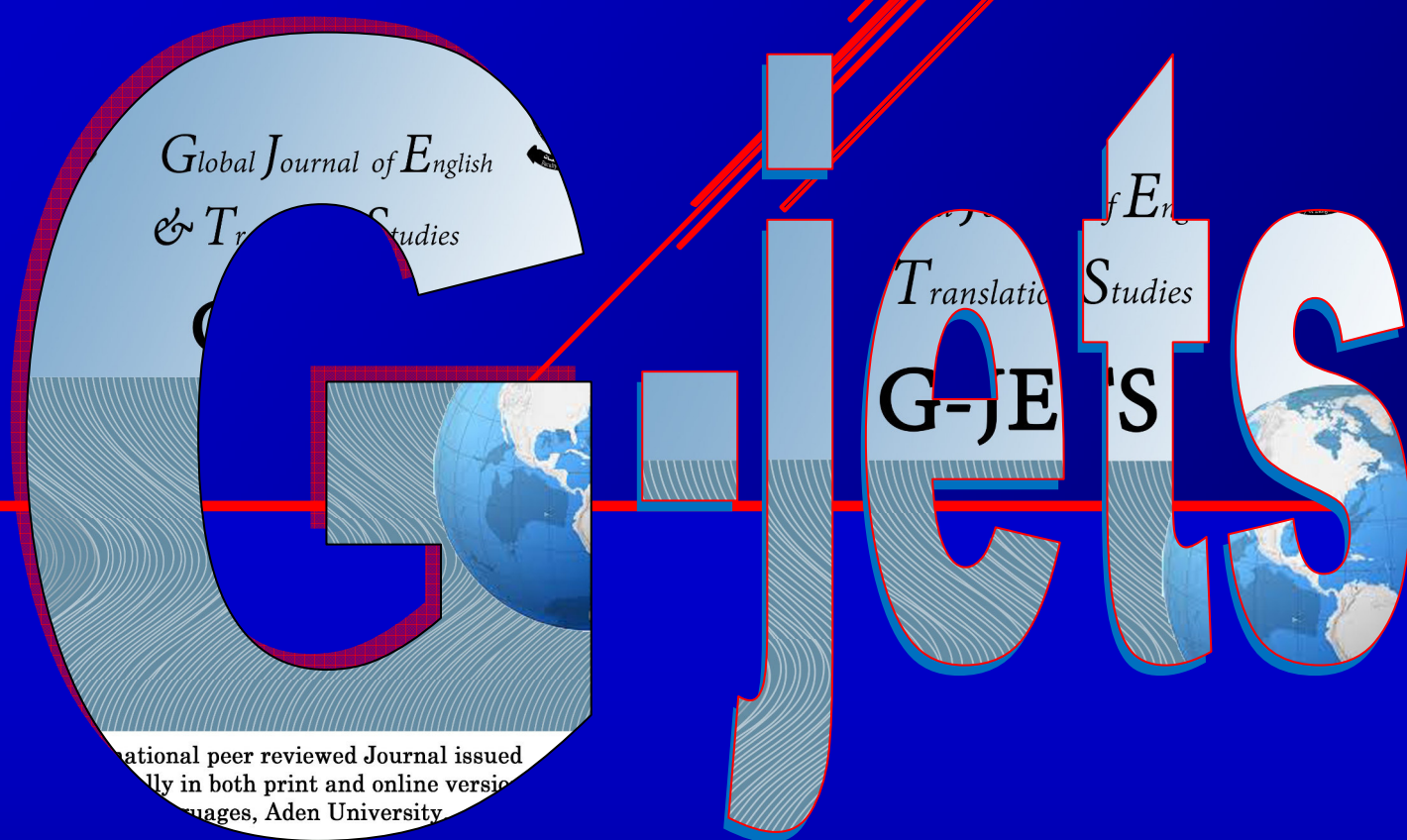


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**Website:** <http://langfaculty-aden.com>

**Email:** globaljets001@gmail.com

**Tel:** +967 02-236476

### **About the Journal**

The Global Journal of English and Translation Studies (G-JETS) is a high quality open access peer reviewed research journal published by the Faculty of Languages- Aden University. It is a brainchild of a group of academicians and research scholars in the field of English language and translation studies. It aims to provide a platform for the researchers, academicians, professionals, practitioners and students to impart and share knowledge in the form of high quality empirical and theoretical research papers, case studies, literature reviews, translations and books reviews to make them available to scholars of English language studies and translation. It is a biannual publication (January & June). The journal publishes in both print and online versions. The G-JETS was founded in 2014 by Prof. Dr. Gamal Mohammed Ahmed Abdullah, dean of the Faculty of Languages- University of Aden.

### Editorial

Our word of thanks goes to contributors and authors who always follow us and take part in every issue. Your participation supports us with continuity of this journal which we try to continue issuing in its time as scheduled. Special thanks goes to the rector, Prof.Dr. Alkhadar Nasser Laswar for his continuous support. This is issue No 5 of the G-JETS which started four years ago. With issuing this issue in January makes the G-JETS appears for the fifth times in time as scheduled. This makes it one of the few journals at the University of Aden that appear as scheduled. I would like to seize this opportunity and express my great thanks to the editorial board who always exert great efforts in order to make the G-JETS appears nicely and in time.

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#### *Editing Requirements*

1. Paper should be in Times New Romans font with 12 font size on 4A paper printed at single side.
2. Margins should be 2.5 cm on four sides.
3. The soft copy of the paper should be in MSW 2007 OR any latest MSW version. Or log to our website to get a template.
4. A PDF format copy should also be included.
5. Contributors should follow APA referencing system.
6. The paper should not exceed 5000 words.
7. The paper should be acknowledged with a declaration that it is an original work and has not been published anywhere else.
8. Abstract should not be more than 200 words.
9. A short bio-note of the author should include name, institutional affiliation and brief career history.

#### *Selection Procedures*

All submitted papers will be screened by peer reviewing committee. Final selection will be made if the paper is selected by reviewers for publications. The editors reserve the right to make necessary editing of the selected papers for the sake of conceptual clarity and formatting.

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ترجمة أستاذ مشارك د. طارق علي عيدروس السقاف  
جامعة عدن- قسم اللغة الإنكليزية  
كلية التربية - صبر  
اللقاء

كيف لي أن أنسى ذلك اللقاء الذي حدث بينهما في تلك الليلة؟؟!!!! كنت في فينيسيا، تلك المدينة التي اشتهرت بأسرارها السوداء ومياهها الساكنة. كان الوقت منتصف الليل وكان الظلام هو الغالب في كل مكان، وبالرغم من أن رياح منتصف الصيف كانت حارة إلا أنها كانت هادئة، وكانت تلك القنوات المائية – التي طالما اشتهرت بها هذه المدينة الرائعة- هادئة هي الأخرى.. ..

فجأة وبينما كنت عائداً إلى منزلي مستخدماً الجندول\* عبر القنال الرئيسية، سمعت صراخاً حاداً لامرأة كان قد اخترق سكوت ظلمة الليل.... التفت بسرعة صوب ذلك الصراخ، وطلبت من سائق الجندول أن يغير وجهته ويجد صوب الجسر باتجاه قصر عائلة منتون التي كانت مصدراً لذلك الصراخ المريب. بعد ذلك الصراخ المفزع والغريب أضيت جميع حجرات ذلك القصر، وشرع الرجال بالنزول مسرعين من سلالم القصر صوب الماء..... بعدها مباشرة أضيت الأنوار باتجاه القناة المائية التي أصبحت للتلو مضئة وكأننا في وضوح النهار. كان واضحاً أن شيئاً رهيباً قد حدث. وبعد أن وصلت لليابسة صرخت مستفسراً أحد الرجال " ماذا حدث؟" وسرعان ما جاء الرد "لقد وقع طفل من حضن والدته صوب الماء بينما كانت تطل من إحدى نوافذ القصر المرتفعة والمظلة على القناة المائية". تسمرت في مكاني لبرهة من الوقت، كان جسدي يرتجف خوفاً على الطفل، وكنت أشاهد رجال القصر وهم يركضون هنا وهناك، وكان بعضهم قد قفز صوب الماء باحثين عن الطفل الغريق.

وهناك عند مدخل القصر، وقفت والدته الطفل المنكوب، كانت حسناء شابة باهرة الجمال، بل أنها كانت أجمل امرأة في كل أنحاء مدينة فينيسيا، أنها المركيزا\* دي منتون. وقفت شاردة ووحيدة. لم تكن تنظر صوب الماء حيث وقع فلذة كبدها، وإنما كانت تحديق صوب المبنى المقابل للقصر.... سألت نفسي مستفسراً وقد ملأني الدهشة "لماذا تنظر الماركيزا شاردة صوب ذلك المبنى القديم والمظلم؟ ماذا يمكنها أن ترى هناك؟ أم أنها كانت مرعوبة بحيث أنها لم تتمالك نفسها حتى تنظر صوب القناة المائية خوفاً من أن ترى جثة الطفل الغريق وهي تطفو فوق المياه المظلمة؟".... على مسافة ليست ببعيدة من المركيزا وفي الطابق العلوي من القصر وقف زوجها العجوز الماركيز منتون، رب عائلة منتون الشهيرة، وقد أعطى أوامره لحراسه للبحث عن طفله الغريق، كان يبدو عليه الضجر إلى أبعد الحدود....

وفجأة، وبعد برهة قصيرة، ظهر شاب يافع من ذلك المبنى المقابل لقصر عائلة منتون، وانطلق مسرعاً كالبرق وقفز صوب الماء.... وبعد دقائق معدودة خرج ذلك الشاب يحمل بين ذراعيه الطفل وكان لا يزال على قيد الحياة.... كان كالفارس الذي ظهر فجأة وأنقذ الطفل بعد أن بدأ اليأس يدب بحراس

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القصر في العثور على ابن الماركيزا... وقف ذلك الشاب وسلم الطفل للماركيزا التي كانت تقف مقابلة له.... عندها سلطت جميع أضواء القصر على ذلك الشاب، واستطاع الجميع رؤية ملامح وجهه....

كان شابا مشهورا ووسيمًا جدا، كانت وسامته من ذلك الطراز الشبيهة بآلهة الرومان، كانت عيناه شديدة السواد، أما شعره فقد كان أكردا... بالرغم من أننا لم نكن صديقين حميمين، إلا أنني كنت أعرفه قليلا في الفترة التي قضيتها مقيما في مدينة فينيسيا.... كان صامتا ولم ينطق بكلمة واحدة، أما الماركيزا - ويالدهشتي العظيمة - لم تأخذ الطفل من بين ذراعيه لتحتضنه.... لقد أخذ الحراس وانطلقوا به صوب القصر.... أما الماركيزا.... فكانت عينها مبللة بالدموع وهي تحديق بذلك الوسيم، كما أن ذراعيها كانت ترتجف بشدة.... عاد الماركيز العجوز صوب قصره بمجرد استلامه الطفل من حراسه وبدأ أنه لم يأبه كثيرا بزواجه الماركيزا الواقفة على الناصية.... أما هي فقد أخذت يد الفارس الوسيم بكلتا يديها ونظرت إليه بعينها الدامعتين. كانت عينها سوداويتان ملوهُما رعبٌ ممزوجةٌ بالألم، كان وجهها شاحبا كضوء القمر المتراقص على مياه القناة المانية المظلمة. عندها تحدثت إليه بتهيدة عميقة ملوهُها الألم، وكانت دموعها تنهمر على وجنتيها الشاحبتين، وكنت أنا لأزال على جندولي على مسافة ليست ببعيدة عنهما، واستطعت سماع كل ما قالته له بالرغم من أنني لم أفهم كثيرا مغزى حديثها معه.

قالت له " لقد ربحت..... نعم لقد ربحت!!!!!!، كنت محقا منذ البداية.... هناك إجابة واحدة فقط لكل ما يحدث لنا.... نعم لا نستطيع الاستمرار معا هنا!!!!!! لقد اتفقنا على اختيار طريقنا!!!!!! ولقد حان الوقت الآن لتلتقي مجددا بعد ساعة واحدة من بزوغ الشمس!!!!!!

بعدها انصرف الجميع، وانطفأت الأنوار وبدأ الهدوء يعم المكان ووقف صديقي الشاب وحيدا، كان وجهه شاحبا كما أن جسده كان يرتجف بشدة، كان واضحا بأنه بدأ شديد التأثير بكلام الماركيزا.... التفت حوله فوجدني أمامه وتذكرني على الفور. لم يكن هناك أي جندول للنقل فقررت أن اصطحبه معي وأن أوصله إلى منزله.... أثناء طريق العودة تحدثنا في أمور هامشية، وعندئذ وجه لي دعوة لزيارة منزله فجر اليوم التالي قائلا "أرجو أن تشرفني بزيارتك عند بزوغ الفجر!!!!!! نعم عند بزوغ الفجر، وليس بعد ذلك ولو بدقيقة واحدة، إذا تكرمت!!!!!!" وكان طلبا غريبا أن أزوره في ذلك التوقيت بالذات، عموما لم يكن هذا هو الشيء الغريب الوحيد الذي صادفته في تلك الليلة الغريبة من لقاء الماركيزا بهذا الشاب الغريب نوعا ما.

قبلت دعوته.... وصلت إلى منزله في مواعيدي عند بزوغ الفجر. كانت شقته تقع في واحدة من مجموعة من البنايات العتيقة في القدم المطلة على الجراندي كانال\* بالقرب من جسر رياتو الشهير. كانت غرف شقته واسعة وملينة بالتحف والأنتيكات الرائعة من أعرق وأقدم حضارات العالم من إيطاليا واليونان ومصر.... كانت هناك العديد من اللوحات الباهية والأثاث والسجاجيد ذات الطراز غالي الثمن وأشياء أخرى نادرة مصنوعة من الحجر الأسود والحجر الأحمر والزجاج والذهب والفضة... كان هناك صوت موسيقى رومانسية هادئة تنبعث من إحدى الغرف، وسرعان ما تراقصت أشعة الصباح على زجاج نوافذ شقته.... كل شيء في الغرفة كان ملفتا للنظر: كانت أضواء المنزل باهرة وساطعة وكانت ألوانه

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زاهية ومتنوعة، كنت مبهورا بكل شيء وجدته.... ضحك صديقي عندما أبصر دهشتي لما وجدته في منزله. قال لي بنبرة غريبة " أنا أسف إذا كنت قد ضحكت، ولكن الدهشة واضحة على مُحياك!!!!!! ولكن ياعزيزي في بعض الاحيان لا يوجد خيار للإنسان الا الضحك أو الموت!!!!!!كم هو رائع أن تموت وانت تضحك!!!!!! الا تتفق معي في هذا؟؟؟" ..... قال هذا وهو يجلس على أحد الكراسي وكان لايزال يقهقه ضحكا بتلك الصورة الغريبة.... تابع كلامه قائلا "لدي منازل أخرى غير هذا، ولكن هذا المنزل بالذات يختلف عن الآخرين.... إنك من القلائل الذين رأوه.... تعال... لدي المزيد من اللوحات الشهيرة لأريك إياها".

