with the discourse of the historian while history makes reference mainly to the historical material"(Lambert, 1993: p.3).

The relationship between historiography and Translation Studies started in the 1970s with the beginnings of the discipline itself in its modern fashion. "Holmes, called historiography in translation as 'socio-translation studies'"(Munday, 2001, p.11).Holmes "sees the parallel between sociology and translation in a historical narration. Nowadays it would probably be called the sociology and historiography of translation"(ibid, p.11).

The importance of the study of historiography of Translation Studies is to get the models for complementary studies, to criticize those models by showing the pros and

cons or to analyze theories of Translation Studies in accordance with its surrounding academic and research contexts.

### **1.3. Culture and translation**

'In Europe, at least, there are no moral or intellectual wildernesses. Let others go forth with me to gather its fruits and flowers' (Bowring, 1830, p. viii).

Diversity is an exotic character of cultures resulted from mutual exchange of cultures by translation. One valuable mission of a translator is to visualize and make visible minor and major points of culture. To discuss how translators deal with different cultures in the process of translation would perhaps require first the provision of definitions of the terms culture and cultural hegemony.

Hegemony is "a term developed by Antonio Gramsci to refer to ideological and cultural leadership of the ruling groups and classes over the allies, force, coercion and imposition of ruling class interests over those of allies or rival groups and classes" (Gündoğan, 2008, p.1).

The classical trend of Translation Studies sees hegemony represented in the culture of the source language. Some theorists, like Nord (1997), have a broader view of hegemony by linking it to the type of translation as the deciding factor (source-culture or target-culture oriented)(Nord,1997,p.43) Another view sees translation as "the creation of a language of mediation between various cultures"(Torop and Osimo 2010, p.384). In all this, language plays the role of a cultural bridge to transfer, back and forth, components of different cultures. In this globalized world, this is also considered a hazardous means of potentially losing identity and a decrease in diversity of languages and cultures. The cultural approach in Translation Studies is linked to the concept of identity, which his discussed in the next sub-section.

### **1.4. Translation and Identity**

Cultural identity and translation or identity through translation is the theme of almost all national translation projects. Cronin (2006) identifies identity as "views of identity determined by local places or local histories" (Cronin, 2006, p.2).

The importance of this concept in culture is that "political, social, economic and technological developments with either a global or rather a local nature, can only be understood via the concept of cultural identity" (Segers, 2000 as cited in Torop, 2002, p. 594).The notion of identity is closely connected with translation. As an inter- and intra-cultural process, translation is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it can

describe how people depict their regional and environmental elements diachronically and synchronicity, pertinence of their origin as they change through time and at a particular time of their history. On the other hand, intercultural transference may dissolve differences between distinct identities of each national culture. The impact of globalization might be a main reason for losing identity by interacting with different platforms of the centrifugal force of a new world.

### **1.5. Thesis Questions**

The main question of this thesis is to assess the development of the Saudi translation project over the period 2000-2015.

This question can be elaborated as follows:

*What are the differences between the traditional and modern Saudi translation projects?*

*What are the reasons behind the need for a modern project of translation in Saudi Arabia?*

*To what extent is the translation project influenced by mono-ideology, patronage and power?*

*What are the development signs of the modern Saudi translation project?*

These questions are discussed through the examination of qualitative and quantitative data obtained from different sources.

### **1.6. Time frame and data resources**

This study covers the period 2000-2015; a period when global advances as well as problems in society and sciences and technologies have had important impacts on Saudi Arabia. The data and information were collected through the following procedures:

- Discussion of existing studies.
- Checking directories of libraries.
- Visiting translation academic institutions.
- Conducting interviews with figures and authorities in the field.
- Conducting questionnaire about aspects of the thesis question.

### **1.7. Organization of the thesis**

In addition to this introductory chapter, this thesis comprises 6 chapters. Chapter 2 offers a genealogical view of translation in Saudi Arabia by discussing historical background of translation in the country and how the elements of history,

ideology, geopolitics, and economy influence the translation project. Chapter 3 shifts the focus from the past to the present by discussing developments in the modern Saudi translation project. Chapter 4 focuses on new academic institutions of translation in Saudi Arabia. Chapter 5 examines statistical and bibliometric studies conducted for the purpose of this study to measure translation activity during the examined period (2000-2015). Chapter 6 offers an analysis of the data examined in chapter 5 and of the results of a questionnaire, which aims at potential obstacles that may face students and workers in the field of translation. Chapter 7 concludes the thesis and proposes some recommendations for further developments of the Saudi translation project.

## Chapter 2: Translation genealogy in Saudi Arabia

### 2.1. Overview

Saudi Arabia has been through a rapid development over the last two decades to achieve further alignments with modern, global world. A viable Translation project was one of the fundamental tools used by decision-makers in Saudi Arabia to enhance its scientific and technical developments, to disseminate Saudi culture, and to keep Saudi identity visible globally. This chapter presents the soci-economic and cultural context of the topic of the thesis. The four sections of the chapter respectively discuss translation genealogy in Saudi Arabia, the general definition, description and identification of the Saudi translation project, previous studies about the project, and ideology and political agenda for the translation industry in Saudi Arabia.

### 2.2. Translation genealogy in Saudi Arabia

The history of translation in Saudi Arabia coincides with the early days of the religion of Islam. The first translation movement took place in the period of Prophet Mohammad, peace be upon him, in Al-Madina Al-Munawara. According to Ibin Hanbal (1998, p.1594), Zaid Ibin Thabit, one of the Prophet's companions, learned the Hebrew language to translate between Prophet Mohammad and the Jews, who lived there:

عن الأعرج عن خارجة بن زيد أن أباه زيدا أخبره أنه لما قدم النبي ﷺ المدينة قال زيد: ذهب بي إلى النبي ﷺ فأعجب بي، فقالوا: يا رسول الله، هذا غلام من بني النجار معه مما أنزل الله عليك بضع عشرة سورة، فأعجب ذلك النبي ﷺ وقال «يا زيد تعلم لي كتاب يهود فإني والله ما آمن يهود على كتابي» قال زيد: فتعلمت كتابهم ما مرت بي خمس عشرة ليلة حتى حدقته وكنت أقرأ له كتبهم إذا كتبوا إليه وأجيب عنه إذا كتب.

In this Hadith, Prophet Mohammad assigned Zaid Ibin Thabit to learn the language of the Jews and to translate for him correspondences instead of using Jewish translators.

The official Muslim Arab translation movement started during the Umayyad period (661-750), and peaked during Abbasid rule (750-1258). This movement almost stopped during the Othman Empire when interest in Arabic language and literature was limited and the major interest was focused on religious studies. For centuries Hejaz, which is now an important part of Saudi Arabia and where the two holy

mosques (Makkah Al Mukarama and Al-Madina Al-Munawara are located), were under the rule of the Fatimid Caliphate, Ayyubid Empire, Mamluk Sultanate, the Othman Empire, and Sharifian Army respectively. The Othman Empire extended its rule to Hejaz and Al-Ahsa region in the east of Saudi Arabia (Anscomb, 1997 as cited in Rasheed, 2002, p.14). In spite of all these different geopolitical episodes in the history of Saudi Arabia, there are not many documents to indicate any translation movement or activity in this region. In 1932, the land was unified and named Kingdom of Saudi Arabia by King Abdul-Aziz. After 23 years of this unification, the first book was translated in 1955. This initiative continued gradually to form a Saudi organized project for translation with its distinct goals and principles as discussed in the following section.

### **2.3. Definition, description and identification of the Saudi Translation project**

During the rapid development of Saudi Arabia, a parallel humanistic, scientific and knowledge renaissance has taken place. The Saudi translation project is a national development project that aims at educating people about different aspects of human knowledge, including science and literature. This project is divided into two phases: The traditional phase and the modern phase each of which has its distinct goals and principles. The first phase started in 1955, when the first book was translated and published in Saudi Arabia. The modern phase (project) started in 2000 when Saudi Arabia as a state and community joined intentionally or unintentionally the global 'mode' of the information revolution. . The major aspects of the two phases of the Saudi translation project are discussed below (the two phases can be said to represent two different projects if considered separately).

**Traditional Saudi translation phase (project).** This phase (project) was launched in 1955 and lasted for some 44 years. It was an attempt by the new nation to fulfill its political agenda. First, to educate its citizens by translating different books from different languages, usually English and French, in different aspects of knowledge into Arabic, and second to spread the religion of Islam by translating books of Islamic Heritage from Arabic into other languages.

Medicine, sciences, literature and humanities were the main interests of this translation project. Translating books of other religions, or any other aspects that contradict the Islamic code was and still is strictly prohibited. The main beneficiary sector of this project was the education sector. At that time, there were almost no



translation technical aids to help performing the task. Correspondences with concerned organizations and parties, such as original publishers, took weeks if not months.

According to Cronin (2006, p.23), “any history of translation must be a 'transnational' history rather than a 'national' history each with its significant moments in this transnational translation history.” In the case of Saudi Arabia, there are three moments (dates) in its transnational translation history of the first phase of its translation project. First, the economic boom of the 1980s helped Saudi Arabia to turn from a poor into a wealthy country with substantial revenues from the sale of its crude oil. The second moment is a socio-cultural one when television broadcasts began in 1965, when this closed mono-ideological tribal society started to open up to the diversity of world cultures. Establishing the first university in 1957, is the third important moment of this phase whereby the need to set relevant educational curricula consistent with the principles of the nation.

**Modern translation phase (project).** Starting in 2000, the government tasked senior officials, academics and specialists (experts) to work on launching a translation project that would fulfill the purposes of modern Saudi Arabia. This phase is characterized by abundant sources. Accessing the Internet and technical aids save time and efforts of translators and provide various resources to produce translations in a faster manner. The modern translation phase (project) is characterized by being more open to the rest of the World than its traditional precedent.

This modern project has two significant moments in its transnational history. First, the economic and social contexts in which it unfolded were and are still affected by a rapid technologically global trend. Second, this phase was significantly affected by an important political cultural moment, namely the 9/11 attacks in New York, which urged, rather forced, people from different parts of the World to know about Saudi culture. "In 2011, the Ukrainian file sharing service 4shared.com alone offered at least 590 books on Saudi Arabia,"(Determann2013, p.18). Of course not all these books were written by Saudi authors or discussed the actual Saudi culture. This phase (project) has three main goals:

- 1) To enable Saudi Arabia to cope with the rapid developments in and diffusion of science and technology.
- 2) To introduce a real image of Saudi culture to the World.

3) To continue the nation's message of serving Islam and Muslims.

#### **2.4. A Summary of previous studies about translation in Saudi Arabia (1932-1999)**

In the previous section the two phases (projects) of the Saudi translation Project were discussed. Based on previous studies, this section discusses the traditional phase in details by looking at its historical beginning, the titles translated, and a bibliometric study of translated books between 1955 and 1999.

According to a study carried out by Nasser (1998) for her MA thesis at Imam Mohammed Bin Saud University, Saud Arabia, and later published as a book (1998), the first translation work in Saudi Arabia was issued in 1955; that is some twenty-three years after the establishment of the country. Culturally speaking, Saudi Arabia did not need to open its doors to foreign cultures at that time; rather it started its education, press and publishing movements with some help of more developed countries of the Arab World at that time. On this point, Determann (2013 p.16) writes: "Between the 1940s and 1970s, large parts of the public education sector became 'egyptianized' by hiring numerous Egyptians as teachers, administrators and consultants."

By examining the list of translated books as it appears in *Translated books in Arabic in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia* compiled by the Index and National Bibliography department of King Fahad National Library, a tremendous work in more than 700 pages, the only translated book in 1950s appears under the heading "A Selection of Studies of Orientalists (al-Muntaqa min dirasat al-Mustashriqin), selected and translated by Ṣalaḥ al-Din al-Munajjid, a Syrian scholar who moved to Saudi Arabia and later became a Saudi citizen. In the 1960s, the translation process was characterized by its unsystematic choices of topics. Although the books translated in the sixties were very few, topics were varied. The ideology of the translation as a national project was not clear. Their choices were good but not justified. *The story of Philosophy* by Will Durant (1924) was translated in 1965 by Ahmad Al-Shaibani. In the same year, a Russian play was translated: *The Government Inspector* by Nikolai Gogol (1836) by Jafar Sadiq Al-Khalili. In 1966, the *Critique of Practical Reason* by Immanuel Kant (1788) was translated by Ahmad Al-Shaibani. The book *Economic system of Islam* by Indian scholar Abdullah Al-Maududi (1957) was translated in 1967 by Asim Al-Hadad. In the same year, the *Najd Journeys of Lady Anne Blunt*

(1881) was translated by Mohammad Anam Galib. The other characteristic of the sixties translation in Saudi Arabia was the variety of source languages. The above-mentioned translation works were from different languages - German, Russian, English and Indian.

The 1970s, on the other hand, witnessed a more systematic and methodical translation activity. Most translation works were concerned with the principles of educational curricula of schools and colleges. Basic books of physics, biology, mathematics, psychology, and other disciplines were the main concern of translators of that period (see table 1).

Table 1: Statistics of translated books into Arabic in Saudi Arabia from 1955 to 1999 (Khatib, 2005).

Year	Number of translated books	Year	Number of translated books
1955	1	1981	29
1956-1962	0	1982	61
1963	1	1983	41
1964	1	1984	31
1965	1	1985	23
1966	3	1986	37
1967	0	1987	44
1968	2	1988	28
1969	0	1989	43
1970	0	1990	15
1971	0	1991	33
1972	5	1992	1
1973	1	1993	13
1974	4	1994	19
1975	4	1995	28
1976	16	1996	20
1977	12	1997	29
1978	14	1998	50
1979	15	1999	70
1980	13	Undated	27

In total, 735 books were translated during 44 years. This is the tally of the Traditional Translation Project. Before discussing development signs in the Modern Translation Project, some theoretical insights are discussed in the next section.

## 2.5. Theory of power and ideology in The Saudi Translation Project

**Overview.** Power and Ideology are one of the major aspects examined under Translation Studies. The two issues correlate the process of translation with culture. The aim in this section is discuss this dimension in translation and see how it applies to the Saudi Translation Project.

**Theory of power and ideology.** "Choosing the model of translation means accepting imperfection, accepting incompleteness ... it means an attention, an openness to the Other with whom we seek communication"(Bialasiewicz and Minca, 2005,p. 370).

Andre Lefevere argues in his book *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (1992) that translation is rewriting in the sense of coping with the ideological factors accepted by the Ftarget culture: "Translation is the most obviously recognizable type of rewriting, and . . . it is potentially the most influential because it is able to project the image of an author and/or those works beyond the boundaries of their culture of origin" (p.9). Such power positions for those people who are involved in rewriting literature as Lefevere sees it are determined by the dominant ideology(Ibid,p.8 ). Lefevere gives the example of the Bible whereby people in the past tended to read the *Authorized Version* than read the Bible in its various original languages (Ibid, p.8).

Lefevere discusses culture as the system, which imposes patronage. He introduces the concept of systems as seen by Russian Formalists who view culture as:

A complex system of systems composed of various subsystems such as literature, science and technology. Within this general system, extra literary phenomena relate to literature not in a piecemeal fashion but as interplay among subsystems determined by the logic of the culture to which they belong.

(Steiner, 1984, p. 112, as cited in Lefevere, 1992, p. 11)

Lefevere then describes the factors of a literary system that control the functions of translation:

1) Professionals inside the literary system: This category includes Professionals such as critics, reviewers, teachers and translators themselves (ibid, p.15). Such professionals have the power to hinder or further an idea or a topic, which may correspond to or may be inconsistent with their dominant ideology.

2) Patronage outside the literary system:

Patronage can be exerted by persons, such as the Medici, Maecenas, or Louis XIV, and also by groups of persons, a religious body, a political party, a social class, a royal court, publishers, and, last but not least, the media, including newspapers, magazines, web-based media, and television corporations. Patrons try to regulate the relationship between the literary system and other systems, which, together make up a society, a culture (ibid, p.15).

This patronage has certain elements. Its ideological component "constrains the choice of subject and the form of its presentation"(ibid, p.16).Lefevere also discusses the economy as a component of patronage. The economic component concerns the payments made for writers and rewriters (ibid, p.16).

3) The dominant poetics:

For Lefevere, the most important consideration is the ideological one, which, in this case, refers to the "translator's ideology or the ideology imposed upon the translator by the party with patronage" (Munday, 2001, p. 130).

**Power and ideology in Saudi Arabia.** To apply this view of power and ideology to Saudi Arabia, it is perhaps better done through finding answers to the following two main questions:

- *What is the dominant ideology in Saudi Arabia? And how it affects the development of any translation project?*
- *What type of patronage is imposed on the Saudi translation project?*

In Saudi Arabia there are three types of powers that dominate translation and its function: Religion, authority and economy.