كان كمن يسابق الزمن...كان يريد أن يريني كل شيء، بالرغم من أنه كان متعبا الا انه كان مبهجا، ولربما كان خائفا من شيء ما، لم أكن متأكدا. كان هناك شيئا ما يقلقه، كان يتكلم ثم يصمت فجأة وكأنه يستمع لشخص ما ..... شخص خفي يختبئ في رأسه. خلال لحظات الصمت التي دارت بيننا، استدرت صوب طاولة صغيرة ووجدت بها كتابا به كلمات حب وعشق لأغاني إيطالية شهيرة رائعة!!!! كان الكتاب مفتوحا وكانت احدى صفحاته مبللة بالدموع وكانت طرية مما يوحي بأن صديقي كان يبكي وهو يقرأها قبل أن أصل، أما صفحته الاخرى فقد كتب عليها صديقي الشاب وباللغة الانكليزية هذه الكلمات:

حبيبتي.... كنت شمسي، كنت قمري، كنت نجومي

أهب لك حياتي

كم تراقصنا نهارا، وغينا ليال

حبنا كان عذريا، طاهرا

والآن هأنا اقضى جل وقتي في الظلام

نار الحياة قد بردت

فلم أعد أرى في هذه الحياة سوى ابتسامتك الخالصة الساحرة

يديك لم أعد أستطيع ضمهما إلى صدري

لقد أخذوك من بينتنا الانكليزية الدافئة إلى بيئة إيطالية باهرة

لنتزوجي هرما غنيا

والآن قلبي يموت مغشيا

وكان تحت هذه السطور مكتوبا المكان والتاريخ...كان بجانب المكان مكتوبا مدينة لندن.... وكم أدهشني هذا كثيرا لأنني عندما التقيته أول مرة في فينيسيا سألتته مستفسرا: "عندما عشت في لندن هل التقيت بالماركيزا دي منتون خصوصا وانها عاشت هناك قبل زواجها؟" وقد تعاضمت دهشتي حين أجابني

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قائلا " لم أذهب إلى لندن البتة " ..كان جوابه غريبا بالنسبة لشاب إنكليزي ثري ولكني لم أهتم كثيرا ذلك الوقت...لم ينتبه صديقي وأنا أفكر بكل هذا ..... بعدها استدار نحوي وقال "تعال، لدي شيء ما لأريك إياه " ..أصطحبني معه صوب غرفة صغيرة وأراني صورة ضخمة جدا ويالدهشتي كانت للماركيزا دي منتون...كانت تبسم ابتسامة خلابة وهي تنظر إلينا، كانت عيناها سوداويتان مليئة بالحياة ...وقف صديقي يحملك بالصورة لفترة طويلة من الوقت وكأنه نسي وجودي، ثم لم يلبث أن دعاني لشرب النبيذ وكان شاردا ولم يكن منتبها لوجودي...هنا اغتتمتها فرصة واستدرت صوب ذلك الكتاب وشرعت بتصفحه وكانت به بعض الاجابات حول تساؤلاتي...وبينما أنا ألقبه وجدت بين طياته رسالة - أو بالأحرى جزءا من رسالة - مكتوبة من امرأة....كان هذا الجزء من الرسالة يقول:

.....لطالما أكدت لي بأنك تعشقتي، بل أنك تعشقتي أكثر من هذا العالم، أكثر من هذه الحياة...ولكن كيف لك أن تثبت ذلك لي؟ كيف لي أن أتأكد بأنني عشقتك الوحيد كما تدعى؟ ولكن... يمكنك أن تثبت ذلك...إذا تمكنت من إنقاذ طفلي منه...إذا تمكنت من هذا...سيكون عندها حبك لي صادقا...سيكون طاهرا عفيفا....وسأحتضن كفيك لآخر مرة...وسنخرج سويا وقت الفجرين آخر باب !!!!...

بعد قراءتي لهذا الجزء من الرسالة سمعت تكة، فأغلقت الكتاب بسرعة...عاد صديقي نحوي وهو يحمل قدحان كبيران من الفضة مملؤان بالنبيذ الفينيسي الفاخر...قدم لي واحدا وقال - وقد بدأ شاردا نوعا ما- "لايزال الوقت مبكرا...دعنا نحتسي قليلا من النبيذ...نعم يبقى لدينا ساعة واحدة...لنشرب نخب طلوع الشمس" قالها وقد دقت ساعة الحائط معلنة بدء دخول الصباح....شرب قدحه بسرعة كبيرة، وقال مغمغا "نشرب نخب أحلامي!!!!طوال حياتي، جعلت قلبي مرتعا للأمال" عندها تساءل باستغراب "تري أين سيكون أجمل؟ هنا أم هناك؟" قالها بعد أن وضع قدحه على الطاولة...بعدها قال بثقة : "والآن أنا مستعد للرحيل لأرض الاحلام الحقيقية، في القريب العاجل جدا سأكون هناك"...بعدها وقف بصورة غريبة محاولا أن يصغي لشيء ما...شيئا لا أعرف كنهه، عندها رفع رأسه ورد على هذا الشيء قائلا بهمس وبصورة شعرية غريبة ولكنها جميلة :

انتظريني هناك يا حبي المعذب

فأنا متأكد بأنني للقياك قريب

وسنلتقي سويا خلال ذلك الباب

عندما قال هذه الأبيات الشعرية سقط على الأرض وجحظت عيناه قبل أن يغلقها....في ذات الوقت سمعت ضوضاء هنا وهناك...سمعت أقدام تركض صوب منزل صديقي وشرع الطارق يدق الباب بقوة، عرفت عندها بانه خادم من عائلة منتون...وبعد أن فتحت له الباب قال- وكان يلهث - "الماركيزا!!!!!!الماركيزا!!!!!!لقد توفيت الماركيزا!!!!!!لقد تجرعت السم!!!!!!" عندها ركضت صوب صديقي الملقى على الأرض وحاولت إيقاظه وتقليبه ولكن دون جدوى...كان الموقف مؤلما...كان المشهد رهيبا...كان المنظر قاسيا....كان هو الآخر قد توفيا.....

إنتهى

من كتاب الحفرة والبندول: للقاص والناقد والشاعر الأمريكي الكبير إدجار آلان بو: ترجمة د. طارق علي عيروس السقاف  
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\* جندول : زورق صغير يستخدم كوسيلة للنقل في فينيسيا. (المترجم)

\* المركيزا: زوجة المركيز وهو لقب بريطاني يمنح للنبلاء. (المترجم)

\* الجراند كانال : القناة المائية الرئيسية في مدينة فينيسيا الايطالية التي من خلالها تمر وترسو جميع زوارق النقل. (المترجم)

## **The Meeting**

**By Edgar Allan Poe**

How well I remember that meeting!!! I was in Venice, that city of dark secrets and silent waters. It was midnight and the midsummer air was hot and still, the canals silent and empty.

I was coming home in a gondola along the Grand Canal when I heard a sudden scream- a woman's scream. I jumped up and the boatman turned my gondola to go under the Bridge of Sighs and past the great house of the Mentoni family. Lights were on in all the windows, and the people were running down the steps to the water. The canal was suddenly as cold as day.

"What has happened?" I called out.

"A child fell from its mother's arms," came the answer. "From a high window of the house"

I stopped to watch, full of fear for the child, already people were swimming in the water, calling, shouting, looking everywhere.

At the doorway to the palace, stood the child's young mother, the Marchesa di Mentoni, the loveliest woman in all of Venice.

She stood alone, but not looking into the water for her lost child. She was staring across the canal at the building opposite. Why? I asked myself. What could she see there, in the dark corners of that old building? Or was she afraid to look into the canal, afraid to see the dead body of her child in the dark waters?

On the steps behind the Marchesa, higher up, stood her old husband, Mentoni himself, the head of the rich and famous Mentoni family. He gave orders to the servants who were looking for his child, but he looked bored, bored to death.

Then, from one of the dark corners outside the building opposite, a man steeped into the light and immediately jumped into the canal.

A minute later, he stood next to the Marchesa, with living, breathing child in his arms. The light of the windows fell on his face, and everyone could see him.

He was a very famous young man-as beautiful as a Greek god, with his black eyes and his wild black hair. We weren't close friends, but I knew him a little, from my time in Vince.

He didn't speak, and to my great surprise the Marchesa did not take her child in her arms and hold him close. Other hands took the child and carried him away into the house. And the Marchesa? Her eyes were wet with tears, and her hands were shaking. Then old Mentoni turned and went into the house. The Marchesa took the young man's hands in both of hers,

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and stared into his face. Her eyes were dark with terror, and her face was as white as moonlight that danced on the waters of the canal.

She spoke softly, hurriedly, the tears running down that wild white face. Below the steps, in my gondola, I heard every word.

"You have won," she said, "You have won....and you are right.... there is only one answer.... we cannot go on.... we agreed the way, and now the time has come.... we shall meet....one hour after sunrise....".

Everyone went away, lights went out, and my young friend now stood alone on the steps. He was white-faced and shaking. He looked around and saw me, and remembered me at once.

There were no other boats on the canal at that time, so I took him home in my gondola. We talked of unimportant things, and then he asked me to visit him the next morning.

"Come at sunrise," he said. "Yes, at sunrise. Not a minute later. Please!". I thought his words were a little strange, but they weren't the first strange words on that strange night.

I agreed to go, and arrived at sunrise. His apartment was in one of those very old buildings which look down on the Grand Canal, near the Rialto Bridge. The rooms were large, and full of beautiful things from Italy, Greece, Egypt.... there were pictures, furniture, carpets, things made of black stone and red stone, of glass, of gold, of silver.... soft music was playing somewhere, and the early morning sunlight danced in through the windows.

There was too much to look at, too much light, too many colors, too many beautiful things. I stared around in silent surprise, and my young friend laughed.

"Oh, I'm sorry for laughing," he said. "But you look so surprised! And sometimes a man must laugh or die. How wonderful to die laughing? Don't you agree?".

He half-fell into a low chair, still laughing in that strange way. "I have other apartments," he went on "but non like this one. you are one of the very few who have seen it. Come-I have some famous pictures here. You must see them."

He wanted to show me everything. He was tired but also excited. And perhaps afraid too. I could not be sure. But something was worrying him. Sometimes he stopped speaking in the middle of a sentence and listened. To what? The sound of another visitor on the stairs? To words inside his head.

During one of these silent moments, I turned away and saw a book of Italian songs on a small table. The open page was wet with new tears. And on the opposite, empty page, written in English and in my young friend's handwriting, were these lines:

You were my sun, my moon, my stars,

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My life I gave to you.

We danced by day, we sang by night,

A love so sweet and true.

Now all my days I spend in darkness,

The fire of life is cold,

I see no more your quick bright smile,

Your hand I cannot hold.

They took you from our English clouds,

To a blue Italian sky,

To marry an old man, rich in gold,

And now my heart will die.

Under these lines were written a place and date. The place was London. This surprised me, because when I first met him in Venice, I asked him "When you were living in London, did you ever meet the Marchesa di Mentoni? She lived in that city for some years before she married."

To this he replied "I have never been to London." For a rich young Englishman, I thought this was strange, but I thought a little of it at the time. He didn't see me with this book, and now turned to me again. "One more picture to see," he said. "Come." He took me to a small room. There was just one picture in it- a portrait of the Marchesa di Mentoni. She stood, smiling down at us, as beautiful as ever, her dark eyes full of life.

My young friend stood, staring at the portrait for a long time. Then, at last, he said "come, let's drink!" He went away to find wine, and I turned back to the book of Italian songs on the little table. Perhaps there were answers to these mysteries about my friend in this book. I turned the pages, and found, hidden at the back of the book, part of a letter. It was a woman's handwriting.

..... You say that you love me, more than the world, more than life itself. But how much is that? How can I be sure? Will you do this for me? Will you save from death my child- my child, by him?

If you do this, then I will know that your words are true. And I will take your hand for one last time.... We shall go together through that last door....

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I heard a sound, and closed the book hurriedly. My friend came back into the room, carrying two large silver goblets, full to the top with wine. He gave one to me. "it is early, but let's drink" he said again. At that moment a clock sounded the hour. "One hour after sunrise," he said softly. "Yes, it's early. But what does it matter? Let us drink to the sun, yes, the sun!"

He drank his goblet of wine very quickly. "To dreams," he said. "All my life I have dreamed. I have made myself a home of dreams, here in the heart of Venice. Where could be better?" He put his empty goblet down on the table. "And now I am ready for the land of real dreams. Soon, I shall be there....."

He stopped and listened-but to what, I did not know. Then he lifted his head and said:

Wait for me there! I will be sure

To meet you at that last dark door

On the last word he fell into a chair, and his eyes closed. At the same moment there were feet on the stairs, and a loud knocking at the door. A young servant from the Mentoni house ran into the room.

"The Marchesa, I come from the Marchesa!" the boy cried. "Poison! She has taken poison! She is dead!"

Iran to the chair and tried to wake my young friend, to tell him this strange and terrible news. But he didn't move. His hand was cold to my touch, and his face white and still. He, too, was dead.

I fell back against the table in terror, and my hand touched my friend's wine goblet, which stood there. It was now blackened inside, and from it came a sweet, sickly smell- the smell of poison.

And in a second I understood everything.

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***Definiteness System in English and Arabic/Differences and Similarities when translating from English to Arabic.***

***Dr. Najla'a Abdullah Ateeg / Associate Professor at the English Department, Women's College / Hudhramout University***

**Abstract**

*This study investigates the system of definiteness in both languages, Arabic and English by contrasting them to distinguish the differences and similarities between them in this respect. Moreover, the study aims at revealing mistakes that Arab learners may encounter when translating from English into Arabic, because of these differences.*

*The researcher depends on surveying the literature related to this topic and she uses both English and Arabic references to illustrate her subject. Also she tries to relate the topic of definiteness in English and Arabic to translation. The researcher recommends doing further researches on this issue which may seem simple as it deals with one kind of determiners. However, this issue is very important when conveying the message, we intend when translating from Arabic to English or vice versa.*

***Introduction***

When Arab learners start translating as beginners, they are surprised that the teacher cancels some articles before some nouns and adds them before some others. Although, there are few similarities in the systems of definiteness between Arabic and English, still we find many differences between them. In this concern, for example, English has three articles including the definite article **the** and the indefinite article **a**, and **an**. At times, English nouns can or indeed must be used without an article; this is called the **zero article**. Some of the differences between **definite**, **indefinite** and **zero article** are fairly easy to learn, but others are not, particularly since Arabic lacks the **zero article** and uses the other articles in different ways than English does.

Arabic on the other hand has two articles: the definite article "**ال التعريف**" and the indefinite marker nunation "**التنوين**". To illustrate the idea that both languages use articles in different ways, we have to consider the following examples:

Examples:

1- "Some people love music." can be translated into يحب بعض الناس الموسيقى.

2- "The Prince of Wales visited Egypt." can be translated into. زار امير ويلز مصر.

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In the first sentence, we added the definite article "ال" to the word music when we translate it into Arabic, although it is not found in the English sentence, while we omitted it in the translation of the second sentence although it is found in the noun phrase "The Prince". In the Arabic sentence we used the construct case "الإضافة"

to define the noun "أمير" instead of the definite article. Another example in Arabic, if we want to translate the sentence "رأيت رجلاً في الشارع"

We say "I saw a man in the street." here we added the indefinite article "a" to the word man which does not exist in Arabic where, we have nunation "التنوين" instead.

These mistakes are very common, so hopefully, the following study might give a clear idea about the areas of differences between English and Arabic in the system of definiteness.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The use of *definite* and *indefinite* articles in English and Arabic is not the same in almost many cases. Consequently, Arab learners may make mistakes in translating English articles into Arabic. The main reason for this might be either the ignorance of grammar rules concerning definiteness in English and Arabic or the interference of their mother tongue when they sometimes apply the same rules of Arabic definite articles to English. Moreover, Arabic lacks the *zero article* which constitutes a recognizable article used in English.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The study investigates the differences between English and Arabic with reference to the system of definiteness. Moreover, it aims at revealing these areas of differences as to support guidelines to Arab learners in order to be careful when translating between Arabic and English. Further, they should be aware of such differences in order to avoid making mistakes that cause their translation to sound ungrammatical or inappropriate.

### **Significance of Study**

The topic of this study though appears simple as it discusses one type of determiners in the system of grammar, namely definite *articles*, yet it is very crucial because usually, the information conveyed by articles is very important. This study may be of a vital use for students of translation as it supports a clarification about the correct use of definiteness in both languages.

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### **Limitation of the Study**

This study is based on surveying material related to the subject of the study in the literature and collecting data from various Arabic and English references. The study is confined to investigate the system of definiteness in Arabic and English and how they differ in this respect. Further, it is limited to how these differences affect the process of translation between the two languages in question.

### **Review of the Related Literature**

With reference to English, the researcher depends on two sources; Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2006) and System in English Grammar (1996) by Master. In these two sources, there are useful material about the definiteness system in English grammar and the different usages of the three articles; definite article *the*, indefinite article *a (n)* and *zero* article.

With reference to Arabic, the study depends on the materials found in some references: Hassiees (2004)، "معجم مصطلحات وأدوت النحو والاعراب"، Abdel-Jaleel (2007) المعجم المعياري لشبكات Nahlah (1999) "دلالة الواصق التصريفية في اللغة العربية"، Al-Najjaar (2005) الفصائل النحوية، "الدلالة". These references include, though little but useful materials about *definite* and *indefinite* articles in Arabic and their various usages. In these references, the subject of definite articles is included within various grammatical categories of the books except the last reference which studies the subject of definite and indefinite articles in details with reference to many Arabic grammarians like Al-Jurjaani and Siibawayh.