Saudi Arabia, the most important Islamic country, has one dominant Islamic ideology: Sunni Salafi doctrine. This is the hegemonic approach in this country, although there are minorities of other doctrines or schools. This dominant doctrine is stronger in Najd, the center of power and where the capital of Saudi Arabia is located, as well as being the birthplace of Saudi Arabia. . This mono-ideology emanates from the fact that Najd was never occupied or ruled by any other Empires or caliphates, as Rasheed (2002, p. 14) says: "Najdi towns and oases were ruled by their own amirs, while tribal confederations maintained their independence and autonomy". The Royal family and other large tribes and families pursue Sunni Salafi doctrine. The Saudi Salafism is often referred to as Wahhabism, named after an eighteenth century scholar,

Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703–1792), who established this school or doctrine. Besides the mainstream Saudi Salafis, there are some Sunni Shafi's and Malikis in the Hejaz area (western part of Saudi Arabia). There are also Shiites in Al-Ahsa area (east of Saudi Arabia) and in the southwest of the country (Shia Twelvers in Qatif and AlAhsa provinces and Ismailis and Zaidis in the Najran province). Due to the fact that Saudi authority and the majority of the population are Salafi, the dominant ideology is influenced by this religious approach. However, all other approaches have the right to express their own ideas unless these ideas are incompatible with religious constants. The mainstream religious ideology could prohibit not only books or publications, but could also filter a whole field of knowledge. For example, during the traditional period of translation, it was strictly prohibited to translate or publish books on horoscopes.

The second type of power is authority. It is the Saudi government that enacts rules and regulations for translation and its functions. Although the government encourages translation in all its types (scientific, literary, medical, etc), it regulates the work of translation. The following are items from article 9 of the *Law of Printed Materials and Publication* issued on November 29, 2000 ([www.wipo.int](http://www.wipo.int)):

When permission is given to a printed matter (written or translated) the following shall be taken into consideration:

- It shall not be conflicting with Sharia Rules.
- It shall not lead to breach of public security, public policy or serving foreign interest that conflict with national interest.
- It shall not be exciting to fanatical instincts or stir up discord among citizens.
- It shall not prejudice the dignity and liberty of persons or lead to their blackmail or injure their reputation or commercial names.
- It shall not lead to approval and incitation of criminal conduct.
- It shall not injure the economic or health situation in the country.
- It shall not disclose the secrets of investigations or trails except with the permission of the competent authority.
- It shall observe objective and constructive criticism that aims at public interests and which is based on facts and evidence.

This might hinder or further the translation project by promoting only those works that comply with these rules and dictates and stopping all those that do not fit them.

Saudi authorities impose restrictions on the rights of authors, including translators, that any amendments of contents will be penalized. The following is an excerpt from Chapter Six; Provisions of Infringements and Penalties of Copyright Law (www.wipo.int): The following acts shall be deemed infringements on the rights protected by the Law:

(2) Amendment of the contents of a work, its nature, subject or title without the knowledge of the author and his prior written consent thereof, whether the amendment is made by the publisher, the producer, distributor or anyone else.

The third type of power is economy. It is a matter of fact that economic growth has a great influence on any national projects, including translation. High rewards and payments encourage translators and influence production rate. Translation production is parallel with economic revival of the country. This argument can be supported by table 1 above. It shows that during 1980s the largest number of translated books was in 1982 when the fiscal position of Saudi Arabia reached the largest surplus then.

These powers that dominate translation lead to what might be called a Saudi School of Translation, which is discussed in the following section.

**Saudi School of translation.** The Saudi government has worked together with public and private organizations since the initial development movements to pave the path for a unique and distinct school of translation in Saudi Arabia. The main aim of this school is to preserve the values of the national culture, make the norms and customs of the nation visible within its unique status in the Islamic world, and above all, to write and rewrite its own national literature. Religious centric and Saudi culture then provides a centric ideology for this school that affects in turn the principles of translation in the country.

*Principles of Saudi School of Translation.* Since the initiatives of establishing the Saudi translation project, there have been certain principles for translator working in Saudi Arabia to observe and adhere to:

- Filtering content: There are strict rules and regulations regarding the contents to be translated, i.e., they must be consistent with the Law of Printed Materials and Publication mentioned above.
- Adaptation and modulation are well known translation procedures in Saudi translation. However, this does not conflict with article 21 of Provisions of

Infringements and Penalties mentioned above since these procedures are usually applied in agreement with the original author or publisher.

- Never Borrow: The rule here is the Arabic language is capable of communicating information in all knowledge fields. This way translation is seen as preserving identity. The exceptions here relate to terms that are deemed untranslatable into Arabic.
- Untranslatability is solved by transliteration, borrowing the original term, together with paraphrasing.
- Translators are allowed to express their point of view either in prefaces or footnotes.
- Apply skopos theory whereby translators have the right to know for what purpose the translation is needed for and work accordingly to produce a functional translatum, for example, summary translation is often used in political or public relations documents.

## **2.5. Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed translation genealogy in Saudi Arabia starting from the early days of Islam in 610 A.C., The Translation Project in Saudi Arabia, which started in 1955, and the notions of ideology and power as discussed by Lefevere(1992) and how they apply to the Saudi translation project. Taking the influence of ideology and power into consideration, one may talk of a Saudi School of translation, which has its own principles and objectives. Initial attempts of translation in Saudi Arabia paved the way for further developments and activities under the Modern Saudi translation project, which is the topic of the next chapter.



## **Chapter 3: Major Translation Projects (2000-2015)**

### **3.1. Introduction**

During the last fifteen years, Saudi authorities made great efforts to enhance their national translation industry and to accelerate the wheel of production. There are a number of significant projects that were launched during this period. This chapter reviews some important projects in terms of their history, statistics and powers that control these projects. These projects include interpretations of the two Holy Mosques sermons, King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz International Award for translation, and the Saudi Association of Languages and Translation.

### **3.2. Live interpretation of the two Holy Mosques sermons**

In accordance with the approval of previous Custodian of the two Holy Mosques King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz, the Agency of General Presidency for the affairs of the Grand Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque has launched one of the greatest translation projects in the world. Interpretations of the Friday sermons at the two Holy Mosques into many languages processed weekly in a determined deadline with subtitles and broadcast in real-time for a global audience. The Translation Unit at the Presidency of Grand Mosque of Makkahh provided information and data which are discussed in the following sections.

**History and objectives.** On June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013, this great project was launched according to the Royal Decree No.29989. Accordingly, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Presidency and Iman Mohammad bin Saud University to mandate intellectual professionals to the translation unit of the Presidency to translate the weekly sermons in four languages: English, French, Urdu and Malawi. Sermons with subtitles are broadcast on TV channels and interpretations are broadcast on smart phones of various audiences and through FM via the intranet and on certain websites. A number of interpreters, translators and scholars were commissioned to introduce and oversee this service for the benefit of diverse Muslim audiences. The project's unit of translation has the following aims:

- Reflecting the image of Islam and its moderation and centrism.
- Translating from all languages of the Muslim world
- Translating and publishing books and publications into all languages of the Muslim world
- Executing studies and field research to develop performance.

- Arranging workshops and seminars to discuss issues and problems of translation in Islamic fields to enhance translators' abilities.
- Providing resources, references, programs and dictionaries for Islamic fields.
- Publishing dictionaries and glossaries for Islamic fields to unify terms.
- Establishing information systems and an electronic library for storage, archiving and publishing within an electronic system.

**Translation and interpreting process.** This process is executed by the following sections each of which plays its distinct role:

**Scientific section.** They are in charge of putting technical strategies to develop interpreting and wide-ranging applied language issues. They also edit and revise all translations of the Presidency in different languages. They study and adopt resources of translating Islamic terms and poetry. They hold periodic meetings with other sections to ensure a full awareness of the structure of Islamic terms and the specificity of Arabic language as well as the unique style of their Excellencies and virtues of the two Holy Mosques orators.

**Technical section.** They first interpret the speech orally to be broadcast during Jum'a (Friday) prayer. They then translate the speech to be added later to the storage system for later retrieval and access. They compile glossaries and dictionaries of Islamic terms and update them regularly. They run courses and workshops for translators and interpreters.

**Documentation and development section.** They revise and edit the final drafts of translations to be published either in hard or electronic copies. They are also responsible for the classification and indexing of all hard and soft copies of translation works. They carry out questionnaires, studies and research in order to develop performance.

**Follow-up section.** The work of those who in charge here is mostly performed on-site. They supervise work of interpreting at the Two Holy Mosques and guide audiences to allow maximum benefits from the service. They collect remarks during the sermons and submit them to the headquarters. They also prepare reports on the activities of the translation unit for both interpreting and translation.