The study also refers to some contrastive studies that contrast English and Arabic grammars such as that of Khalil (1999), Farghal and Shunnaq (1999) and Najeeb (2005).

Within the materials of his *Contrastive Grammar of Arabic and English*, Khalil (1999) contrasts the system of definiteness in both languages and comes with a contrast that illustrates the areas of differences between the two languages in this respect.

Najeeb (2005) and Farghal and Shunnaq (1999) on the other hand relate this subject of definiteness in both languages to translation and explain the differences with supporting examples from both languages so as to bring them to the surface.

### **Methodology**

To carry out this study, the researcher has followed certain steps: checking the library for relevant materials concerning the subject of the search, collecting and reviewing the related

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materials in terms of the study as to obtain a deep and considerable thought about the subject, analyzing and discussing the related materials as to bring the problem to the surface and explore its components. Consequently, the study orders and reorders the findings according to the areas of differences between the two languages in the subject of the search.

## **Discussion and Analysis**

### ***Definite article "the"***

The function of definite article "*the*" in English is to define, determine, familiarize etc. Unlike *the indefinite article*, which is used with mainly singular count nouns. This *definite article* is used with all kinds of nouns (except proper nouns): singular, plural, mass and count nouns, concrete and abstract.

Master (1996) gives an example of how we can differentiate between classification (using *a* (*n*) or *zero article*) and identification (using *the article*). He states that one way to visualize the difference between the classification and the identification between the different articles is to imagine that you are at the airport watching the passengers come out of a plane. If you are not expecting anyone in particular, you may see  $\phi$  passenger,  $\phi$  flight attendants, perhaps *a* woman with *a* baby (notice the article used:  $\phi$  and *a*). However, if you are expecting a particular person to arrive, you ignore the other passengers as you try to identify *the* person you are waiting for, perhaps, *the* special person in your life (notice the article used: *the*)

### ***Definite Article in Arabic "ال التعريف"***

Arabic definite article "*ال التعريف*" is used to indicate the following meanings:

1-To indicate the position of the proper noun when it attaches to it, e.g., "*الحارث*"، و "*العباس*" "*الحارث*" indicates frowning and "*الحارث*" indicates someone who ploughs as Al-Faraheedi says "ان الذين قالوا: الحارث، الحسن والعباس انما أرادوا أن يجعلوا الرجل هو الشيء بعينه ولم يجعلوه سمي به ولكنهم جعلوه (Alfaraahidi cited in Al-Najjar, 2005)

2-To indicate the meaning of demonstratives, e.g., "*سأزورك اليوم*" "I will visit you today. It means this *day*. (Al-Jurjaani cited in Nahlah:1999)

3- To distinguish a common noun as being particularized. "*اي بمعنى الغلبة*".

e.g., "*البيت*" to mean "*الكعبة*"، "*المدينة*" to mean "*طيبة*".

4- For restriction (functions as relative clause in English), Al-Jurjaanni gives two examples, "*زيدٌ منطلق*"، "*زيدٌ المنطلق*". He claims that in the first sentence, the addressee knows nothing

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about the action or the doer while in the second, he knows that the speaker means a specific person whom he knows in advance.

### **Levels of meaning of Arabic definite article "ال التعريف"**

1- The **definite article** that indicates pledge or agreement. "ال العهدية"

It attaches to the noun as to make it very specific among two people. There are three elements to exist for this definite article: the speaker, the listener and the thing they agree on it (Iben Ya'iish cited in Nahlah:1999). It has three types: *mentioned agreement* "العهد الذكري", *presented agreement* "العهد الحضوري", *agreement of shared knowledge* "العهد الذهني".

In *mentioned agreement*, the noun that takes definite article is previously mentioned

as a common noun, e.g., (1) (كما ارسلنا الى فرعون رسولا فعصى فرعون الرسولا )

( مثل نوره كمشكاة فيها مصباح المصباح في زجاجة الزجاجة كأنها كوكب دري ) (2) .

In *presented agreement*, the noun which is defined should be present at the moment of speaking, e.g., (3) ( اليوم اكملت لكم دينكم واتممت عليكم نعمتي ) , it means the day of pilgrimage. Another example is "يا أيها الرجل".

In *agreement of shared knowledge*, the speaker and the addressee share knowledge about the subject of conversation, e.g., "جاء الأمير." ، " حضر المجتهد." ، "الرجل قادم."

2-Laamul-jinsi "لام الجنس" It indicates a specific thing, e.g. (4) ( وجعلنا من الماء كل شيء حي )

, it means that water is a specific thing for creation, another example is "اهلك الناس الدينار والدرهم."

3- Generic article for generic indication (5) ( او الطفل الذين لم يظهروا على عورات النساء )

Here the words; "الطفل"، "النساء" are used with a generic reference.

### **Firstly: Similarities between English and Arabic definite article**

Nahlah (1999) claims that there is a similarity between English and Arabic in using definite articles with the things mentioned before. He says "If a common noun is mentioned in a context then it is repeated again in the same context, the definite article must attach to it" (Ibid). He gives the following examples: "His car struck the tree; you can still see the mark on the tree." and (6) ( فيها مصباح المصباح في زجاجة الزجاجة كأنها كوكب دري ) .

Also he adds that the concept of generic article in English is as the same in Arabic and he quotes what Close (Close cited in Nahlah) says when giving an example supporting this similarity: "The lion is the king of the beasts." an imaginary representative of a class, distinct

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from animals or other classes. " Arabic and English also agree in using the **definite article** for unique reference such as the moon "القمر", the sun "الشمس", the universe "الكون"

Sometimes, proper nouns take definite article in both languages, despite the fact they are definite by nature these includes names of countries, e.g., the Congo الكونغو, body water, e.g., the Indian Ocean المحيط الهندي and the Euphrates الفرات, buildings, e.g., the Sheraton Hotel فندق الربع الخالي, mountain ranges and deserts, e.g., the Alps جبال الألب, the Empty Quarter الربع الخالي, literary works and magazines, e.g., the Iliad الإلياذة and the Newsweek مجلة النيوزويك. Most of the previous mentioned nouns are related to the shared knowledge of language users. (Farghal and Shunnaq,1999)

Arabic and English use **definite articles** with adjectives to refer to more than one individual, e.g., the old and the young الشيب والشباب, the poor and the rich الفقراء والأغنياء. Also both languages use article with possessive construction and musical instruments, e.g., the boy's book. الشبابة كتاب الولد, the flute.

Arabic and English use **the definite article** with the nouns that are modified by adjectives or adjective phrase, e.g., *Ali lives in the tall building at the end of the street.* can be translated into Arabic as: "يعيش علي في البناية العالية التي تقع في نهاية الشارع."

### ***Secondly: Differences between the two languages in using the definite article***

1-We do not use the definite article in English with names of titles while in Arabic we use it, e.g., President Mubarak الرئيس مبارك, king Fahed الملك فهد.

2-We do not use the definite articles in English with abstract, names of meals and plural nouns if we talk about them generically, while we use them in Arabic either specifically or generically (Najeeb:2005), e.g., Eggs are rich in proteins. البيض غني بالبروتين.

The eggs I ate today are delicious. كان البيض الذي اكلته اليوم لذيذاً.

Breakfast is my favorite meal . الافطار وجبتي المفضلة. The breakfast I had today was good . ان الافطار الذي تناولته اليوم جيداً .

3- The definite article is not used in English with the names of institutions or buildings or places if the purpose of mentioning them is not as the same purpose they are used for (Ibid).

Examples:

a1- The criminal was sent to prison. ارسل المجرم الى السجن .

b1- He went to visit his friend in the prison. ذهب لزيارة صديقه في السجن .

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a2- I went to bed. (to sleep) / للنوم. ذهبت الى السرير

b2- I went to the bed and searched under the pillow. ذهبت الى السرير وفنتشت تحت الوسادة.

4-Nouns and adjectives in Arabic agree in definiteness but not in English. For example: The big boy wrote his homework. كتب الولد الكبير واجبه.

5-English uses the definite article with superlative and comparative degree of adjective while Arabic does not use it, e.g., *The greatest scientist in the twentieth century was Einstein* أنيسيتين هو اطول الاثنين. *He is the taller of the two*. هو اعظم علماء القرن العشرين.

*The sooner the better* كلما كان اسرع، كان افضل.

6-In English we use **the** before the name of a family in the plural to refer to all the members of the family, e.g., The Johnsons had lived in this house for years.

In Arabic we use "ال" before the name of person in singular as to describe the name rather than the person, e.g., "العباس" indicates the meaning of "العبوس" frowning.

7-English mass and abstract nouns used generically, take **zero article** while the equivalents in Arabic take the **definite article**, e.g., Milk is good for health.

"القناعة كنز لا يفنى." Contentment is an inexhaustible treasure. "الحليب مفيد للصحة"،

### **Indefiniteness in English and Arabic.**

#### **English indefinite article a/an**

The indefinite article, **a/an** is mainly used with singular count nouns for a different set of purposes. Before mentioning them, the study should give a brief idea about the difference between "a" and "an" which concerns the sound that comes after them. These are some rules:

- 1- Before a word beginning with a vowel sound, use **an**: an elephant, an umbrella, an obvious mistake.
- 2- Use **a** before an "h" that is not pronounced: an hour later, an honest explanation.
- 3- Use **a** before a "u" that is pronounced like "you": a university, a unique opportunity.
- 4- Use **an** before an abbreviation that is pronounced with a vowel sound at the beginning: an SOS call, an MP3 file. (Longman Dictionary :2005)

#### **التنوين "nunation" Indefinite Article**

Arab grammarians define "**nunation**" as an extra consonant sound /n/ attached to the end of the noun phonetically, but not autographically and it is not for the purpose of emphasis. Also they say that **nunation** marks the noun for indefiniteness just as

"ال" marks nouns for definiteness (Nahlah :1999).

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**Nunation** does not necessarily indicate indefiniteness because it may attach to proper nouns ,e.g., ( محمد رسول الله والذين آمنوا معه أشداء على الكفار رحماء بينهم ) (7) ,e.g., (Al-Najjar:2005)

**Nunation** does not attach to nouns that end with shortened and extended –aa- for feminine gender, e.g., (حبلى، ليلي، صحراء، ليالى) (Op cit)

### **Similarities and differences in using indefinite article in Arabic and English**

The indefinite article *a (n)* may have three basic functions: to denote one particular individual with its specific characteristics, e.g., *A lady* came to see you, to denote one or another of the class presented, e.g., John is *a doctor*, and to generically represent a class whose characteristics are embodied in the specimen, e.g., *A lion* can be dangerous.

Similarly, Arabic uses the indefinite article **nunation** to perform comparable functions for denoting one particular individual with its specific characteristics and denoting one or another of the class presented (Farghal and Shunnaq,1999)

Examples: A girl came. جاءت بنتٌ. I saw a dog. رأيت كلباً. Ali is a judge. علي قاضي.

However, Arabic cannot use the indefinite article to perform a generic function; rather it uses the definite article "ال" to perform such a function, for example: *A book is a*

*good companion.* can be translated to الكتاب صديقٌ جيدٌ

*A doctor makes much money.* can be translated to يكسب الطبيب مالاً كثيراً.

Further , the English **indefinite article** is used for a variety of expressions including numbers , e.g., He won *a million* dollars , quantity , e.g., The speed limit is sixty miles *an hour* , emphasis , e.g., It was such *a disaster* , mass nouns ,e.g., This is *a courage* which I admire , e.g., We consider him *a Romeo* , prepositions ,e.g., She was in *a hurry* , aches and diseases e.g., He has *a fever* ., formulaic phrases, e.g., Have *a good day* , etc.

With expressions like these, there is no correspondence between the **indefinite articles** in English and **nunation** in Arabic .Therefore, such expressions are translated into Arabic equivalents that do not necessarily feature the indefinite article .(Ibid)

Examples

Ali has a cold. يعاني علي من الزكام.

Mona was in a hurry. كانت منى في عجلة من امرها .

### **The zero article( Ø)**

The **zero article**, generally occurs with plural count nouns such as books, rocks, slogans and uncountable, meaning those nouns that cannot usually be counted or made plural, such as

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oil, air, love and food. To differentiate between *the definite article* and *indefinite article*, the following two examples can be examined with reference to the fact we know "Christina has a twelve-year-old son and an eleven-year-old daughter":

- a) - Every morning, she drives the children to school.
- b) - Every morning, she drives children to school.

In sentence (a), we understand *the children* to mean Christina's own children and thus we interpret Christina to be the mother of the children. In sentence (b), we understand *children* to mean an unspecified group and thus interpret Christina to be, perhaps, a school bus driver. (Master :1996)

English uses *zero article* in many cases where Arabic utilizes the *definite article*.

These includes mass nouns , e.g., bread الخبز and abstract courage الشجاعة, unique nouns , e.g., Paradise الجنة and man الانسان , proper names of days and seasons , e.g., Saturday السبت and Spring الربيع, names of institutions, e.g., parliament البرلمان and university الجامعة , and plural common nouns when used generically , babies الرضع and rabbits الأرانب. However , both English and Arabic use *zero article* with proper nouns , e.g., Hamlet هاملت , Ahmed احمد , America امريكا , Damascus دمشق London لندن . There are some Arabic exception in both categories , e.g., Hell جهنم , Cairo القاهرة , Riyadh الرياض al-Harith الحارث (Farghal and Shunnaq,1999)

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

This study investigates the differences in the system of definiteness between English and Arabic which may cause difficulty when translating between English to Arabic. Below are some conclusions and recommendation related to the investigated issue in the present study:

#### **Conclusions**

Arab learners of English and the translators between Arabic and English may encounter difficulties when dealing with definiteness in Arabic and English because of the following differences :

- 1- English mass and abstract nouns used generically take *zero article* while the equivalents in Arabic take the *definite article*.
- 2- English plural concrete nouns used generically take *zero article*, whereas the Arabic equivalents take the *definite article*.

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- 3- In **Arabic**, the nouns and the adjectives agree in definiteness, while in English they donot agree.
- 4- English singular concrete nouns used generically may take ***an indefinite article*** whereas the Arabic equivalents take the ***definite article***.
- 5- Unlike Arabic, English does not use the ***definite article*** with times , days, months , and seasons especially after at, by, on, and in ,e.g., at midnight , on Tuesday , in May, I saw her last week., however, we can use ***the definite article*** before these names when we give more information about which specific one we mean, e.g., on **the Tuesday** before Christmas, in **the summer** after I graduated .
- 6- Unlike Arabic, English does not use the ***definite article*** with names of institutions and means of transportations.

#### **Recommendation:**

All the above differences should be taken into consideration when translating between English into Arabic. To detect more mistakes committed by Arab learners and translators, the researcher recommends doing investigation and using a grammatical test including various sentences concerning this subject to be translated from English into Arabic .

Being stumbled by the shortage of time, the researcher is unable to conduct a questionnaire as to help detecting this problem and revealing more clues about learners' mistakes committed in this area. Consequently, the researcher suggests that conducting a proficiency test in this subject may shed more light on the subject of this search. The test may include sentences which should be purposefully written with relevance to the subject , then given to the sampling to be translated . Such test may reveal many important issues about the investigated problem.

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**Teaching English Writing Skills at the Faculty of Languages - Sana'a University****Muthanna M. Moqbel Al-Shoaibi****Assistant professor - English Department****Faculty of Languages – University of Aden****Abstract**

*In the latter half of the twentieth century, writing (as first language), written discourse and the teaching of writing began to receive significant attention from scholars and teachers. Along with the growth of composition studies, there was also a parallel development in the field of second language writing. Because of their parallel development, second language writing has always been influenced by research and studies in first- language writing in several ways. In this paper, I shall work on the teaching of English writing skills at faculty of Languages-Sana'a University. I intend to examine the unsatisfactory performance in the writing of English among English students at this faculty.*

*This paper will address the following issues of teaching English writing skills: a) examine the approaches used in teaching writing; b) the micro skills of writing taught in this faculty; c) how can students improve their writing; d) how teachers understand their students' difficulties in writing and e) how teachers evaluate and grade students' writing.*

**Introduction**

Second language writing first became an issue in English language teaching in the mid1950s as a result of the post-World War II. However, even as late as the 1970s, ESL writing was not viewed as a language skill to be taught to learners. Instead, it was used as a supporting skill in language teaching (Reid 2001:28). The early practice of ESL writing in the classroom was meant to teach using grammar, to improve handwriting, and to serve as an aid to the audio-lingual teaching methods (Raimes 1991). EFL writing received scant attention in the past because many language teachers believed that writing was not necessary until the learners had mastered oral language. In addition, there was an idea that language developed sequentially from listening to speaking to reading then finally to writing. As writing was thought to be the hardest skill, it was the last language process to be taught (Hudelson 1989)

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## **Literature Review**

Some scholars find writing's value in its ability to become a permanent record of thoughts, to reveal the writer's self or to negotiate meaning. This view points to the affective aspects of writing.