**The project in numbers.** The following are some statistics of the project:

- 70 sermons at the Holy Mosque of Makka were interpreted and translated until July 2015.

- 67 sermons at the Holy Mosque of Madina were interpreted and translated until July 2015.
- 1900 is the average number of words for each sermon.
- 60000 headsets are distributed weekly to audiences to listen the interpreting of the sermons in their languages, other than Arabic which is the language of the sermons.
- 59 translators are needed for each live interpreting of a sermon divided as follows: 15 in charge of translating the sermon with 4-6 translators per language, 4 interpreters for live interpreting, and 40 support translators who supervise the process on-site and guide audiences.

### **3.3. King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz International Award for translation**

King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz International Award for Translation is the richest translation prize in the world with \$ 1 million in prizes. It is an annual international award for distinguished individual works of translation and for institutions with significant contributions to the field of translation from and into Arabic. In this section, this valuable award is discussed in terms of its history, organizational structure, objectives, categories terms of nomination and assessment process. The General Secretariat of the award gratefully provided most of the following information.

**History and organizational structure.** King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz International Award for Translation with its headquarters in King Abdul-Aziz Public Library in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, was established on 31st of October 2006 upon the approval of King Abdul-Aziz Public Library Council, a charity entity that is sponsored by King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz. The organizational structure of the award is as follows:

- Board of trustees
- Scientific committee
- General Secretariat

**Objectives.** The objectives of this reward are the following, (<http://www.translationaward.org>):

- To contribute to the transfer of knowledge from and into Arabic.
- To promote translation into Arabic in the various fields of science.
- To enrich the Arab archive by publishing distinguished works of translation.

- To recognize the achievements of institutions with outstanding contributions in the field of scientific translations from and into Arabic.
- To establish standards of excellence in translation with regard to originality, scientific value, and text quality.

**Categories.** There are six categorized in the award (<http://www.translationaward.org>):

- Translation Award for Institutions
- Translation Award in the Humanities from Arabic into Other Languages.
- Translation Award in the Humanities from Other Languages into Arabic.
- Translation Award in the Natural Sciences from Arabic into Other Languages.
- Translation in the Natural Sciences from Other Languages into Arabic.
- Translation Award for Individual Efforts in Translation.

**Terms of nomination.** The nominated work should comply with the following terms (<http://www.translationaward.org>):

- Works of translation should be recent; their date of publication must not exceed five years before the date of nomination.
- Original text must be distinguished.
- Text must be written in the standard, formal language.
- Both original and translated texts must comply with intellectual property rights laws.
- Accuracy in translation and precision in documentation must be observed

**Assessment process.** The process of assessment and decisions regarding the winner works go through three stages:

1. **Preliminary Assessment:** Here, members of scientific committee, which consists of seven professors working in or interested in different fields of translation, study the nominated works, which meet the nomination terms mentioned above. Each member produces a report for each individual work detailing points of strength and weakness of the translated work and their judgment on the translated work whether to qualify or be excluded. The individual reports are collated and examined for the purposes of qualification or exclusion of nominated works.
2. **External Assessment:** Each qualified work from the preliminary assessment phase is then submitted to two judges outside the organization. The judges must be Ph.D. holders with one being a specialist in the field of the original work (geography,

history, physics, etc.). The other judge should be a specialist in translation into the target language (English, Italian, French, etc., in the case of translation from Arabic). Each external judge produces an independent report on each work.

3. Final Assessment: At this stage of the assessment, the scientific committee meets again and discusses the reports of the external judges. Accordingly, the committee announces the winners. The recommendations of the committee are submitted to the board of trustees for approval. The Board of Trustees has no right to exclude works, but has the right to change the order of winners.

These three phases of the process take a minimum of four months. After the announcement, a ceremony is arranged to honour the winners and present the awards. Those ceremonies take place in different cities of the World such as Geneva, Berlin and Sao Paolo and are normally held at a university or a comparable education institution (Table 2 below shows statistics of the nominations for the award of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz International award for Translation for sessions 1-7).

Table 2: Statistics of the nominations for the award. (1-7)

Categories	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6	Session 7	Total
Institutions	36	12	17	14	26	24	24	153
Humanities Sciences from Arabic into other Languages	32	22	21	25	22	18	18	154
Humanities Sciences from Other Languages into Arabic	82	82	53	46	76	83	83	489
Natural Sciences from Arabic into Other Languages	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	4
Natural Sciences from Other Languages into Arabic	36	11	27	25	36	39	39	204
Individual Efforts							10	10
Total	186	127	118	110	162	166	145	1014

As Table 2 shows, category 3, works translated from other languages into Arabic in the humanities, attracts considerably more nominations than category 2, translated works from Arabic into other languages. There were no nominated works translated from Arabic into other languages in the natural sciences, category 4, during the first four sessions (years) of the award. For the category of individual efforts, accepting nominations began in the seventh session. Table 3 below shows statistics of nominated works, winners, translation languages and the number of countries of nominees.

Table 3: Nominated works, winners, translation languages and countries of nominees.

Total number of nominated works	1014
Total winners	90
Total languages of nominated works	38
Total number of countries of nominated works	54

As the table shows, the award attracts nominations from a large number of countries. The interesting point to note from the table, however, is the number of 38 languages. This indicates that the award attracts not only languages such as English and French (the two historically most translated languages into Arabic), but also many others.

### 3.4. Saudi Association of Languages and Translation (SAOLT)

**Overview.** With the aim of spreading awareness of the importance of translation in the Saudi Society and introducing the latest educational and technical means in the field of languages and translation, the Saudi Association of Languages and Translation (SAOLT) was established on the 6<sup>th</sup> of October 2003 through a recommendation by the board of Imam Mohammad bin Saud Islamic university. This non-governmental association is housed in college of languages and translation of the university and is financed by its board of administration.

**Objectives.** SAOLT sets out to fulfill the following objectives:

- Developing, promoting and activating of scientific thoughts in the field of languages and translation.

- Achievement of scientific communication between members of the association.
- Providing scientific advice in the field.
- Developing scientific and professional performance of members of the association.
- Facilitating scientific and intellectual production and exchange between relevant bodies and organizations inside and outside Saudi Arabia.
- Providing profiles of qualified scientific talents in the field.
- Supporting and encouraging of scientific research in the field of languages and translation.

**Activities of the association.** The following points provide a summary of the activities undertaken by the association:

- Providing scientific consultations for research in the field of languages and translation and in other related fields, publishing the results of the research studies, and sharing these results with scientific bodies inside and outside Saudi Arabia.
- Authoring, translating and publishing scientific books in the field.
- Conducting scientific studies with the aim of developing applied aspects of translation practice.
- Organizing symposia, seminars and courses.
- Publishing studies, publications, periodicals and attributed scientific journals related to the areas of interest.
- Inviting scholars and intellectuals to participate in the activities of the association in accordance with its governing procedures.
- Organizing research trips for members of the association as well as competitions.

**SOALT in practice.** So far, the association has held 3 conferences in Saudi Arabia and 2 courses in interpreting. It also publishes a biannual journal titled *Ain* (eye) to disseminate issues of languages and translation for the benefit of all interested professionals and researchers in the world of languages, translation, and to encourage researchers in the field.

### 3.5. Translation Project of the Ministry of Higher Education

**Overview.** With the stated aim of serving students and faculties of higher education by offering specialized translation, the Translation Project of the Ministry of Higher Education is was established in February 2010. The information given below about this project was obtained from its Information Unit.

**Objectives.** This project aims to fulfill the following objectives:

- Transferring knowledge and sciences and other developments in the world from other languages into Arabic.
- Supporting the translation sector to raise educational standards at Saudi universities.
- Encouraging faculties to translate books, resources and relevant research.
- Setting time plan to translate and arabicize books, resources and curricula for undergraduate and graduate programs.
- Translating scientific periodicals with research value to Saudi academic institutions.
- Retranslating some books from different languages into Arabic.
- Authoring specialized dictionaries and glossaries in cooperation with relevant scientific sections or units of universities and other academic or research institutions.
- Unifying scientific translation at university level.
- Organizing courses, seminars, and studies on scientific translation and terminology.
- Holding periodic meetings with all faculty members who are concerned with translation.
- Using translation from and into Arabic to serve the aim of The “Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz International Program for a Culture of Peace and Dialogue”.

**Services.** This project provides a number of services in the field of translation such as:

- Conducting translation projects
- Developing and conducting applied projects in translation to serve both the public and private sectors.
- Producing Arabic books and references.
- Publishing books and research in translation.
- Providing professional consulting in translation.