Professional writers focus on the act of writing and its purpose and value. Some focus on writing's close connection to thinking and discovery, Murray's (1982) compilation of what professional writers think about writing is not worthy in that there is no separation between writing's form and content, so close is the connection between thinking and writing. Meaningful writing, according to Orwell (2000:605), is the struggle to "efface one's own personality"; without this struggle, nothing a writer produces is worth reading. Some professional writers find the purpose of writing is self-analysis, connection and influence on the lives of others.

The connections between composition and thinking have been questioned and explored throughout the last few decades. (Murray 1973:22) defines writing as "the most disciplined form of thinking", involving many skills common to thinking. Therefore, writing is as students write "to define, refine, evaluate, integrate and communicate what they have learned at a variety of levels". Through writing, students can develop their ideas more fully, integrating and connecting old learning and new thinking as they write.

Moreover, Kane T.S. (1988) said that writing is a rational activity. He wants to illustrate that one need not to be a genius to write clear, effective English. One only needs to understand what writing involves and learn how to handle words and sentences and paragraphs while writing. By doing so, one can communicate what one wants to do.

Concluding to the definitions of writing discussed above, one can argue that writing should be incorporated in all subjects to enhance thinking and learning specific contents. That means, writing is a form of thinking that students need to learn both the skills of thinking processes as well as the skills of composing processes. Most importantly, the type of writing encouraged must go beyond an analysis of grammar. Rather, it must encourage idea exploration, multiple drafts—in other words, the elements of the writing process.

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## **Foreign language writing instruction and foreign language writing on the process approach**

The researcher in this section intends to cover relevant ideas about the process approach and show what kinds of advantages that the students will get from this approach. The researcher therefore, insists through this research to expose faculty students to the process approach to writing.

The purpose of this research is to provide an overview on the process-oriented approach and show how it influences the faculty students' writing and to illuminate the development of EFL writers.

The teaching of writing was primarily product-oriented approach in that teachers placed heavy emphasis on the accuracy of students' compositions and highlighted all grammatical errors students made in their final product. This drew our attention that writing was used as a means of fixing syntactic patterns in the memory. Using this meant copying sentences, dictation, or translation. Writing was not seen as a goal of language learning in itself but as an adjunct of grammar.

The teaching of composition to native speakers, ESL/EFL writing instruction became focused on the rhetorical modes in academic writing, such as comparison/contrast and cause and effect. ESL/EFL writing teachers began to subscribe to the notion that good writing was that which conformed to a predetermined ideal model. In this model, writing was seen as a form of initiating different rhetorical modes and the focus was on error-free sentences and the final written product. As the model approach did not work, composition teachers of native speakers began to abandon it. Nevertheless, it still appears to live on in some ESL/EFL text books (Kelly 1984).

Since the 1980s, a move away from teaching based on the product towards the process of writing had been under way in the teaching of English to native speakers. This new view of teaching writing grew out of research on how people actually write. The shift was motivated by the dissatisfaction over the failure of the product-oriented approach to foster students' thinking and self-expression (Hairston, 1982; Raimes, 1983). From the perspective of the process-oriented approach, writing is a complex, recursive and creative process or set of behaviours, making it very similar in its broad outlines for first and second language writers. By the late 1980s process writing pedagogies reached the mainstream of ESL/EFL writing

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instruction that offered suggestions on how teachers might help their students improve their writing.

The results showed that all participants improved their writing skills after having experienced the process-oriented writing course and variables that affected the quality and experience of writing were found: 1) how the students were taught, 2) the quality of the peer partner, 3) commitment to success 4) language difficulties.

Through the discussion above regarding the process approach to writing, this research pays more concern to this approach because of its highly demand to be used in teaching writing. Through this research field work, the researcher confirms that the process-oriented approach does not take place in the teaching of writing at faculty of languages. Thus, and for the future research, the researcher highly emphasizes the process approach due to its useful techniques that will reflect the students' writings. These techniques will help students to produce longer and better-developed compositions, as well as increase their confidence and motivation to write. Specific techniques that the students will find helpful are the teaching of pre-writing activities, writing in multiple drafts, teaching students how to peer and self-edit effectively, instructor's comments on early drafts that focus more on content and organization than on grammar, group activities that encourage interaction and sharing of ideas among students, teacher/student conferences and an emphasis on the publication of students' work.

In summary, the impact of the process-oriented approach to teaching EFL writing will show positive effect of the approach when it will be used in EFL writing than the traditional approaches that are used recently at this faculty.

### **Feedback in an English Foreign Language Writing Classrooms**

In the process-oriented approach to writing, feedback is emphasized in students' development of writing skills. The effect of feedback in foreign language writing classes has recently become a source of controversy among researchers. The research on feedback on foreign language writing consists of two types: (i) that focuses on teacher feedback and (ii) that focuses on peer feedback.

#### ***Teacher Feedback***

Teacher feedback can be divided into two categories: teacher-student conferences and teacher's written feedback. The discussion here focuses on the teacher's written feedback.

*The effectiveness of teachers' written feedback*

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More recent studies showed that teachers' feedback had advantage and resulted in improvement in students writing. Zhang (1995) compared different sources of feedback and found that teachers' feedback had an effective advantage over peer feedback, self-feedback and other sources of feedback. The results of her study showed that claims made about the effective advantage of peer feedback in first language writing did not apply to ESL/EFL writing.

Ferris (1995, 1997) examined in details the students' reactions to teachers' responses and the relation between teachers' comments and students' revisions in a multiple draft setting. Her earlier study revealed that, overall, the students found the teachers' responses helpful when revising their drafts; that the students tended to reveal their papers and teachers' comments on the earlier drafts, rather than on the final drafts; that the proportion of the students who reread their papers was greater than that reported in only one revision.

### ***Peer Feedback***

The effect of peer feedback in foreign language writing has recently become a source of controversy among researchers. The possible effect of peer feedback might vary according to learners' level of proficiency and cultural backgrounds.

#### ***The effectiveness of peer feedback***

Researchers have claimed that peers' feedback motivates students to do revisions, for it provides them with genuine questions and responses from authentic readers. Peer feedback helps student writers to develop not only their audience awareness, but also their critical thinking ability, which is essential for good writing. Other benefit such as stimulating students through multiple and mutual reinforcing perspectives and equipping students with the power to express themselves be also illustrated. Through the researchers' views regarding "peer review", the researcher can deduce that peer review sessions help students clarify, generate and develop ideas; improve the organization and style of their writing and develop their sense of audience which is essential to good writing.

### **Research Methodology**

A descriptive study method was utilized to explore the phenomena in question or the teaching of English writing skills at Faculty of languages- Sana'a University. In this research methodology, I present the participants, the data collection, and data analysis procedures.

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This qualitative research offers many strategies of data collection: conducting questionnaires, interviews and class observation. In addition to the data analysis that is most suitable for my purpose and for my preference as a researcher.

### ***Research site and participation***

The site for this research was faculty of languages- Sana'a University (first, second and fourth levels). The number of the participants for both teachers and students are as follows: (30 teachers) and (112 students).

### ***Data collection***

The primary data for this research was administering questionnaires and interviews for both English students and teachers at faculty of Languages-Sana'a University. The secondary data includes classroom observation.

### ***Data analysis***

This part of methodology presents the results from the data analysis designed to explore the real situation of teaching the English writing skills at faculty of languages- Sana'a University. The data designed particularly to examine the unsatisfactory performance in the writing of English among students at this faculty, approaches and materials used, the teachers understanding for the students' difficulties in writing and the teacher's ways of evaluating and grading students' writing.

### **Research Questions**

1. What do students and teachers think writing is?
2. What is the purpose and value of writing?
3. How is writing used in exchanges between and among peers?
4. In what ways are these perceptions evidenced by students talk about writing, writing approaches, writing attitudes and writing products?
5. What are students and teacher's perceptions of students' writing skills as determined by assessment tests?
6. How do assessment test influence students' writing attitudes and motivation?
7. What suggestions do teachers have as motivators to further encourage and strengthen students' writing?

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### **The unsatisfactory performance in the writing of English among English students at faculty of languages -Sana'a University**

The unsatisfactory performance in written English is partially due to defects in the teaching system or other issues. We begin the investigation by referring to the teachers' and students' responses to question 1 (See Appendix A) and question 1 (See Appendix B) which seek to find out whether faculty English students enjoy composition class like other English classes or not.

The responses are shown in

Table 1: Students' motivating factors to learn writing.

Students like composition Period		Number of teachers who selected the Responses (out of 30)		Number of students who selected the Responses (out of 112)	
		No.	%	No.	%
(i)	as much as other English classes	6	20	48	42.86
(ii)	more than other English classes	1	3.33	23	20.54
(iii)	less than other English classes	21	70	21	18.75
(iv)	hardly at all	-	-	18	16.07

The responses in Table (1) show that 20% of the teachers recommend that students like composition "as much as other English classes" while 70% recommend that students like composition "less than other English classes and only one teacher who recommends that students like composition "more than other English classes".

About the students' responses shown in the same table, 42.85% of the students recommend that the students like composition "as much as other English classes" while 20.53% recommend that students like composition "more than other English classes".

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According to 18.75% students like composition “less than other English classes” and 16.7% show that students “hardly at all like composition classes.” In question 1 (See Appendix B) there were 17.85% did not answer the question.

By examining both the teachers’ and students’ responses that in Table (1), it was clear that the students’ responses are completely different of their teachers. 42.85% of the students who answered the question selected item No. 1 in the table, while the teachers’ selection of the same item is only 20%. The ratio of the teachers’ selection for the 2<sup>nd</sup> item in the table is 3.33%, while the students’ ratio who selected the 2<sup>nd</sup> item is 20.53%. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> item, the ratio of the teachers who selected the item is 70%, while the ratio of the students is 18.75%. Regarding the last item in the table, the ratio of students who selected this item is 16.7%, but the teachers did not select this item at all.

Through the ratio mentioned above, we can conclude that the majority of the students who answered the question express their interest for learning composition as much as other English classes, but the teachers’ view is reversibly. The majority of teachers confirm through their selection for the third item is that students are not interested in and not motivated to learn composition at least as other English classes.

Choosing specifically these two items leads us to examine two different views for both the teachers and their students. It is evident from the above discussion that the teachers express their opinions on what they really feel and observe daily in their classrooms. On the other hand, the students express their real motivation and interest towards learning composition.

The teachers’ and students’ responses and the discussion lead to the question: “Is there anything wrong with the teaching of composition at faculty of Languages-Sana'a University?” Questions 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 (See Appendix A) seek to find an answer to question 1 in the teachers’ questionnaire and question 1 in the students’ questionnaire.

- (8) How many classes a week are devoted to the teaching of writing?
- (9) Do you teach composition in full class, tutorial groups, or both?
- (10) How many composition classes do you take in each?

Through the responses to question (8) most of the teachers specify two classes per week (i.e. three hours per week). Questions (9) and (10) are about “teaching composition in the full

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class and tutorial groups and how many composition periods the teacher take in each. The teachers' responses on questions (9) and (10) are shown in table (2) below.

Table 1: Ways of teaching composition

Ways of teaching composition		Number of teachers who selected the responses (out of 30)		Number of students who selected the responses (out of 112)
		No.	%	
(i)	in the full class	13	43.33	
(ii)	in tutorial groups	-	-	
(iii)	both (i) and (ii)	11	36.67	One class for each

20% of the teachers did not answer Q. (9). Regarding question (10), there are 6.66% who answered it and 93.33% did not.

Questions 11 and 12 ask about "if the teachers set exercises in free composition, guided composition or both? And "How many exercises of each do the teachers set in each per term? Table (3) below shows the total number of free and guided composition exercises set by each teacher per term.

Table 2: Types of writing composition

Do teachers set exercises in		Number of composition exercises taken per term (Unknown)		Number of teachers who set and practice composition exercises (out of 30)	
		No.	No.	No.	%
(i)	Free composition?	7	5	1	3.33
(ii)	Guided composition?	9	15	1	3.33
(iii)	both (i) and (ii)			25	83.33

Table (3) indicates that 83.33% of the teachers set out composition exercises in both free and guided composition. One teacher specifies that he set out his exercises only in free

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composition and one teacher set out his exercises only in guided composition. Regarding the number of exercises taken per term in both free and guided composition there are only two teachers who specify the number of exercises per term. One of them specifies that the exercises taken per term are 7 exercises in free composition and 9 exercises in guided composition and the other teacher specifies that the exercises taken per term are 5 exercises in free composition and 15 exercises in guided composition. 28.33% of the teachers did not answer Q. 12.

A possible explanation could be that the teachers do not distinguish between composition and other writing tasks such as isolated exercises in grammar, copying notes or taken down dictated notes. Perhaps they consider every writing task as contributing to the skills of writing in equal measures.

It is evident from Table 2 and Table 3 that sufficient time is not being spent on the teaching and learning of the skill of writing. A possible reason for this negligence could be that a suitably designed composition course has not been prescribed.

It is also evident from the responses to questions 11 and 12 that at college of Languages-Sana'a University, composition is taught in classes exceeding 100. Where tutorial groups are formed for composition teaching, the strength of each tutorial group ranges between thirty and forty students. As a result, it is difficult to get learners interested in composition classes and also to supervise their work. Composition can be taught effectively in small tutorial groups.

Responses to questions 11 and 12 show that teachers set both free and guided composition exercises and the ratio of free to guided composition is ill-balanced according to the responses of the two teachers who specified the exercises taken per term. As students are not able to cope with free composition, they lose interest in the class.

According to the teachers' responses to questions 4, 5, 6, and 7 (See Appendix A), free composition proves discouraging as it makes demands far above the ability of the students. Moreover, what each teacher means by guided writing is difficult to specify. Guided writing can be of different kinds and can be specified at different levels.

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## **Views on Approaches to Teaching Writing**

The evolution of second/foreign language writing instruction has been very interesting. Teachers in the field of writing have always searched for new and effective approaches to teaching writing. Raimes (1991) and Silva (1990) found that writing instruction in a second language started with a controlled composition or a product-focused approach. Then, researchers and writing teachers realized that a product-focused approach did not take into account the act of writing itself, but merely followed existing forms and grammar practice. Therefore, writing researchers and teachers began to investigate the composition process (Camel 1986).

Research on the composing process on both the L1 context and the L2 context yielded a new approach that called attention to *how* students write rather than *what* they write. This new approach rapidly diminished the product-centered paradigm because many teachers/practitioners jumped on the new approach which is process approach to writing without hesitation.

The researcher here wanted to recall both approaches for comparison and emphasizes the advantages of process approach as the suitable approach for teaching writing at faculty of languages Sana'a University and the other Yemeni Universities.

### **A Product-Oriented Approach to Writing**

A product-oriented approach was pre-dominant in the past. It puts emphasis on the final written texts. It is “prescriptive and product-centered,” stressing correct usage and mechanics, while emphasizing the traditional modes of discourse (narration, description, exposition, persuasion, and sometimes poetry). In the 1960s and 1970s, this approach was still dominant. In addition, the product-oriented approach also includes the ways teachers use models (for students to copy) in a writing class. This is why a product-oriented approach, many have argued, cannot foster thought, but can discourage creative thinking and writing, many writing teachers and researchers sought to find a different way of teaching writing (Silva, 1990).

### **A Process-Oriented Approach to Writing**

A process-oriented approach to writing is an idea that began to flourish 30 years ago as a result of extensive research on first language writing (Reyes cited in Montago 1995). The most important principle of process pedagogy is that writing is the result of a very complex, highly individualized process. *Process writing* refers to a broad range of strategies that

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include pre-writing activities, such as defining the audience, using a variety of resources and planning the writing, as well as drafting and revising (Goldstien and Carr (1996). As Raimes (1991) clarified that the process-oriented approach focuses on the writer because it allows writers times and opportunity to select topics, generate ideas, write drafts, revise, and provide feedback.

Some recent researches suggested that many of the techniques and activities associated with the process approach including group-writing assignments, peer-editing and multiple revisions serve to demystify the task of writing in a foreign language, as well as to provide students with valuable opportunities to learn from each other. Concluding to what mentioned above, we found that, writing as a process is necessary for EFL students, particularly Yemeni students, because they may have placed a low priority on developing their writing skills. So that, teaching them writing as a manageable process can not only enrich these students' notion of writing, but can also give them a method of diagnosing where they have problem in the process of moving from the beginning to a complete/final text in English.

Teachers said that, if the concentration paid to these aspects of writing, students will be better motivated, be more confident and will eventually be able to write better. Through the teachers' responses the researcher concluded that communicative writing at faculty of Languages-Sana'a University should illustrate how communication is applied in teaching writing and the instructors on the other hand should encourage their students to follow and grasp the written communication strategy.

### **Teaching Writing Skill**

It is believed that students learn to write by reading, but this phenomenon or strategy is not followed at faculty of Languages-Sana'a University. That means, teachers don't encourage their students to condense their reading for the purpose of writing, because the more exposure the student gets from reading, and writing about what he reads, the more fluent in writing he becomes. As a result, reading is important for students not just for practicing reading, it is also important for students to talk about writing, to talk about each other's writing, to talk about what they've read. For college students to produce an effective piece of writing, they should go through several steps which are included in the process approach.

This section discusses points that are related to the teaching of writing at faculty of languages- Sa na'a University. These points concentrate on the teachers' and students' views

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on teaching the writing skills at this faculty; collaborative writing; class interaction; journal writing; how students improve their writing.

### Teachers' and students' views on the skills of writing

Question 3 (See Appendix A) was given to ask the teachers and students about the skills of writing that are taught and learnt in writing courses. The teachers' and students' responses are shown in Table (4).

Table 4: Skills of writing

Skills of writing		Number of teachers who selected the responses (out of 30)		Number of students who selected the responses (out of 112)	
		No.	%	No.	%
A	Note-making from books	23	76.67	51	45.54
B	Summarizing	18	60	26	23.21
C	Note-taking from lectures	17	56.67	46	41.07
D	Conveying message in writing	13	43.33	56	50
E	Answering examination questions	26	86.67	45	40.18
F	Paragraph writing	26	86.67	52	46.43
G	Essay writing	26	86.67	55	49.11
H	Report writing	26	86.67	68	60.71
I	Writing formal letters	21	70	30	26.79
J	Writing informal letters	18	60	25	22.32
K	Giving written instructions	19	63.33	61	54.46
L	Making written inquiries	16	53.33	40	35.71

In Table (4), all the teachers who answered the question select the items E, F, G, and H. In their views, they consider these skills as the most important ones to be taught in the college classroom. About the secondary skills, the teachers select the items A, I, K, J, and B respectively. For the items C, L, and D are given the least consideration by the teachers. In this question, 4 teachers did not answer the question.

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To examine the students' views on question 2 (See Appendix B) which indicates to the same question of their teachers, we noticed that, the students' responses seem a little bit different of their teachers. In this question, 15 students out of 112 did not answer the question.

In Table (4), students on the other hand, select the items H and K as the important skills of writing to be taught in their views. The secondary skills they select are the items D, G, F and A. The skills which seem less important in the students' views are the items C, E, L, I, B, and J.

By examining the teachers' responses, we can conclude that there was a consensus by the teachers on those common skills which they themselves teach in their classes. But examining the students' view on the same question seems strange. It is evident from their responses that there is a discrepancy between what the students select and what their teachers did. This leads us to deduce that:

- There is no specific syllabus designed for teaching the skills of writing.
- Probably the syllabus is there, but the teachers do not include the skills in their own hand-outs that they design for the writing course.
- Perhaps the students do not understand each particular skill while learning the course of writing.
- The teachers neglect the skills of writing and depend on other tasks such as teaching grammar, copying notes, dictation and focusing at the sentence structure level.

### **How can Students Improve their Writing?**

We learn how to talk by listening to others talk, by listening to what words they used and how they put their words together. We then practice until we learn to communicate effectively. A similar process is involved in learning how to write well. We concentrate on the words writers use and how they put those words together and we practice until we communicate effectively. So, students' involvement both inside and outside the classroom is essential.

Learning how to write well involves more than class participation. Internalizing the patterns of writing takes time and practice. There are other ways that we can use to improve

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our writing such as, reading daily, notice what writers do, writing daily, and review what we have learned.

Because the researcher' plan to teach college students how to write in English effectively, he needs to notice how they are processing their writing in English. Thus, one of the findings of the researcher's field work in composing written text is that the students' lack of competence in English grammar and vocabulary. This forces them to compose through their mother tongue (Arabic) first and later to translate their texts into English through the students' questionnaire and interviews, students stated that they need a course that cover more content and that allow them to practice not only English writing, but also listening, speaking, and reading skills. For the evaluation, students need a more tangible approach to measure their abilities not the traditional one that recently followed by the teachers. In this regard, students in the college classrooms suggest that giving more marks for the writing assignments should not depend on the final exam results as a method for evaluation, but evaluating the students' work during the academic year.

The researcher emphasizes on some issues in teaching the writing skill. First is that the writing teachers should help students become more aware of their own writing processes by familiarizing them with the writing activities, such as pre-writing, drafting, giving peer feedback, revising and editing. Secondly, writing teachers specifically at faculty of languages-Sana'a University should think carefully with the students' self-awareness. It is essential in developing higher-mental functions, because it is the key issue in learning. It could enable learners to gain conscious control of their actions and learning. Thus, increasing students' awareness in writing is especially important in large classes because large classes are always a dilemma in Yemen. A teacher in this situation may not be able to pay close attention to all students.

### **Understanding the Students' Difficulties**

This section tries to find out the difficulties that students at faculty of Languages-Sana'a University encounter in the writing composition. This will be seen by obtaining the views of the teachers and students through the questionnaires and the interviews organized with them as well as class observation.

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### **The teachers' and students' views on the students' difficulties**

Questions 13, 14, and 15 (See Appendix A) sought to ascertain the difficulties that students face in writing. Question 13 indicates that 93.33% of the teachers recommend that the students are handicapped because they are weak in the skills of writing, while 6.66% are against that. So that, the teachers' responses to question 14 (See Appendix A) and the students' responses to question 3 (See Appendix B) that indicates to the same question of their teachers are an evident for question 13. Table (5) that is given below shows the responses selected.

Table 5: Students' writing difficulties

Students are handicapped		Number of teachers who selected the response (out of 30)		Number of students who selected the response (out of 112)	
		No.	%	No.	%
(i)	at college when doing work which demands the skills of writing	1	3.33	8	7.14
(ii)	in real-life situations which demand communications through writing	2	6.67	23	20.54
(iii)	both (i) and (ii)	25	83.33	44	39.29

In Table (5), it seems clear that 83.33% of the teachers recommend that the students are handicapped at college and in real life situations which demand written communication. About the teachers who select the item (ii) in the table are only two teachers, while only one teacher who select item (i) in the table above. In this question two teachers did not answer the question.

Regarding the students' views on question 3 (See appendix B), the students' responses as shown in Table (5) yielded that, 7.14% of the students select the item (i) in the table. 20.53% select the item (ii) while 39.28% select both of the items (i) and (ii). 33% of the students did not answer the question.

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By examining the teachers' responses to question 13 and the result shown in Table (5) is that the more urgent need for faculty students is not to be taught the kind of written English needed in job situations but to find out whether students need written English in the college setting and to equip them to face these situations. In this way, various kinds of writing tasks could be given adequate coverage and the students may be equipped to face real-life situations requiring written communication before they have graduated.

In their responses to question 4 (See appendix B) which was given to ask students about the most important difficulties that they face in writing composition, the researcher summarizes their difficulties as follows:

- ❖ Students do not have good and effective writing and have not good supporting ideas.
- ❖ Probably all Yemeni students and not only students at faculty of Languages-Sana'a University encounter problems regarding grammar, vocabulary, spelling and the order of sentences in a paragraph.
- ❖ Students face difficulties in writing letters of various kinds.
- ❖ Students claim that they don't have time to allocate for practicing the writing skill daily.
- ❖ Students face difficulty in translating what they read into a piece of writing.
- ❖ Students encounter difficulty in finding ideas about the topic they want to write about and difficulty in getting the right way of organizing these ideas.
- ❖ Students claim that they write the style that satisfies their teachers not to satisfy their desires.
- ❖ Students need their teachers to teach them the writing skill by using the suitable approaches that guide them to write a piece of writing effectively and asking their teachers give them more classes in learning the writing course.
- ❖ Students claim that they do not have an opportunity to write English compositions as should be required because the curricula as they mentioned in college is mainly focus on grammar exercises and translation but not writing composition.

It is concluded that the quality of the faculty students' writing depends on their competence in English. Students would be able to produce a good piece of writing if they possessed English at a certain level of proficiency.

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### **Evaluating and Grading Students' Writing**

Evaluation usually has a wash back effect on teaching. Therefore, this section examines the practice followed by the teachers in evaluating students' writing at faculty of Languages-Sana'a University.

### **Teachers' Views on Evaluating and Grading Students' Writing**

Responses to question 16 (See Appendix A) show that, in the evaluation of composition, the majority of the teachers laid greater emphasis on grammatical correctness than on organization. This is hardly surprising in view of the students' inability to write even fairly correct English. When the teachers find too many grammatically incorrect sentences in composition scripts, the tendency is to give better marks to students who make relatively fewer mistakes. This, however, is not the only reason for greater emphasis on grammatical correctness in evaluation. Grammar mistakes are numerous as well as serious; the entire teaching effort concentrates on the teaching of grammar alone in most composition classes. The teacher tends to overlook requirements other than grammatical correctness in the skill of writing. And as grammatical correctness is emphasized while teaching, it naturally continues to be emphasized in evaluation too.

Question 15 (See Appendix A) discusses the kinds of common mistakes that students commit often. The teachers' responses to question 15 indicate that the teachers consider only the mistakes that interfere with comprehension more serious than mistakes which violate the rules of grammar. It cannot be denied that mistakes which affect intelligibility are certain to be considered more serious. As we know, writing is a means of communication. If communication breaks down, writing proves futile. Evidence to support the teachers' responses to question 15 is to be found in the teachers' views when they respond to question 16 (see Appendix A) which asked about the aspects that the teachers lay greater emphasis in the evaluation of writing composition. The teachers' responses are shown in Table (6) below.

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Table 6: Aspects of evaluating writing composition

Aspects that lay greater emphasis in the evaluation of writing composition	Number of teachers who selected the response (out of 30)	
	No.	%
a) grammatical correctness	18	60
b) Content and organization	14	46.67

In Table (6) 60% of the teachers recommend that the greater emphasis they follow in the evaluation of the writing composition is “grammatical correctness”, while 46.66% select the item (b) in the table which is “content and organization” that they recommend as the aspect which needs greater emphasis during the evaluation of the writing composition.

Through the teachers’ responses, we conclude that the majority of the teachers basically concentrate on grammatical correctness on their evaluation of students’ writing composition.

It is evident from their answer to question 15 and 16 (See Appendix C), the teachers confirm that their concern while correcting the students’ writing is on two things: one is the grammatical errors and the second is the spelling errors. On the other hand, some teachers confirm that content and organization should be taken more consideration while evaluating. Other teachers select both items (a) and (b) in the table.

Through examining the teachers’ responses, we find that there is a discrepancy between the teachers’ views on how to evaluate the students’ writings. This discrepancy drew our attention that there are not specific strategies to oblige the writing teachers of how they evaluate the students’ writings.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

This research highlights the findings of this paper which revealed that the process approach to teaching writing will have positive effect on ELT students at faculty of languages- Sana'a University. It serves each student to reflect his needs, interests and capabilities.

### **Conclusions**

- Through examining the students’ unsatisfactory writing in English, it has been found that it is due to the following:

1. The meaning of writing is variously understood by Yemeni writing teachers. Grammar and vocabulary exercises on the sentence level and single-sentence answers are termed writing tasks.
  2. The time devoted to the teaching of composition is insufficient.
  3. Composition is taught in large classes or in large tutorial groups. This makes individual guidance and supervision almost impossible. Writing being a difficult skill needs individual supervision.
  4. Through the approaches used in teaching writing skills at faculty of languages Sana'a University, this research found that teachers emphasize the “Product-oriented approach to teaching writing” and ignored the use of the process approach to teaching writing which is concentrated on content, organization, and the communicative use of language rather than grammatical aspects. This research concluded that, if the attention is paid on these aspects of writing, students will be better motivated, be more confident and will eventually be able to write better.
- Through the investigation of the teachers’ and students’ views on the teaching of the skills of writing, this paper deduced the following:
    - (i) There is no specific syllabus designed for teaching the skills of writing.
    - (ii) Probably the syllabus is there, but the teachers do not include the skills in their own hand-outs that they design for teaching the writing course.
    - (iii) While teaching the English writing skills, the teachers neglect the skills of writing and depend on other tasks such as teaching grammar, copying notes, dictation and focusing at the sentence structure level.
  - This research found that in composing the written text, the students lack a competence in English grammar and vocabulary. Their lack of competence forces them to compose in their mother tongue. This paper explored that the revisions are mostly done at a sentence level but peer review, teacher/student conference and collaborative writing are not followed in the teaching of writing skill at this faculty. In addition, the course content appears to have been inadequate.
  - This research found that the major writing difficulties that the ELT faculty students encounter are as follows:

- a) Students are handicapped in college on the account of their inability to communicate in written English.
- b) Teachers and English department probably do not think carefully about what kind of writing tasks will enable students to meet the requirements of their jobs in future.
- c) The limited role and series of writing that takes place in most classrooms and when students are asked to write, the focus is only on the expository writing that is highly structured and teacher-centered.
- d) Writing at faculty deal with retelling what a teacher says, summarizing subject materials, the emphasis remaining on mechanical corrections and strategic repetition.
- e) Teaching approaches are treating writing processes in a superficial manner, while the students are not learning to link process activities with the problems they face in their own writing.

Through the above discussion regarding the students' problems associated with the teaching and learning writing skill, this research found that the faculty ELT students encounter three major problems. They are:

1. The issue of time.
  2. The misuse of peer review, peer evaluation, and collaborative writing in writing classes.
  3. The English language problem which seems to be typical for an EFL writing class.
- Regarding the evaluation of composition, this research explored that the majority of teachers laid greater emphasis on the grammatical correctness than on organization and content.
  - This research found that there are not specific strategies to oblige the writing teachers of how they evaluate the students' writing. As a result, it may be concluded that the stress on grammatical correctness in teaching and in evaluation is a possible cause of students' unsatisfactory writing. Perhaps, because a specially designed course in writing has not been prescribed, teachers find it easiest to resort to grammar teaching even in the composition classes.

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### **Recommendations**

- One of the main recommendations in this research is to emphasize that the teachers of writing skills at this faculty should shift the emphasis from grammar to communication. That means how teachers focus on how to illustrate a method for teaching writing that focuses on both the grammatical and communicative aspects of writing.
- This research adjures the writing teachers and English department to pay more attention to the process-oriented approach, because it may help students who are relatively unskilled in English composition. This research provides some suggestions on how communicative writing is applied in teaching writing at faculty classrooms and through that the researcher recommends the instructors to encourage their students to follow and grasp the written communication pedagogy.
- This research emphasizes that for the students to produce an effective piece of writing, they should go through several steps which are included in the process approach to writing.
- The research recommends the English department at faculty of languages should design a syllabus that meet the demand for more writing instruction preparation.
- After investigating the students' difficulties associated with the teaching of the writing skills of English writing, this study emphasizes on helping students to communicate in written English, improve their oral and written expression in English and enabling students to meet the requirements of their jobs in future; instructors should teach their students some sorts of writing tasks such as: problem- solving tasks; tasks which require knowledge and information; tasks which require manipulation of grammatical structures; tasks which require creative thinking; and tasks which require communication in a well-defined situation. By performing these tasks all the aims mentioned above will be reached easily.