- Holding workshops and courses to develop translation products and quality.
- Cooperating with organizations, institutions, universities, publishing houses, and translation experts to meet the objectives of the project.

**The project in practice.** With 37600 translators on its database, the Unit of Translation in the Ministry of higher education has executed four projects so far. These projects are:

***First project.*** The total production of this project was 66 translated books for the benefit of higher education. This project is divided into three phases. The first phase started before the actual establishment of the unit. It was supervised by King Fahad University of Petroleum and Minerals and monitored by the Agency of the Ministry of Higher Education for Educational Affairs. The total number of translated books during this phase was 32 books. These books were published by Al Obeikan Printing and Publishing and distributed to all Saudi universities. In the second phase, 30 books were translated and distributed to Saudi local and private universities as well as Saudi cultural Attachés around the world. During the third phase, 4 books were translated.

***Second Project.*** During this project, 11 books in geology, chemistry, biology and mathematics were translated. These translations were performed under the supervision of Prince Naif Institute of Research and Consulting Services. These books were edited by the Unit of Translation and published by Al Obeikan Printing and Publishing but have not been distributed yet.

***Third Project.*** Under this project, 450 books were nominated for translation. The Agency for Educational affairs chose 30 books in education, engineering, management, chemistry, physics and mechanics. Some of these books are already translated and printed, but most are still in the pipeline.

***Fourth project (A100 books project).*** Under this project, the Translation Unit is planning to translate 100 books. Many books are nominated for translation on disciplines deemed important, including medicine, engineering, business, economics, mathematics, computer science, biology, physics, chemistry, and geology. For this reason, the unit has formed a scientific committee to examine the list of suggested books and to consult concerned sections at Saudi universities so as to choose the most relevant titles to be used as textbooks or references.

### **3.6. Conclusion**

This chapter can be summarized by the following points:

1. Many translation projects have been launched in the period covered by this thesis to support the Modern Saudi translation project (interpretation of Two Holy Mosques sermons, the Saudi Association of languages and translation, King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz international Award for translation, and The translation Project of the Ministry of Higher Education).
2. All these projects were launched recently, and as such it might be too early to judge their final productivity in terms of numbers. Still, a considerable production rate has already been achieved regarding sermons, books, practical training, or conferences.
3. Government projects are more productive and systematic than non-government (private) ones.
4. The government pays more attention and effort to religious projects, perhaps for political and cultural reasons above all others.
5. Economic problems might affect the work of SAOLT compared with other projects.
6. All projects are launched by royal decrees or ministerial resolutions.
7. All nominated books for the King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz International Award for translation are registered at King Fahad National Library, that is to comply with the Law of Printed Materials and Publication discussed in chapter 2 above.
8. Religion, authority and the economy, as discussed above, are the most powerful factors that affect the Saudi Translation Project.

But, government projects and individual contributions are not the only development activities during the period under study. Academic institutions have the lion's share. The next chapter discusses this aspect of translation in Saudi Arabia.

## Chapter 4: Academic Translation Institutions

### 4.1. Introduction

As an academic discipline, translation has gained a considerable standing in academic circles during the last few decades globally and in Saudi Arabia as well. This development has also coincided with an increase in the number of students and academic institutions of translation. Before 2000, there was only one college of translation in Saudi Arabia, namely the college of languages and translation at King Saud University. After 2000, six new colleges have been established. Some of them were started from scratch like the departments of translation for female students at Noura, Effat and Prince Sultan universities. Others have been institutes or departments and developed afterwards to be independent colleges like the college of languages and translation at Imam Mohammad bin Saudi University, the college of translation at Taiba University and the college of languages and translation at King Khalid University in Abha. The purpose of this chapter is to review the developments witnessed by translation as an academic field during the period examined in this thesis (2000-2015).

### 4.2. Translation at Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University

**College of languages and translation.** The College of languages and translation at Imam Mohammad bin Saud University was established in 2003 in accordance with decree no1/21/1422 to restructure the department of languages and translation, established in 1982, into an independent college ([www.imamu.edu.sa](http://www.imamu.edu.sa))

**Capacity and requirements.** This new college has 33 professors, 15 lecturers, 11 language teachers, and 46 teaching assistants. 2900 students are enrolled at the bachelor level of whom 1900 are female students and 1000 male students. 109 students are enrolled at Master level with 14 male and 95 female students.

At the bachelor level, students follow 39 courses distributed on language skills (13), language sciences (7), literature (12), and applied linguistics (4). The number of credits required for graduation is 180 credits.

In order to be enrolled in this college, students have to successfully pass an intensive session usually scheduled as a full semester of 25 hours of instruction per week. During this time, students are taught the four basic language skills in addition to improving the students' English grammar and vocabulary.

**Institute of Translation and Arabization.** This institute was established in accordance with the Royal decree of 30/8/2011 based on a resolution of the Board of the Imam Mohammad bin Saud University dated 28/6/2010. The institute started operating 3 months of the decree of establishment ([www.imamu.edu.sa/colleges/kaiftaa](http://www.imamu.edu.sa/colleges/kaiftaa)). The institute consists of three units:

**Translation unit.** This unit is responsible for providing certified translation and interpreting services in and outside the university either to governmental or non-governmental bodies. The section for females is responsible for translating books, reviews, reports, circulations, conferences, and books for the University use only.

**Training unit.** This unit provides theoretical and practical training services by experts in translation from international universities. The unit provides also post-training consultations. Trainees either hold bachelor, master, or doctorate degrees in linguistics, literature or translation. Other majors are also accepted but conditioned by passing either TOEFL or IELTS.

**Quality control and development Unit.** The task of this unit is to transfer knowledge by translating from and into English, Arabic and other languages. It corresponds with publishers around the world to seek their permissions for translating titles they have published. It also signs contracts between publishers and the institute and translators. In the final analysis, the institute performs all translations and other related works. The unit holds meetings to discuss books suggested for translation. The unit also sets measures to develop translation performance and quality.

**The Institute Publications.** The institute has published four books so far - three on engineering, linguistics and translation respectively, and the fourth book was authored and published by the Institute, table 4([www.imamu.edu.sa/colleges/kaiftaa](http://www.imamu.edu.sa/colleges/kaiftaa)).

Table 4: Books published by the Institute of Translation and Arabization

Book Title	Year of publication	Author	Translator	Year of translation
Research of linguistics	2010	Lialito	Dr. Saleh Al-Osaimi	2014
Ethics of engineering	2012	Charles Fredman	Dr. Atheer AlMasri and Dr. Abdullah Almarshad	2014
Translation	2003	Michaal Ostinof	Institute of translation and Arabization	2014
Translation Jurisprudence	2012	Dr. Waleed Al-Omari And Dr. Abdulhameed Alioh	Institute of translation and Arabization	2012

### **4.3. Translation department at Prince Sultan University**

This translation department was established in 2006. According to Deanship of admission, the translation bachelor program is designed to train students in both English and Arabic translation. Required courses cover theoretical and applied linguistics, practical training in the translation and interpreting of various types of fields and domains. 140 credits are required for completion the expected duration of the program is 8 semesters. Between August 2006 and June 2015, 170 students have graduated so far, and currently 137 students are enrolled.

In 2013, the University established a translation center, which is administratively connected to the Deanship of Higher Education and Scientific Research. This center performs distinct roles to enhance translation in Saudi Arabia, including:

- Financing projects of translation
- Authoring books in the field of translation
- Publishing research in related fields.
- Performing activities that help those who are interested in translation such as a translation club, which trains students, and monthly forums as well as the annual event to mark international translation day.
- Publishing the *Connect* magazine, a semiannual magazine in both online and printed versions.
- Awarding translation grants.
- Providing translation consultancies to governmental and non-governmental bodies and agencies.

Since it only began operation a couple of years ago, the productivity of this center is limited. So far, it has published only two translated books in the field of engineering, and two issues of the *Connect* magazine -January 2015 and May 2015.

### **4.4. College of Languages and Translation at Princess Noura University**

In a university where its staff is 100% female, a college of languages and translation was established in accordance with the Royal Decree No 8626/mb and dated in 8October 2007. In that year, 183 students registered. The college has two departments: English and French. It offers a bachelor degree in translation from and into English, and French. Students start learning general skills of English or French together with introductions to linguistics and interpreting. Then courses on discourse

analysis, morphology and syntax and stylistics are offered. Unlike the college of languages and translation at King Saud University which offers courses in Arabic grammar, syntax, rhetoric and literature as required courses, the college of languages and translation at Princess Noura University does not offer courses in Arabic language, with only one course as an optional (free elective)course. Students of the English department have a chance to learn the French language through some elective courses (see College of Language and Translation in *PNU*, 2015([www.pnu.edu.sa](http://www.pnu.edu.sa))).