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### **Appendix (A)**

#### **Questionnaire for Teachers of English at Faculty of Languages- Sana'a University**

The questionnaire is a part of a research project related to the preparation of teaching English writing skills at faculty of languages Sana'a University. The researcher shall be grateful if you consider it with due seriousness and objectivity. Wherever choices are provided, tick the answer you feel relevant.

The researcher here will concentrate to some extent on the English writing skills.

**1. Do your students like composition periods?**

- a. Yes, as much as other English periods ( )
- b. More than other English periods ( )
- c. Less than other English periods ( )
- d. Hardly at all ( )

**2. In which aspects of the skill of writing your students' performance is unsatisfactory? List these aspects in the order you think the students are the poorest in. Put the ranking numbers against the choices provided.**

- a. Content ( )
- b. Grammatical correctness ( )
- c. Logical organization ( )
- d. Appropriateness and effectiveness ( )

**3. For which specific purposes do students need the skills of writing? Tick those which you consider relevant to students' needs in college and in real- life situations.**

- a. Note-making from books ( )
- b. Summarizing ( )
- c. Note-taking from lectures ( )
- d. Conveying messages in writing ( )
- e. Answering examination questions ( )
- f. Report writing ( )
- g. Essay writing ( )
- h. Paragraph writing ( )
- i. Writing formal letters ( )

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- j. Writing informal letters ( )
- k. Giving written instructions ( )
- l. Making written inquiries ( )
4. A free composition of an average students shows that he/she has hardly any ideas.  
Agree ( ) Disagree ( )
- If your answer to Q. (4) is (b) then answer questions 5, 6 and 7.
5. A free composition of an average student shows that he/she has ideas but cannot express them in grammatically correct English.  
Agree ( ) Disagree ( )
6. A free composition of an average student shows that he/she has ideas but cannot organize them.  
Agree ( ) Disagree ( )
7. A free composition of an average student shows that he/she has ideas but cannot express them effectively.  
Agree ( ) Disagree ( )
8. How many classes a week do you devote to the teaching of writing? Mention the number.
9. Do you teach composition in the
- a. full class? ( )
- b. Tutorial groups? ( )
- c. Both (a) and (b) ( )
10. If your answer to Q. (9) is (c), mention how many composition periods you take in each.
11. Do you set exercises in
- a. free composition? ( )
- b. guided composition? ( )
- c. both (a) and (b)? ( )
12. If your answer to Q. (11) is (c) then say about how many exercises in each per term.
- a. free composition ( )
- b. guided composition ( )

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13. Do you think your students are handicapped because they are weak in the skills of writing?

Yes ( )

No ( )

14. If your answer to Q. (13) is (yes) answer the following questions.

Students are handicapped:

- a. at college when doing work that demands the skills of writing ( )
- b. when they leave college and face situations that demands communication through writing ( )
- c. both (1) and (2). ( )

15. What kinds of common mistakes do your students commit oftener?

- a. those which interfere with comprehension ( )
- b. those which violate the rules of grammar ( )

16. On which aspect do you lay greater emphasis in the evaluation of composition writing?

- a. grammatical correctness ( )
- b. organization ( )

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**Appendix (B)****Questionnaire for students at Faculty of Languages- Sana'a University**

This questionnaire is meant to help discovering the teaching English writing skills at faculty of languages- Sana'a University. Your experience and remarks can be of great help. So, kindly answer the following questions after reading them carefully. Wherever choices are provided, tick the answer you think is relevant.

1. Do you like composition periods?

- a. Yes, as much as other English periods ( )
- b. More than other English periods ( )
- c. Less than other English periods ( )
- d. Hardly at all ( )

2. For which specific purposes do you need the skills of writing? Tick those which you consider relevant to your needs in college and in real-life situations.

- a. Note-making from books ( )
- b. Summarizing ( )
- c. Note-taking from lectures ( )
- d. Conveying messages in writing ( )
- e. Answering examination questions ( )
- f. Report writing ( )
- g. Essay writing ( )
- h. Paragraph writing ( )
- i. Writing formal letters ( )
- j. Writing informal letters ( )
- k. Giving written instructions ( )
- l. Making written inquiries ( )

3. As generalized, students at faculty of language- Sana'a University are handicapped because they are weak in writing. As a result, they are handicapped:

- a. at college when doing work that demands the skills of writing ( )
- b. when they leave college and face situations that demands communication through writing ( )
- c. both (1) and (2). ( )

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4. What do you think the most important problem that you face in writing composition?

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**Appendix (C)****Interview Questions**

1. Do you teach students how to have a clear goal in mind before they start writing their composition? How do you teach it?
2. When students write in English, do you find them using the same discourse patterns that they use in Arabic?
3. How do you deal with this transfer?
4. Do you teach your students how to deal with different registers (viz. special vocabulary for certain audiences and certain situations)?
5. In your teaching, do you follow exactly what is in the syllabus? In case, you do not do so, why not?
6. Do you teach the writing skill by using the process approach to writing?
7. What are the steps or processes you use when teaching writing?
8. What kind of writing composition you usually assign to your students? Why do you choose those?
9. How many assignments do students write per term?
10. What kinds of techniques do you use in teaching composition writing?
11. What are the most successful techniques you find to teach writing?
12. What are the weaknesses and strengths of the techniques of peer review?
13. Do you introduce your students to the following writing points:
  - a. Grammar of each sentence
  - b. Grammatical relationship between sentences
  - c. Content/ meaning
  - d. Purpose
  - e. Clarity
  - f. Relevance to the topic
  - g. Sequencing of information
  - h. Writing for a specific audience
  - i. Avoiding literal translation from Arabic to English
  - j. Developing a paragraph

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- k. Examples of paragraph structure already taught
- l. Style
- m. Coherence

- 14. Do you correct every student's assignments?
- 15. What are the problems you face when you correct their writings?
- 16. What are the criteria you use when correcting the assignments?
- 17. How do you evaluate your students' progress during the semester?
- 18. What are the common problems that students face in writing composition?
- 19. How do you tackle these problems?
- 20. What are your suggestions to enhance the teaching of composition writing?

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## **Investigating the Problems of Translating Non-equivalent Culture-specific Concepts in Surat al-Bagarah and Surat Yusuf in the Holy Quran**

T. Husein Ali Hasan AL-Aidaroos - MA in Translation

Ministry of Education – Hadramout - Seiyoun

### **Abstract**

*This study aims at finding the strategies that the translators dealt with while translating five culture-specific terms chosen from Surat al-Baqarah and Surat Yusuf of the Holy Quran. To be more precise in finding out the more appropriate strategies while dealing with such aspects, three translations have been chosen and analyzed as far as these aspects are concerned. Identifying and analyzing the data collected, it has been found that five different methods were pursued by the translators while dealing with these aspects. Some of these methods were used repeatedly while others were used scarcely. The result of the study shows that translation by giving explanation was used five times, translation by using more general terms was used three times, literal translation was used three times, translation by using more specific term was used two times, while word-by-word translation was used only one time. By analyzing the above mentioned methods, it has been inferred that the hidden intended meaning of the culture-specific terms can be appropriately conveyed by giving some clarification to the source text term so as to eliminate any ambiguity or obscurity. The other strategies can do well in conveying only partial indication of the source text.*

### **Introduction**

Being one of the most controversial issues among translators, non-equivalence requires to be considered and a great attention should be paid to. Armstrong (2005) states that " The notion of target language solutions to source language problems is always referred to as 'equivalence', suggesting that in extreme cases, where linguistic and cultural material are inextricably blended, translators need to seek a solution, probably situated on a different linguistic level compared with the source language, in order to produce an effect on the reader of the target text that should be as close as possible to that produced on the reader of the source text" ( p.44 )

Translating culture-specific concepts is the focal point that will be discussed here since it is considered to be a problematic issue among those who try to find an appropriate strategy to deal with them well. Mona Baker (1992) points out that this type of non-equivalence emerges when "the source-language word expresses a concept which is totally unknown in the target culture".

### **Statement of the Problem**

Translating non-equivalent religious and cultural elements is not actually an easy task because it is not mere finding their equivalents in the target language. There are many cultural problems which rise at the linguistic level. Among these, one essential issue is to find exact equivalents in English for those non-equivalent religious and cultural aspects. This study is based upon the strategies that three translators (Mohammed Pickthall, Yusuf Ali, Al-Hilali & Khān) used when dealing with the problem of translating these culture-specific aspects in Sūrat Al-Baqarah and Sūrat Yūsuf in the Holy Quran.

### **The Aim of the Study**

This study mainly aims at finding out the strategies that translators use while dealing with non-equivalent Qur'ānic words and expressions when translating certain work from Arabic into English. In addition, the three translations will be evaluated in terms of their linguistic and referential accuracy and in terms of their intelligibility which will be based on a comparison between the translations and the original text and also by referring to the Qur'ānic exegeses to find the degree of intelligibility and whether the translations match them or not.

#### **This study aims to answer the following questions:**

1. What are the problems that face translators while dealing with nonequivalent culture-specific aspects?
2. What types of strategies are adopted by the translators while dealing with translating some specific-culture words and expressions in Sūrat Al-Baqarah and Yūsuf?
3. What interpretations (exegesis) did the translators base their translations on while translating non-equivalent cultural elements in Sūrat Al-Baqarah and Yūsuf?
4. To what extent do these translations convey the intended message of the source text?
5. How should translators deal with these cultural aspects if they lack appropriate equivalent in the target language?

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### **The Significance of the Study**

It is important here to point out that this study does not aim to criticize particular translations, but to investigate the extent to which they succeed in solving the problem of translating culture-specific aspects and to relate that outcome to the translation methods used.

It is a well-known fact that culture is a huge problem of translation, yet cultural and religious terms and expressions can be translatable if appropriate strategies are used. This study is so important in the way that it will clarify some strategies and principles that will help in translating such non-equivalent aspects. Moreover, it will be a supporting source for translators who find it difficult or improbable to deal with non-equivalent cultural expressions.

### **The Relation between Translation and Culture**

Cultural understanding during the process of translation is extremely essential especially in the translation of different Qur'ānic terms and concepts as well as different literary texts in general, which require an effort on the part of the translator to retain the cultural information of the source text in the target text.

Translation is a kind of activity which inevitably involves at least two languages and two cultural traditions (Toury in Venuti's edited book, 2000, p.200). According to this statement, translators regularly encounter the problem of how to deal with cultural aspects implied in a source text (ST) and to find the most appropriate technique of successfully conveying these aspects in the target language (TL). Puyu (2013) confirms that linguistic and socio-cultural phenomena are two interrelated concepts in the process of translation, "Cultural differences are not something that can be eliminated; however, the attitude towards exotic cultures is not impossible to be shaped by reasonable and practical modes of thinking. Since translation is not only a linguistic phenomenon, but a socio-cultural phenomenon as well, which reveals the interaction between speech act and socio-cultural factors." (p.23). According to this statement, transferring the meaning and the intended message of the text is the major aim that the translator is trying to attain. Cultural differences lead to semantic gap, which is defined as that the cultural information contained in source language has no equivalence in target language. Hatim (2005) states that in translation studies, culture, as an area of argumentation, has had mixed incidents over the years. The so-called 'cultural model' emerged as a reaction to earlier

conceptions of translation set primarily to account for 'equivalence' in terms of grammatical and lexical categories as elements of the linguistic system. This was a time when both linguists and translators felt that the attitudes and values, and the experience and traditions of people, inevitably become involved in the indication of meaning carried by language. Glodjović (2010) points out that cultural implications can be noticed in different forms ranging from lexical content and syntax to ideologies and ways of life in a given culture (p.141). The translator also has to decide on the importance given to certain cultural aspects and to what extent it is necessary or desirable to translate them into the target language (TL). Some linguists assume that untranslatability doesn't only come from linguistic limits but also from cultural barriers within translation. Nida in the book edited by Venuty (2000) attributed the serious problems that translators face to the linguistic and cultural differences between the source and the target languages. "Where the linguistic and cultural distances between source and receptor codes are least, one should expect to encounter the least number of serious problems." (2000, p. 130). Salehi (2012) asserts that both language and culture can never be separated in the process of translation and that:

language is culturally embedded. It both expresses and shapes cultural reality, and the meanings of linguistic items, whether they are words or larger segments of text, and it can only be understood when considered together with the cultural context in which these linguistic items are used.  
(p.83)

### **Methodology**

In doing this research, three English translations of the Holy Quran are selected in order to compare and contrast them with the original Arabic text. The focus here is a descriptive study in which different religious and cultural aspects chosen from different Quranic texts. The three English translations of these texts, which were written by Pickthall, Yusuf Ali, Al Hilali and Khan will be investigated. The above mentioned translations were selected on the ground that the renderings by these three translators have been claimed by many to be more comprehensive, faithful, and literary than others, although translating the word of God bears inevitable loss.

The procedures which will be used to conduct the present study are as follows:

1. Studying the original text and locating the items under study (i.e. non-equivalent culture-specific aspects).
2. Reading the translations and comparing the given translated items not only with one another, but also with the original text (ST).
4. Referring to different interpretations (Tafsir) of the Holy Quran and compare them with the translations of the above mentioned translators.
5. Determining the strategies applied by the English translators in rendering the cultural aspects of the source text.
6. Concluding from the data elicited in the above manner to determine the most frequently used strategies and to decide on the (un)translatability of the Quranic cultural terms and expressions based on the applied strategies.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

In order to come with the strategies used by translators in conveying the appropriate meaning of the determined culture-specific terms, I checked different dictionaries and some Arabic exegesis of the Holy Qur'ān. Then the translation of the terms and the Qur'ānic expressions under study will be compared to discover if there are any mismatches with the different exegeses. In addition, it attempts to find out to what extent the strategies used in translating such aspects were successful and appropriate. Dealing with the various types of non-equivalence needs more than one strategy. Baker (1992) identified some of these strategies that will be taken into consideration when assessing the translations of the aspects we are concerned with in this study. These strategies are as follows:

1. Translation by a more general word (superordinate).
2. Translation by a more neutral/ less expressive word.
3. Translation by cultural substitution.
4. Translation using a loan word or loan word plus explanation.
5. Translation by paraphrase

### **Culture-specific concepts in the Qur'ānic context:**

Culture-specific terms refer to those which have no equivalents or different positions in target reader's cultural system, and thus cause difficulties in translating their meanings and functions in the source text into target text. This indicates that the source-language word may

express a concept which is totally unknown in the target culture. Kashgary (2011) points out that "Religious terms are culture-specific par excellence. They represent a category of translation non-equivalence because they cannot be appropriately translated by providing their dictionary equivalents" (p.52). For example, the word زكاة [zakāt], can be translated by using its one-word English equivalent "charity" or "alms", as many translators did in translating Qur'ān. However, these equivalents do not give the complete meaning of the Arabic word as it is used by Muslims. [zakāt] can be more adequately translated by explaining and describing its conditions to approximate its full meaning through adding a qualifier "obligatory" or "ordained" to the English equivalent. The word زكاة, for instance, can be explained as 'an obligatory amount of man's property that is given to poor and needy people.'

### **The identification of the culture-specific concepts**

According to Mona Baker, non-equivalence can be divided into some common types, *culture-specific concepts* is the type we are concerned with here which was defined according to Baker as "the source-language word may express a concept which is totally unknown in the target culture" (1992). Cultural issues in translation are connected with the problem of understanding the texts to be translated, because in many cases the translator and the reader are not necessarily members of the same culture. Without any cultural or factual pre-knowledge, the translator will not understand a piece of information, even if it is presented to him in the most logical way.

The underlined concepts in the following Qur'ānic Arabic texts from sūrat Al-Baqarah and sūrat Yūsuf can be enrolled under the heading of being culture-specific concepts in a religious

Qur'ānic context:

#### **Source language text 1**

[ Sūrat Yūsuf ( Joseph), Āya (verse) 16 ]

وَجَاءُوا أَبَاهُمْ عِشَاءً يَبْكُونَ .

Translations:

- And they came weeping to their father in the evening. (M.P.)
- Then they came to their father in the early part of the night, weeping. (Y.A.)
- And they came to their father in the early part of the night weeping. (H&K)

In comparing the above three translations and finding the most appropriate one among them, it is very important to include what exists in the various Arabic-English dictionaries in addition to what Arabic Qur'ānic interpreters say concerning the meaning of this Qur'ānic term.

The word (عشاء) in the sixteenth Āya (verse) in Sūrat Yūsuf is related to the time of 'Isha (nightfall) praying which might be considered as a religion-specific term. Najīb (2006) points out that the word (عشاء) refers to "the early part of the night, that is, commencement of darkness" (p.694). In his clarification of the term, he explains it as "and they came to their father in the early part of the night, weeping". Albaghawī and Al-Baghdādī (1979, vol-2, 269) agreed in interpreting the term (عشاء) in this place. They both indicated that the term here refers to "the time of 'Isha" which clearly shows 'Isha (nightfall) praying time. Assabūnī (1997, p.39) also states that the word 'Isha means 'the time of 'Isha at night'. At this time, it will be dark and they may have the daring to tell the lies. Mas'ūd (1992) specifies (عشاء) 'Isha as "the early dark part of the night that lasts from sunset (*almaghrib*) to the nightfall darkness" (p.551)

According to the discussion above it can be inferred that Yūsuf Ali and Al-Hilālī & Khān have appropriately captured and conveyed the meaning of the word (عشاء). Their translations matched most of the exegeses of the Holy Qur'ān. They also match what is stated in Arabic-English dictionaries and dictionaries of religious terms. The only translation of the three that did not, to a large extent, match any of the checked Qur'ān interpretations was Mohammed Pickthall's. His translation of the word (عشاء) matched what Baalbaki stated in his dictionary Al-Mawrid. He translated it as "evening" which sounds ambiguous for the non-native to comprehend the appropriate meaning of the term. In looking up the word (evening) entry, Hornby states that it means "the part of the day between the afternoon and the time you go to bed." (2006, p. 16466). According to this statement, it can be inferred that Pickthall's translation of the word (عشاء) may confuse the non-native reader since he did not specify the period of time for the word (عشاء).

The three translators here used different strategies in translating the term (عشاء). Baker (1992) suggested some strategies that can be used by professional translators for dealing with

various types of non-equivalence. In translating this term, Yūsuf Ali and Al-Hilali and Khān have adopted the paraphrase strategy to reach the desirable adequacy while Pickthall has preferred translating by a more general word. This strategy, as Baker (1992) states, is used to overcome a relative lack of specificity in the target language compared to the source language. Therefore, the translation presented by Pickthall is to some extent less expressive than the original item. Yūsuf Ali as well as Al-Hilali and Khān might be more precise in their transferring of the term by using paraphrasing or explaining the meaning of the source language.

### Source language text 2

[Sūrat Al-Baqarah, Āya (verse) 87]

- وَأَتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ

Translations:

- We gave unto Jesus, son of Mary, clear proofs (of Allah's sovereignty), and We supported him with the holy spirit. (M.P.)
- We gave Jesus, the son of Mary, clear (signs) and strengthened him with the Holy Spirit. (Y.A.)
- We gave 'Isa (Jesus), the son of Maryam(Mary), clear (signs) and supported him with Ruh-ul-Qudus [Jibrael (Gabriel)]عليه السلام. (H&K)

Since the underlined expression above is a totally religious one, it can be identified as a culture-specific term. Religion, as stated by Newmark, is considered to be one of the cultural aspects, so the religious practices performed by different nations in different areas will, no doubt, be a part of the culture of that specific area. Newmark's view concerning religion and culture seems to be right since the availability of different religions entails the availability of different possible cultures. In his interpretation of this verse (Āya), Mawdudi (1988) assures that "the 'spirit of holiness' signifies the knowledge derived through revelation. It also signifies the angel Gabriel who brought this revelation. It also denotes the holy spirit of Jesus; the spirit which God had endowed with angelic character "(p.90). Al-Baghdādī (1979) agreed with what Qatāda and Al-Dahhāk indicated in interpreting the expression (روح القدس). They all assert that this expression signifies the angel Gabriel (p.81) since he accompanied Isa and supported him with strength till they come to heaven. Ibn Kathīr (1999) also assures what Al-

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Baghdādi included in his exegeses. Najīb (2006) illustrates that 'the holy spirit' to Muslims is but only Gabriel (PBUH). (P.489)

On the basis of the discussion above, it can be figured out that Al-Hilali and Khān came to almost the appropriate meaning of (روح القدس) as *Ruh-ul-Qudus [Jibrael (Gabriel) عليه السلام]*. Their translation was in accordance with what most of the exegetical interpretations pointed out. Translating the expression as Gabriel (Gibrael) (PBUH) matches Al-Baghdādi's, Najīb's, Qatāda's and Al-Dahhak's interpretations. Al-Hilali and Khān here pursued the strategy of translating by adding some explanation which can be used in interpreting the culture-specific concepts. Pickthall and Yūsuf Ali, on the other hand, adopted the strategy of word by word translation which occurs when a SL word or phrase is translated into a TL word or phrase, without worrying about style, but adapting the text to the TL syntactic rules. When a literal translation is rendered, without indicating more information through brackets or a footnote, the verse may be misunderstood. This strategy can sometimes be used in translating culture-specific expressions, but in the case of religion-specific terms more clarification is needed to convey the intended message. As for Pickthall, he provided some footnotes that rendered his translation to agree with Al-Hilali and Khān's translation. Concerning Yūsuf Ali's translation, it would have been more adequate if some notes clarifying the source text had been included.

### Source language text 3

[ Sūrat Yūsuf, Āya (verse) 31]

وَقُلْنَ حَاشَ لِلَّهِ مَا هَذَا بَشَرًا إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا مَلَكٌ كَرِيمٌ.

Below are the three translations of the above Qur'ānic text:

- Exclaiming: Allah Blameless! This is not a human being. This is no other than gracious angel. (Pickthall)
- They said: Allah preserve us no mortal is this is none other than a noble angle. (Yūsuf Ali)
- They said:" How perfect is Allah (or Allah forbid)! No man is this! This is none other than a noble angle!" ( Al-Hilali and Khān)

The underlined expression, as a whole, in the Qur'ānic text above can be categorized as culture-specific because of its availability most often in religious texts than it is in any other type of text. This also indicates the absolute perfection of Allāh, the creator of all the worlds, which clearly implies its religious culture specificity. Whereas Baalbaki in Al-Mawrid included the expression حاش لله with the meaning 'God forbid', Wehr did not include it in his

dictionary which might be a sign that this expression is absent in the non-Arab societies which in turn assures the cultural specificity of the phrase. The best reliable sources that must be referred to in translating such expressions are those credited Qur'ānic exegeses.

Najīb (2006) pointed out that *حاشا لله* means "no imperfection can be ascribed to Allāh! i.e. far be it from Allāh to be imperfect, Allāh is blameless" (p.338). Zamakhshari in his interpretation of these words agrees with what is indicated by Najīb that *حاشا لله* shows that no deficiency or imperfection can be attributed or ascribed to Allāh the Almighty and The Exalted. Al-Tabari and Al-Qurtubi stated that *حاشا لله* means *معاذ الله* *ma'ād Allāh* which is stated in Najīb's dictionary as 'Allāh forbid'.

By referring to the concerned text above in various dictionaries and the Qur'ānic exegeses mentioned in our discussion hereinabove, it is extracted that the three translators referred to different interpretations while dealing with the expression *حاشا لله*. Pickthall translated it literally which will be more appropriate if he adds some clarification for the word 'blameless' according to the Qur'ānic context. Yūsuf Ali, on the other hand, used 'preserve' which the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English explained as "to save something or someone from being harmed or destroyed". If some notes are added to give more indication of the perfection of Allāh the Exalted as stated in this Āya, it will be clear and more adequate translation. As for Al-Hilali and Khān, they referred to more than one exegesis when they translated this expression which makes it more possible to grasp the intended meaning of the source text.

#### **Source language text 4**

Sūrat Yūsuf, Āya (verse) 87]

- وَلَا تَيْأَسُوا مِنْ رَوْحِ اللَّهِ /

Pickthall, Yūsuf Ali, Al-Hilali and Khān translated the above underlined words respectively as follows:

- and despair not of the Spirit of Allah.
- and never give up hope of Allah's soothing mercy.
- and never give up hope of Allah's mercy.

Grammatically speaking, the genitive construction is what characterizes this phrase. The noun *روح* here is attributed to the unique name of our creator Allāh which may be considered as a sign of expressing religious denotation which in turn indicates its cultural specificity. The religious terms in general and the Qur'ānic ones in particular are unique and

inimitable. Marmaduke Pickthall, the renowned English translator of the Qur'ān, observes in the foreword of his translation: "The Qur'ān cannot be translated. That is the belief of old-fashioned sheikhs and the view of the present writer. The book is here rendered almost literally and every effort has been made to choose befitting language. But the result is not the Glorious Qur'ān, that inimitable symphony, the very sound of which moves men to tears and ecstasy. It is only an attempt to present the meaning of the Qur'ān and peradventure something of the charm-in English. It can never take place of the Qur'ān in Arabic, nor is it meant to do so." (p. vii)

Most of the exegetical interpretations of Quran are agreed in interpreting the phrase **رَوْحُ اللَّهِ** which can be transcribed here as (*rawh*) not (*rūh*) in Sūrat Yūsuf. Al-Ṭabari pointed out that it is Allah's mercy, hope and relief and that Muslims must not despair of this great gift of Allah. It is also included in Al-Ṭabari's exegeses that Wakī', Qatāda, Ibn Ishāq and others all support the same interpretation. Albaghawi and Albaghḍādi as well interpreted this phrase exactly as interpreted by Al-Ṭabari and many others. They maintain that **رَوْحُ اللَّهِ** is the mercy of Allah that He endows to those Muslims who work hard for the sake of Allah and who keep patient in hard situations and in cases of extreme sufferings.

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English illustrated what the word *mercy* means. It is noted that "if someone shows mercy, they choose to forgive or to be kind to someone who they have the power to hurt or punish" (p.1031).

Noticeably, Pickthall's translation of the expression **رَوْحُ اللَّهِ** did not seem to match any of the interpretations we referred to while investigating the translation and the strategy used to transfer this religious text. In Arabic language the two words (**رَوْحُ**) and (**رُوحُ**) which can be called homographous i.e. words which have different meanings and different pronunciation but the same spelling. This is what we are concerned with here. The word **رَوْحُ** in Arabic can be transcribed as (*rūh*) which means spirit or soul; it can also have the transcription (*rawh*) that means Allah's mercy or relief. In explaining some points in semantics, Thakur (1999, p.32-33) mentions three classifications of homonyms, one of which is that words with different meanings and different pronunciation but the same spelling. This feature can be noticed in the words **رَوْحُ** and **رُوحُ** which might be ambiguous to non-native translators to differentiate between them. In this case, translators must have deep understanding in Arabic semantics since they may mix while translating such ambiguous words. Pickthall here

translated the word ( *rawh* ) as spirit which mismatches the various interpretations concerning this word which illustrated this word as *mercy* of Allah. Pickthall here used the literal translation which will be more appropriate in translating this expression only if he used the precise equivalent lexical item such as *mercy*. As for Yūsuf Ali and Al-Hilali and Khān conveyed the meaning of the source text more appropriately. Both translations were according to what is stated in the different Arabic exegesis which noted that رَوْحُ اللَّهِ is Allah's mercy and the hope of Allah that Muslims must not give up. Yūsuf Ali, Al-Hilali and Khān used the literal translation which is noted by Nida as the *dynamic equivalence*. This strategy proved its trueness in translating some culture-specific expressions, whereas in some other cases, more clarification is needed to make the ST clearer and unambiguous.

#### Source language text 5

[ Sūrat Al-Baqarah, Āya (verse) 158]

- إِنَّ الصَّافَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ.

The three translators we are concerned with translated the above part of the Qur'anic verse as follows:

- Lo! (the mountains) As-Safa and Al-Marwah are among the indications of Allah. (Pickthall, p. 46)
- Behold! Safa and Marwah are among the symbols of Allah. (Yūsuf, p.21)
- Verily! As- Safa and Al- Marwah (two mountains in Makkah) are of the symbols of Allah. (Al-Hilali and Khān, p.32)

In referring to various English-Arabic dictionaries and vice versa it is noticed clearly that the word شَعِيرَة (*sha'īrah*), whose plural form is شَعَائِر is a religion-specific concept that is culturally bounded term. In his dictionary of religious terms, Najīb figures out that شَعَائِرُ اللَّهِ are "rites of Allah = Allah's sacred rites (rituals, observances, ceremonies, acts of worship) of Islam" (p.578). Baalbaki(1995), on the other hand, agrees with Najīb in giving the meaning of this word. He stated that it means "rite, rituals (religious) ceremony"(p.672). Wehr (1976) set forth the meaning of the word شَعِيرَة (*sha'īrah*) whose plural is شَعَائِر as "religious ceremony, rite... also places of worship" (p.474). All the above mentioned dictionaries match each other in explaining the meaning of the word شَعَائِر (*sha'ā'ir*).

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English explained the meaning of the word 'rite' as "a ceremony that is always performed in the same way usually for religious purposes" (p.1422). Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary has also defined the term 'rite' as "a

ceremony performed by a particular group of people, often for religious purposes." (p.73552) which confirms the data collected above.

Some translators used the word 'symbol' in interpreting the word شعائر in the above verse of the Qur'ān. In looking the word 'symbol' up in several dictionaries, it is observed that it indicates a totally different denotation of that of the word 'rite'. In Longman dictionary of contemporary English, it is pointed out that one of the word *symbol* meanings is "someone or something that represents a particular quality or idea." (p.1683) which might still convey an obscure vision to non-Arab and non-Muslim readers.

As for the various exegesis of the Qur'ān we referred to have all showed agreement in interpreting the term شعائر الله. They also maintained the clarifications that Najīb and Baalbaki have included in their dictionaries. Albaghawī, Albaghdādī and Al-Ṭabari's interpretations have included nearly the same explanation concerning the expression شعائر الله. They all indicated that they are the marks and places that Allah set to be worshipped in either by remembrance of Allah (*dhikr*), praying and performing duties that Allah imposed and prescribed on His worshippers. Ibn Kathīr in his interpretation claimed that شعائر الله are the rituals that Allah ordained for Ibrahim in pilgrimage (Hajj) rites. (p.471)

On the ground of the above discussion concerning the interpretation of the phrase شعائر الله, it can be noted that the three translations of this phrase require some more explanation or notes so as to convey the message clearly and more appropriately. Yūsuf Ali and Al-Hilali and Khān used the word 'symbols' to translate the word شعائر which may cause some ambiguity to non-Arab readers since the meaning of performing religious rituals may not be implied in this translation. Pickthall, as well, used the word 'indications' in his interpretation which also needs more clarification to match what is stated in different Arabic exegesis and various dictionaries. Accordingly, it can be inferred that the strategy of the literal translation which the translators dealt with in interpreting the phrase شعائر الله did not produce a precise equivalence. Notes, paraphrasing or explaining translation can be more adequate strategies to deal with those culture-specific concepts.

### **Findings and Results**

Here, we are to focus on the findings we have come up with while analyzing the data discussed concerning the above mentioned terms in addition to providing some suggestions

and recommendations so as to make it more probable to deal with culture-specific aspects in the process of translation. Below is a list of the study findings:

1. The Qur'ān is the inimitable word of Allah. The translation of the meaning of the Qur'an will not be free from distortion, because some of the words in the Qur'an seemed to have more than one meaning.
2. Based on the analysis of the data collected, it has been found that there are five translation strategies included: 1) literal translation. 2) translation by a more general word(superordinate) 3) translation by a less expressive meaning. 4) translation by paraphrasing. 5) translation by using loan words from the source text with explanation. Some of these strategies are included in Baker's book 'In Other Words' to be used by professional translators.
3. According to the analysis of the non-equivalent, cultural and religious aspects in Surat Al-Baqarah and Sūrat Yūsuf of the Holy Qur'ān, it is elicited that the best strategy that can be used in translating them is the one that can maintain, as far as possible, both meaning and effect. Literal translation is mostly blocked because of the availability of some linguistic, semantic and cultural constraints which may lead to an inevitable loss of meaning. In this case, some other translation strategies should be used. In such cases the literal translation may fulfill the purpose if only supported by explanation as shown in some of the analyzed aspects.
4. Using the paraphrasing translation, loan words with explanation and sometimes literal translation with explanation that matches what different exegetes include can be considered to be more appropriate in translating the examined non-equivalent aspects.