#### **4.5. Conclusion**

The following points conclude this chapter:

1. Six new academic institutions were established during the period studied in this thesis (2000-2015).
2. Four institutions are public colleges and two are private ones (Prince Sultan and Effat).
3. Three of these six institutions are female colleges (Prince Sultan, Princess Noura and Effat, a situation that may encourage equality of opportunity).
4. These colleges play an essential role in teaching translation, providing diverse translation and interpreting services and supporting projects of translation

The establishing of academic colleges and departments for the study of translation as a major academic discipline may well contribute to an increase in the output of the Saudi translation project as well as input by training the required personnel. The next chapter discusses this point.

## **Chapter 5: Official Statistics and Bibliometric Study of Translation Production in Saudi Arabia**

### **5.1. Introduction**

It is not always easy to find accurate statistics about a field like translation, particularly in the Arab World. However, for the purposes of this thesis, relevant data were collected from variant sources and different government sectors with a view of proving as reliable information as possible to sustain findings and recommendations. This chapter is divided into two sections. Section one presents collected statistics of the number of students who graduated with academic degrees in translation and of certified translators who work in the private sector. Section two provides a bibliometric study of translated books published during the period examined in this thesis.

### **5.2. Official Statistics**

**Graduates from Colleges of Translation (MOHE statistics).** For the benefit of this thesis, the Higher Education Statistics Center of the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) provided two sets of statistics of students who graduated with degrees in translation. Unfortunately, these statistics do not cover all the 15 years examined in this thesis. Table 5 below, shows the numbers of students who graduated with a degree in translation (diploma, bachelor, master and doctorate) from three different universities in Saudi Arabia in 2009.

Table 5: Total number of graduates from three universities in 2009.

Total number of graduated students with a diploma in translation					
King Saudi University					
	Saudi		Non-Saudi		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
College of Languages and translation	12	12	0	0	24
Total number of graduated students with a bachelor in translation					
Imam Mohammad University					
	Saudi		Non-Saudi		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
College of Languages and translation	149	285	0	2	436
King Saudi University					
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Total
	College of Languages and translation	164	246	1	
European languages	120	246	1	10	377
Asian languages	44	0	0	0	44
King Khalid University					
College of Languages and translation	163	80	0	0	243
Total number of graduated students with a Master in translation					
Umm Al-Qura University					
College of Languages and translation	0	19	0	0	19

This statistics is considered limited when examined against the background of the establishment of many new colleges during this period. Still, it is worth pointing out that there were more female graduates than male graduates. This is compatible with the fact that three of the six new colleges of languages and translation accept female students only.

Table 6 below shows the total number of students who graduated from colleges of languages and translation with bachelor, master and doctorate degrees during the last five years, 2010-2015.



Table 6: Total number of graduates from colleges of languages and translation in Saudi Arabia for 2010-2015.

Numbers of graduated students from the colleges of languages and translation for the years 2010-2015			
2010			
Level	Male	Female	Total
Bachelor	0	3	3
Master	2	1	3
Ph.D.	1	0	1
2011			
Bachelor	5	3	8
Master	12	12	24
Ph.D.	4	0	4
2012			
Bachelor	0	1	1
Master	3	8	11
Ph.D.	4	1	5
2013			
Bachelor	8	11	19
Master	16	19	35
Ph.D.	4	0	4
2014			
Bachelor	1	4	5
Master	4	10	14
Ph.D.	1	0	1
2015 (Fall semester)			
Bachelor	0	0	0
Master	1	4	5
Ph.D.	1	1	2
Total number for the period 2010-2015			145

The statistics are somewhat disappointing. The total number is very low compared to the numbers given in table 5 for 2009. What is noticeable is that the total number of students who graduated with master degrees is higher than that of those who graduated with bachelor degrees. It is an unusual situation to have more postgraduate than undergraduate students. The decline in the number of undergraduate students could be either because the requirements for admission have become rather strict and

selective, or because students do not have the motivation to major in the field (this point is discussed later on in the thesis).

**Number of certified translators who work in the private sector (MOL statistics).** The Ministry of Labor (MOL) has provided the author of this thesis with statistics for the number of translators working in the private sector for the last three years (2013, 2014 and 2015) as table 7 below shows.

Table 7: Total number of translators working in the private sector.

Job title	2013	2014	2015
Translator			
Male	7939	7923	7968
Female	966	1050	1208
Interpreter			
Male	276	288	285
Female	86	99	129
Total	9267	9360	9590

The same information is given in figure 1 below.

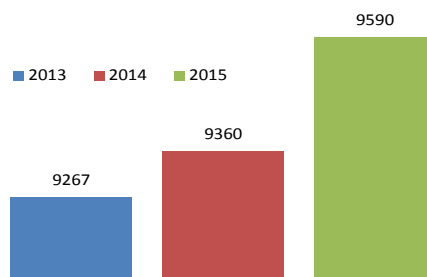


Figure 1: Total number of translators in the private sector in 2013, 2014 and 2015.

Figure 1 shows a steady increase in the number of translators and interpreters in the private sector in Saudi Arabia. According to the Ministry of Labor, the total number of workers in the private sector in 2013 was 9389335, out of which 9267 were translators. Although not a bad number, it indicates that the job market for translation cannot depend on graduates from the colleges of languages and translation at Saudi Universities, particularly when considering that most of these graduates ultimately join government institutions and agencies rather than the private sector. This situation might also explain why most of the translators, as per figure 1, do not hold degrees in translation.

### 5.3. Bibliometric study of translated books in Saudi Arabia

A bibliometric study is “the use of statistical methods in the analysis of a body of literature to reveal the historical development of subject fields and patterns of authorship, publication, and use” (Halpin, 2013, p.19). The bibliometric study reported in this thesis provides an analysis of translated books during the period of the Saudi modern translation project. First, a quantitative set of data is given, and then an analysis of the topics translated is provided for the period examined in this thesis, viz. 2000-2015.

The King Fahad National Library, where all books are registered before publication in Saudi Arabia, provided the author of this thesis with statistics for the number of translated books as shown in table 8.

Table 8: Total number of translated books published in Saudi Arabia between 2000 and 2015

Year	Number of translated Books
2000	14
2001	10
2002	5
2003	4
2004	7
2005	21
2006	53
2007	267
2008	177
2009	285
2010	88
2011	33
2012	52
2013	19
2014	20
2015	0
Total	1046

1046 is the total number of translated books during 15 years. This is a very encouraging number when seen against the total number of 733 books translated in Saudi Arabia from 1955 to 1999, 44 years, as shown by table 1 given earlier in chapter two of this thesis. The total output of the modern Saudi translation project over 15 years is very much higher than the total output of the traditional Saudi translation project over 44 years.

The topics of translated books for the modern period are totally different from those of the traditional project. In analyzing topics of translated books, this thesis reviews titles for the period 2000-2009. Unlike the traditional translation project, when there was an urgent need to transfer areas of general knowledge to help with establishing national curricula of schools and universities, it could be said that there is an intellectual welfare characterizing the modern Saudi translation project. There are some special characteristics of the topics translated during the modern project:

- There is a concern in translating books about computers and the internet (23 books)
  - The largest number of translated books come from the world of self-help books, power of attractions and the like (108 books)
  - Books on religion mostly translated from Arabic into English and Farsi (44 books).
  - Methods of modern education and raising children occupy a large area in translation production (55 books)
  - Semi scientific books which provide science with a simple and non-technical language are translated from English into Arabic (22 books), including books with medical information and advice that are accessible to common/average people (2 books)
  - Most history books are those written by Orientalists discussing ideology, history and culture of Saudi Arabia or the Arabian Peninsula (19 books), while political books provide analyses of current political situations (28 books).
  - Books of management, particularly those that discuss how to be an effective manager or how to deal with employees, occupy a considerable position at 42 books.
- The following list shows the total number of translated books between 2000 and 2009 classified by the topics:

1. Humanities:
  - History (19 books)
  - Dictionary (1books)
  - Literature (32 books)
2. Social Sciences:
  - Economics (23 books)
  - Society (2 books)
  - Political science (28 books)
3. Natural sciences
  - Physics (1book)
  - Biology (8 books)
  - Earth sciences:
    - Geology (1 book)
    - Geography (7 books)
    - Mineralogy (1 book)
4. Professions
  - Medicine (5 books)
  - Sports (2 books)
  - Agriculture (1book)
5. Cooking (24 books)
6. Religion (44 books)
7. Self-help (108 books)
8. Computer science (23 books)

Figure 2 presents the percentages of translated books by topics for the period 2000-2009.

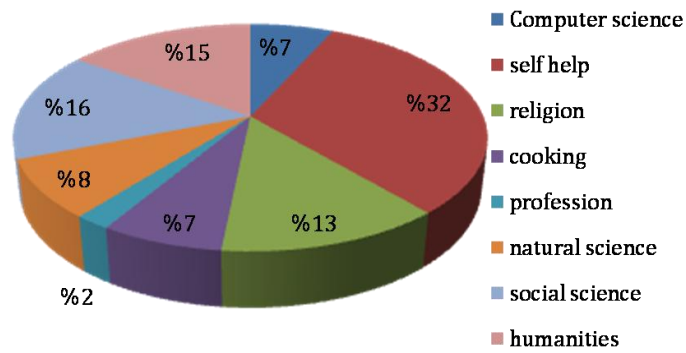


Figure 2: Topics of translated books (2000-2009)

#### 5.4. Conclusion

Although previous statistical and bibliometric studies show signs of developments on translation activities, they revealed in some problems that might hinder the systematic development. This is the topic of next chapter.

## **Chapter 6: Data Analysis**

### **6.1. Introduction**

The previous three chapters have discussed inputs and outputs of the modern Saudi translation project. How this project is prepared and provided with essential aspects of developments and determining its production. This chapter measures consistency between these inputs and outputs and how effective they are. The chapter first analyzes consistency between the number of graduated students from the colleges of translation and recruited translators in the same years. It then discusses a questionnaire conducted to find out the difficulties that face those who are studying or working in the field of translation.

### **6.2. Translation students and translators in the job market**

Available statistics show that the total number of translators who are working in the private sector in 2015 is 9590, while the number of translation students who graduated from colleges of translation is very low. Only 2 students graduated in 2012 and 30 in 2013 with bachelor degrees in translation. This low number might be the result of either difficult and strict admissions criteria or simply students not wanting to pursue this field as a major. But analysis has shown that the first hypothesis is not true. Admission at different colleges of translation in Saudi Arabia is very high. From 2003 so far, 2900 students were admitted to college of languages and translation at Imam Mohammad University only (see Section 4.2.). So, this limited number of graduated students compared with the reasonable number of or required translators could raise two issues. First, it may seem that most translators who are working in the private sector do not hold translation degrees. Many translators and interpreters in hospitals, for example, are recruited on the basis of passing the TOFEL test only! The second issue is that most students who join translation programs do not complete their studies at colleges of languages and translation. A high number of students admitted to such colleges did not graduate. So, to find some possible solutions for this particular issue, a questionnaire was conducted and the findings are discussed in the next section.

### **6.3. The Questionnaire**

This questionnaire was aimed at students of translation and translators to find out the obstacles that may hinder the development of translation as a project and

activity in Saudi Arabia, and their views on how to develop translation further in the country. 22 students participated in this questionnaire.

This questionnaire addresses four main questions or issues. The first two questions are based on the problem raised previously in section (6.2) about the limited number of graduates from the colleges of languages and translation.

Question 1 tries to establish reasons why students who are admitted to colleges of languages and translation tend to change their major. Figure 3 provides a summary of the answers to this question: Why do students who are admitted to colleges of languages and translation tend to change their major?

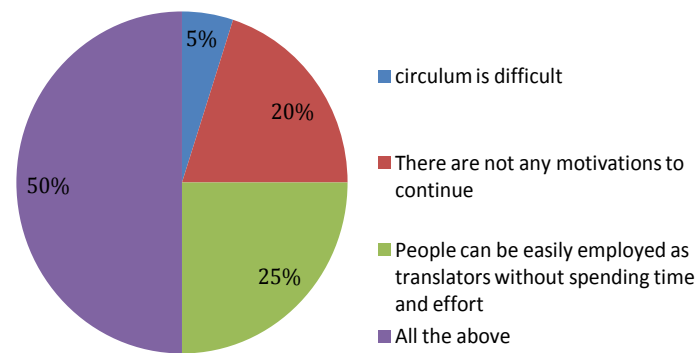


Figure 3: Answers to question 6.3.1

Students' answers vary. Some think that there is no motivation to continue studying translation. Others think that there is no need to continue since it is easy to be a translator without a university degree. Half of the respondents thought that all the three reasons given apply.

Question 2 sings from the same hymnbook. Figure 4 provides a summary of the answers to question on how to motivate students to continue their undergraduate studies at translation colleges.



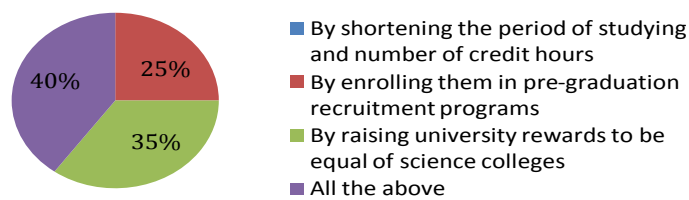


Figure 4: Answers to question 6.3.2

25% of respondents opted for enrolling students in pre-graduation recruitment programs to guarantee ‘proper’ jobs after graduation. Students graduated from colleges of translation were shocked by the lack of job opportunities. Even worse, they sometimes have to work as schoolteachers. 35% of respondents suggested increasing university monthly payments for arts colleges from SR840 to SR990 paid to students of sciences colleges. Students of translation need to pay a lot to buy dictionaries, resources, electronic devices and IT applications. Besides, foreign books are more expensive than those locally published. 40% of respondents think that all suggestions apply to the question of motivating students to major in translation.

Question 3 moves to obstacles that might face translators at work. Figure 5 summarizes the answers to question 3: In terms of working in the field of translation, what obstacles might face translators?

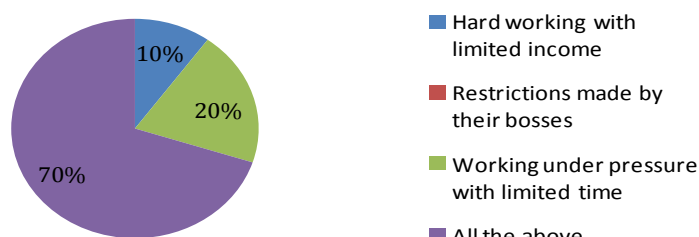


Figure 5: Answers to question 6.3.3

10 % of the respondents opted for translation being hard work with limited income. It is true that no one can judge how much efforts translators put in a single translation

task except those who practice translation. 20% of answers related to stress caused by limited time and deadlines. The aim here seems to be that translators should be given enough time to perform work appropriately. 70% of respondents thought that all obstacles applied (hard work, low income, bosses, pressure and deadlines).

Question 4 asked participants to the questionnaire about ways of raising the profile of translators whereby young people would be encouraged to study translation and work in the field. Figure 6 summarizes the answers to this question: How to raise the profile of translators?

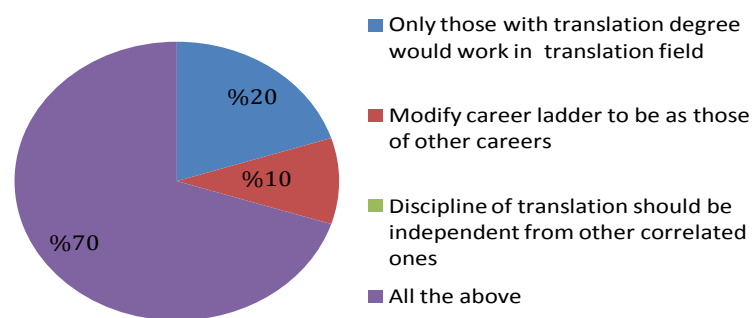


Figure 6. Answers to question 6.3.4

10% of the participants went for modifying the career ladder since translators are the only civil servants who do not have a systematic career ladder and who are not allowed to enroll in routine professional development courses which are offered regularly for civil servants. 20% of respondents thought that a translator is a distinct job that should be restricted to those with a university degree specifically in the field of translation. 70% of answers put all suggestions together as required to raise the profile of translators.

Question 5 is an open one. Participants were asked to provide suggestions to develop the performance of translators. As table 6 shows, training and job opportunities were the most significant suggestions

Table 9. Answers to question 6.3.5: Suggestions to develop the performance of translators.

**?What are your suggestions to develop the performance of translators**

Face the challenge because each and every major is a challenging one, and who overcomes any obstacles wins the battle
regular training and cooperation between translators to maintain best performance
.Practice, practice and practice-
More job opportunities and better income

So far, data of translation statistics are analyzed. Some inconsistencies in those data which cause problems that hinder the process of translation in the country. Those problems might be solved by suggesting some recommendations. This will be discussed in the following section.

## **Chapter 7: Conclusion and recommendations**

Any translation project is a cultural, historiographical and ideological process in which government and non-government institutions cooperate to fulfill a certain agenda. Saudi Arabia has developed a national translation project since the first years of its establishment. This policy has over time achieved satisfaction results.

This thesis has set out to examine the Saudi translation project between 2000 and 2015. This thesis first distinguishes between the traditional project launched in 1955 and the modern project that start with the new millennium. The modern project is discussed in terms of its important activities such as live translation and interpreting of the weekly (Friday) sermons delivered at the two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz International Award for translation, the Saudi Association of Languages and Translation, and Translation project of the Ministry of Higher education.

Developments in educational institutions are also discussed. During the period covered, six institutions and colleges of translation were established (colleges of languages and translation at Imam Mohammad bin Saud University, Princess Noura University, and Prince Sultan University). The Institute of Translation and Arabization was established to further enrich all translation projects.

Statistics and bibliometric studies were conducted to measure the improvements in translation activities in Saudi Arabia. Statistics and bibliometrics indicate improvements in numbers of translators and the production of translated books. But, the data also show a serious decline in students graduating from colleges of translation. This particular problem was analyzed by comparing the numbers of working translators and graduates of translation programs. A questionnaire was administered to find the reasons and possible solutions for this problem. Furthermore, another questionnaire was administered to measure the awareness of Saudi citizens of new developments in translation as a national project and their expectations and suggestions for further developments. Based on the findings of this thesis, the following recommendations are suggested.

Although the Saudi translation projects goes along way at both governmental and non-governmental levels as well as academic institutions to further translation as a national project, this thesis has shown that there three major problems that may hinder modern Saudi translation project, namely financing, restrictions (mostly

ensorship) and the lack of motivation to study translation as an academic discipline. To hopefully overcome these problems, this thesis suggests the following recommendations:

- 1) Major Private Translation projects such as King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz International Award for translation and the Saudi Association of Languages and Translation could be funded by the government. As these projects attract no revenues, but have very important agendas for the future of translation in Saudi Arabia.
- 2) Establish a state-backed investment fund to finance small and medium enterprises of translation. Inclusion and exclusion of these enterprises should depend on their annual translation production and quality not quantity.
- 3) Separate the Institution of Translation and Arabization administratively and financially from Imam Mohammad bin Saudi University and make it an independent organization. This organization is considered to be the highest translation authority in the country. It performs an advisory role for all translation centers in Saudi Arabia and coordination role with other translation and Arabization institutions in the Arab world.
- 4) Facilitate the translation process in terms of publishing, registration and reducing costs. Meanwhile, impose sanctions on those who produce or publish what could be termed 'low-level' translations in terms of language and content.
- 5) Encourage high school students to register in colleges of translation by launching awareness campaigns performed by students and faculty of from translation major academic programs at these colleges.
- 6) Increase university allowances for students of the colleges of translation and enroll them in pre-graduation recruitment programs to secure jobs immediately post-graduation.
- 7) Limit the title job of translator to those who hold a university degree in the field and exclude those who practice translation without such a degree.
- 8) Encourage people to finance translation by establishing a service of translation via SMS. This service could be administered by a governmental organization concerned with translation such as King Abdul-Aziz National Library, for example. All participants could share all the activities financed by this service.

9) Establish a mobile library of translated books, financed for example by the fund mentioned under recommendation 8 above. This library could visit schools, universities, social clubs and public areas to encourage people to read books.

10) In terms of translating books, concentrate on those semi-scientific ones which are accessible to average readers. After all, almost all professionals in fields such as medicine or engineering tend to read specialized books in their original languages.

It is hoped that these recommendations may help in overcoming the problems, which mostly relate to financing translation activities and encouraging studying translation at college level. It is further hoped that these recommendations may help furthering developments in the Saudi translation project as a matter of national urgency.

## References

- Bialasiewicz, L., & Minca, C. (2005). Old Europe, new Europe: For a Geopolitics of Translation. *Area*, 37(4), 365–372. Retrieved on July 1, 2015 from <http://dare.uva.nl/document/2/104945>
- Bowring, J. (1830). *Poetry of the Magyars, preceded by a sketch of the language and literature of Hungary and Transylvania*. London: Printed for the Author.
- Cronin, M. (2006). *Translation and identity*. London: Routledge.
- College of Languages and Translation in Imam Mohammad University*. (n.d.). Retrieved on July1, 2015 from <https://units.imamu.edu.sa/colleges/LanguageAndTranslation/Pages/default.aspx>
- College of Languages and Translation in PNU*. (n.d.) Retrieved on July1, 2015 from <http://www.pnu.edu.sa/en/Faculties/Languages/Pages/Default.aspx>
- Determann, J. (2013). *Historiography in Saudi Arabia: Globalization and the State in the East*. London, GBR: I.B. Tauris. Retrieved on July 1, from <http://www.ebrary.com>
- Gündoğan, E. (2008). Concepts of Hegemony in Antonio Gramsci's Southern Question and the Prison Notebooks. *Journal of Marxism and Interdisciplinary Inquiry*, 2(1), 45-60.
- Halpin, E. (2013). *Digital public administration and e-government in developing nations policy and practice*. Hershey, PA: Information Science Reference.
- Institute of Translation and Arabization*. (n.d.) Retrieved on July 1, 2015 from <https://units.imamu.edu.sa/colleges/en/kaiftaa/pages/default.aspx>
- Ibin Hanbal, A. (1998). *Musnad Imam Ahmad Ibin Hanbal*. [In Arabic]. Riyadh: International Ideas Home for Publishing & Distribution.
- Khatib, M. (2005). *Economic Performance of the Arabic Translation Industry in Saudi Arabia*. Retrieved on July1, 2015from <http://faculty.ksu.edu.sa/alkhatib/English/Economic%20of%20the%20Arabic%20Translation%20Industry%20in%20Saudi%20Arabia.pdf>
- King Abdulla bin Abdul Aziz International Award for Translation*. (n.d.). Retrieved on July1, 2015 from <http://www.translationaward.org/en/default.aspx>
- King Fahad National Library, (2008). *Translated Books in Arabic in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia* [in Arabic]. Riyadh: King Fahad National Library

- Lambert, J. (1993). 'History, Historiography and the Discipline. A Programme.' In Gambier, Yves & Tammola, J. (Eds.). *Translation and Knowledge*. Turku: University of Turku.
- Lefevere, A. (1992). *Translation, rewriting, and the manipulation of literary fame*. London: Routledge.
- López, P., & Pinilla, J. (2013). *A Contribution towards the Historiographical Study of Translation. A proposal for a Translation Historiography Reader. MonTI*. Retrieved on June 28, 2015, from [http://rua.ua.es/dspace/bitstream/10045/35004/1/MonTI\\_05\\_04\\_eng.pdf](http://rua.ua.es/dspace/bitstream/10045/35004/1/MonTI_05_04_eng.pdf)
- Munday, J. (2001). *Introducing translation studies: Theories and applications*. London: Routledge.
- Naser, al, N.S. (1998). *Translation of Books into Arabic in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia – a Bibliometric Study* [in Arabic]. Riyadh: King Abdul Aziz Library.
- Nord, C. (1997). *Translating as a Purposeful Activity. Functionalist Approaches Explained*. Manchester: St. Jerome.
- Rasheed, M. (2002). *A history of Saudi Arabia*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Torop, P. (2002). Translation as translating as culture. *Sign Systems Studies*, 30 (2). Retrieved from <http://www.ut.ee/SOSE/sss?pdf/torop302.pdf>
- Torop, P., & Osimo, B. (2010). Historical Identity of Translation: From Describability to Translatability of Time. *TRAMES*, 14(64/59), 383-393. Retrieved September 30, 2015, from [http://www.kirj.ee/public/trames\\_pdf/2010/issue\\_4/trames-2010-4-393.pdf](http://www.kirj.ee/public/trames_pdf/2010/issue_4/trames-2010-4-393.pdf).
- World Intellectual Properties*. (n.d.) Retrieved on July 1, 2015, from <http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/details.jsp?id=3594>



## **Vita**

Ajayb A. Al-Otaibi was born in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. She graduated from the college of languages and translation, King Saud University with a bachelor degree in translation. She received a diploma in computer programming from Al-Alamia Institute and a master degree in translation from the Arab British Academy for Higher Education.

Mrs. Al-Otaibi works as a translator for the Ministry of Finance, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and is mother of two children.