### **Conclusion**

To conclude, dealing with non-equivalent aspects in the process of translation is not an easy task. Culture-specific terms and expressions is a classification of non-equivalence that needs deep understanding of both the source and the target cultures. Some religious aspects which can be enrolled under the category of culture-specific are inimitable and untranslatable since the absence of their, exactly, matching equivalents in the target language. No specific method can be used to convey the intended message of such aspects; however, they can be translated by referring to their exact message in the source text.

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**Effects of Sound Recognition on Arab Students' Pronunciation****Dr. Fahmi Banafa****Faculty of Languages****University of Aden****Abstract**

*This study examined the potential benefits associated with the use of interactive multimedia sound recognition on participants' English pronunciation over a period of time. It also investigated the participants' perceptions of the efficacy of multimedia technology to enhance the acquisition of their pronunciation skills. The participants were 52 Arab college students who were randomly selected from a public university in Yemen. They were first year students studying in diverse major and the majority of them were males.*

*In order to collect data, participants asked to read a list of words and a short passage in recorded interviews before and after sessions. Their readings were scored using an oral production interview scale. At the end of the sessions, an open-ended questionnaire was handed in to collect background data.*

*Results indicated that the sound recognition program boosted students' pronunciation skills. The Paired Samples t-test findings showed that students' scores in the post-sessions were higher than the pre-sessions intervention. The pure Mean difference ( $\underline{M}=1.33$ ) in favor of integrating of sound recognition in pronunciation sessions.*

**KEY WORDS:** Pronunciation; Arab Students; English as a Foreign Language (EFL); English Language Learning (ELL); Sound Recognition; Rosetta Stone.

**Introduction**

Individuals as well as groups seek to learn English language for different purposes and goals. Among the diverse groups of English language learners are Arab students, who are particularly interested in enrolling in colleges and universities in English language speaking countries like the United States of America, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom. The number of Arab students studying in countries where English is considered a first language has been increasing (Al Shemary, 2008). According to the Saudi Higher Education Ministry, 1,622 Saudi students intended to enroll in the American universities in 2008. Canada is the second destination of Saudi students with 1,578. Australia is the third destination with 1,374

students and the United Kingdom will receive 1,283 students too. In 2016, a new report stated that "...60,000 students in 2014/15 (for a nearly 2,000% increase over the last ten years) ... Canada has enjoyed similar growth and hosted about 14,000 Saudi students in 2014."

he motivation that stimulates Arabs to study English as a Second Language (ESL) in these countries is the perception of the academic, economical and social prosperity that English provides for them inside and outside of their own countries. As Butler-Pascoe and Wiburg (2003) stated: "In today's world with easy access to travel, globalization of business and industry, and the desire of non-native speakers to communicate with native English-speaking peers, English learners of all ages and purposes value the ability to orally communicate in the second or foreign language." (p. 97)

However, Arab students face major pronunciation problems that affect their speaking skills when learn English language. Wahba, (1998) states that: "[Arabs] students face certain problems related to pronunciation. Some of these problems are related to stress, others are related to intonation. However, most of these problems can be attributed to the differences in pronunciation between English and Arabic." (p. 36). Wahba emphasizes the major problem that Arab students encounter in English language learning. This emphasis shows that Arabic pronunciation affects students' pronunciation in English language learning. Paulston and Bruder (1976) wrote: "The acquisition of a good pronunciation in the target language is commonly held to be the most difficult of all tasks in language learning" (p. 81). Arab students are among English language learners who encounter difficulties in pronunciation. Figure 1 gives a sense of the Arabic consonants and vowels. "The short vowels ا و ي and the diacritics attached to the long vowels are usually written only in poetry, textbooks for foreign learners, children's books, and the Qur'an" (Ager, 2004).

*Figure 1. Arabic consonants and vowels: Arabic vowels ا و ي (a, i, u)*

IPA	Value	Name	Final	Medial	Initial	Isolated	IPA	Value	Name	Final	Medial	Initial	Isolated
[d]	d	dād	ض	ض	ض	ض	[ʔ]	ʔ(a)	alif	ا	—	—	ا
[t]	t	tāʾ	ط	ط	ط	ط	[b]	b	bāʾ	ب	ب	ب	ب
[z]	z	zāʾ	ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ	[t]	t	tāʾ	ت	ت	ت	ت
[ʕ]	ʕ	ʕayn	ع	ع	ع	ع	[θ]	θ	thāʾ	ث	ث	ث	ث
[ɣ]	gh	ghayn	غ	غ	غ	غ	[ʒ]	j	jīm	ج	ج	ج	ج
[f]	f	fāʾ	ف	ف	ف	ف	[ħ]	ħ	hāʾ	ح	ح	ح	ح
[q]	q	qāf	ق	ق	ق	ق	[x]	kh	khāʾ	خ	خ	خ	خ
[k]	k	kāf	ك	ك	ك	ك	[d]	d	dāl	د	—	—	د
[l]	l	lām	ل	ل	ل	ل	[ð]	dh	dhāl	ذ	—	—	ذ
[m]	m	mīm	م	م	م	م	[r]	r	rāʾ	ر	—	—	ر
[n]	n	nūn	ن	ن	ن	ن	[z]	z	zāy	ز	—	—	ز
[h]	h	hāʾ	ه	ه	ه	ه	[s]	s	sīn	س	س	س	س
[w]	w	wāw	و	—	—	و	[ʃ]	š	shīn	ش	ش	ش	ش
[j]	y	yāʾ	ي	ي	ي	ي	[s]	ṣ	ṣād	ص	ص	ص	ص

As Al-Menoufi (1988) stated, “Most English consonants cause Arab students no problem. Difficulties arise when learner substitutes some of the consonants for others because they do not exist either in classical Arabic or in colloquial Arabic” (p. 15). Arab students mispronounce not only English consonants but also English vowels because some sounds do not exist in Arabic language. Al-Menoufi pointed out that Arab “students are sometimes not able to distinguish between the rounded vowels /u/ and /U/” (p. 12). These rounded vowels are illustrated in the English/Arabic dictionary as follows: / [pʊl]/ as in /PULL/ and / [pʊl]/ as in / POOL /.

## Distinctions between Arabic and English Languages

Scholars have investigated the bilingual affect on students' language acquisition. Said (2002) addressed the problem of being bilingual in Arabic and English in Living in Arabic. He maintained that the problem emerged for the reason that both languages have different linguistic families and represent two different worlds. He pointed out that each of the two

languages “creates barriers against [the] other language” (p. 235). He also expressed his own experience during language learning: “I remember and still listen very fastidiously to what people say, how they say it, what words carry the stress and exactly how” (p. 235). Malik (1957) pointed out that there are phonological and semantic differences between Arabic and English. He also mentioned that, because the two languages have entirely different scripts, Arab students are required to work more than many students to learn English. Malik’s study discussed the problems that Arabs face with vowels, which in Arabic are relatively simple and “straightforward.” He gave a comparison between Arabic vowels and English vowels. For example, the word (Keen) \ 'kēn \ would be difficult to pronounce, as it should be. Arab learners would pronounce it as \ 'kin \. Also, Arab students are not able to differentiate between /I/ and /E/. This mispronunciation becomes clear when it comes to pronouncing” pit” \PIT\ as (pet) \pEt\ and “pill” \PIL\ as (pel) \pEl\.

Long vowels are not the only challenge when Arab students learn English, but also consonants. Allophonic consonants p/b and f/v are challenging for learners when learning English in all positions, i.e. initial, medial, and final. Likely due to the absence of these consonants /P/ and /V/ in Arabic language.

Therefore, Arab students will probably say “bark” for “park” and “ban” for “pan.” They also will likely pronounce the voiced labio-dental fricative /V/ as /F/. Words that have the consonant /V/ such as “LIVES” and “INVOLVE” are likely to be pronounced by Arab students as “LIFES” and “INFOLFE,” respectively. Therefore, Arab students need to recognize the difference between the above consonants in order to avoid mispronunciation.

## **Literature Review**

### **The Use of the Interactive Multimedia in ELL**

Several studies have been designed to measure the extent to which the multimedia approach in using computer technology is helpful for learning and teaching in ESL classrooms. Burns (1996) reported that multimedia software with sound and video linguistically encourages nonnative speakers of English to learn. Students can correct their pronunciation by repeating sounds to demonstrate any difficulties. Also, Cazade (1999) pointed out that video and animated clips can be useful because they show the various positions of the speaker’s tongue and lips, as well as the airflow of the speaker’s words.

On the other hand, Butler-Pascoe and Wiburg (2003) reported that pronunciation programs enable learners of a second language to make comparisons between their utterances and the utterances of native speakers.

Al-Seghayer (2001) investigated the efficacy of interactive multimedia on learning foreign language. The study examined the impact of dynamic video or still pictures on foreign language vocabulary acquisition. The researcher selected 30 ESL participants (13 females, 17 males) enrolled in the English Language Institute (ELI) at the University of Pittsburgh. Thirteen of the participants were Arabs, and the rest were from a variety of countries. All participants were familiarized with the hypermedia learning program. This program enables participants to read a narrative English text that has annotations and glosses of words in the forms of printed text, sound, video, and graphics. It was designed to help learners to understand unknown words. "[Participants] could read the target word's printed textual definition, hear its pronunciation, or view its meaning via a still picture or video" (p. 9). Participants were measured reading in two modes: annotated with only the textual mode, and annotated with both textual and visual modes of information.

The data were gathered from two sources: 1) face-to-face interviews to read a list of words and a passage. 2) a questionnaire of three questions handed in to the participants at the end of the study.

The results showed that a video clip annotated with a text definition was more effective in teaching unknown vocabulary words than a still picture annotated with a text definition. The researcher concluded that multimedia is useful in vocabulary learning for English native speakers as well as nonnative speakers of English.

Egan (1999) pointed out that "speaking is the heart of second language learning. It is arguably the most important skill. . . . Despite its importance . . . speaking was until recently largely ignored in schools and universities" (p. 277). Unlike the other language skills, speaking seem to be benefited by learning/teaching with multimedia. Nevertheless, James indicated that there is some controversy about the speaking skill. He believed that earlier writers tended to be pessimistic about the beneficial effect of computers on oral skills, others were more optimistic about the benefits of computer assisted language learning (CALL; James, 1996). Hence, James suggested that the technique used in conversation class to assist oral interaction can be a good model for CALL programs targeting language oral skill.

Despite the overall impression of a problem with pronunciation, there are few studies that explore the effect of technology with sound recognition on Arab students' English language pronunciation.

This paper aimed to examine the potential benefits of interactive multimedia with sound recognition to improve Arab students' English pronunciation studying at a major Yemeni university.

### **Effectiveness of Technology on Language Learning**

Previous studies indicate that computers can be used to enhance language learning. Kosakowski (1998) pointed out that students learn faster when computer-assisted instruction (CAI) is used in courses. This benefit of rapid learning included all levels of schooling and all areas of study and not only in regular classes but also special education classes. Amanti (2001) urged reframing the purpose of technology in English Language Learning (ELL) in a way that using computers as communication tools turned to be important in classes. He proposed that using computers in this manner will not only improve the teaching and learning of ELL but also students will be able to acquire computer skills. Amanti suggests that a presentation by using PowerPoint to download pictures and animation from the Internet could be useful in ESL (p.2).

Several researchers (e.g., Weinberg & Knoerr, 2003; Yamada, Tohkura, Bradlow, & Pisoni, 1996) reported that trained learners in speech perception were able to improve their speech skills. The studies showed that the native speakers of Japanese who were trained to distinguish the minimal pair /r/-/l/ significantly progressed between the two tests. In a similar study, Murawaka and Lambacher (1996) trained English-language Japanese students the pronunciation of [r] in an American English for 13 weeks using "electronic visual feedback." Many students made improvement in pronouncing these specific sounds.

Butler-Pascoe and Wiburg (2003) described how technology facilitated the improvement of the speed of reading through student understanding of the linguistic structure of the language, such as the phoneme and alphabet. This understanding helped language learners to make the correct relationship between the letters of the alphabet and their sounds. Software programs can help students to understand this linguistic structure. Leap into Phonics is a good program for ESL learners because it matches names of objects with the

sounds. Such programs will be useful for language learning because they allow learners to be aware of sounds that do not exist in their mother tongue.

Liu, Moore, Graham, & Lee (2002) reviewed previous literature from 1990-2000 on computer-based technology use in second language and foreign language learning. The goal of the review was twofold: a) to conceive how computers were used to support the area of second and foreign language learning and teaching in the past eleven years; b) to examine the research evidence of using computer-based technology to enhance language skills. The review pointed out that Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) benefited language learning, increased interest in technology facilitated written communication, and that the Internet has been increasingly integrated in the language classrooms. The review showed that research has been shifted from just accepting computer technology in classrooms into more integration of technology in learning and teaching languages. It pointed out that educators have recognized that students can benefit from technology in their learning if technology is affectively used.

Also, the review revealed some evidence of the effectiveness of computer technology in second language learning and that the online communication improved writing skills of learners who have been given equal opportunities to use.

### **Computer Aided Pronunciation (CAP)**

Although researchers have addressed the use of technology in second language learning in general, very few studies investigated the integration of technology in listening and the skill of pronunciation which call for the urgent need to study the effect of technology on pronunciation.

Wei (2006) indicated that more studies are needed to undertake to solicit more procedures in acquisition of pronunciation.

Luo, discusses a study she has conducted on Taiwanese English major students to examine the technique of computer-assisted pronunciation training (CAPT).

In addition to in class instructions, students were given peer-reviewed oral reading assignments and recorded short passage by a native speaker to practice at home and mimic the speaker till satisfied. Later students posted their reading online to get feedback on their pronunciation from other students. Results indicated that CAPT students have performed better pronunciation skills compared to the two control groups.

Two control groups were used to receive only in class instruction with no additional assignments.

Seferoglu (2005) states, "There have been very few studies so far which test the effectiveness of computer-assisted pronunciation training" (p. 306). Felix (2005) also surveys the impact of CALL in research papers between 2000 – 2004 and finds out that computer-based pronunciation has not received a great deal of attention in the previous studies.

Although available speech recognition software programs have been considered as a potential aid to language learning, there is a general consensus that these programs are insufficient and unreliable to justify its use in language learning studies. In fact, the national standards for foreign language recommended equal focus on the different skills including oral and listening skills. The national standards suggested more activities for listening and speaking. It was believed that computer technology has the potential to develop students' speaking and listening skills (Liu et al., 2002.).

Drawing on all these studies, the purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of the interactive multimedia on Arab students' pronunciation. More specifically, the research questions are: a) how will interactive multimedia with sound recognition such as Rosetta Stone help Arab students to improve their English pronunciation? b) how will Arab students perform on an Oral Production Interview Scale after the implementation of the intervention (i.e., Rosetta Stone)? and c) what is the perception of participants towards sound recognition?

## **Methodology**

### ***Participants***

The participants in the study were 52 Arab college students in their first year enrolled in a major Yemeni university of whom 9 were females and 43 males. The participants were from Egypt, Syria, Gulf States, Iraq and Yemen. However, one male student didn't complete the study for personal reason. Their majors were engineering, computer science, arts, sciences, education and business. Their ages ranged from 19 to 24 years old ( $M=21.6$ ).

### ***Instrumentation***

The dependent measure in this study was the passage and the list of words that students read in the pre- and post- tests (see Appendix A). The passage and the words were carefully selected to include the consonants V, F; B & P and the long vowels such as two

common, yet different, ways of describing “long” vowels are, for example, the vowel in “hide” in contrast to the short vowel in “hid”; the vowel in “bag” before a voiced consonant (/g/) in contrast to the short vowel in “back” before a voiceless consonant (/k/) and in “boy” /boi/ and ice /'is / in order to examine the changes, if any, in the students' pronunciation before and after the intervention sessions.

A questionnaire of four questions was presented to the students. In the first and second questions, students were asked about their ages and nationalities, in the third question, students were asked about majors. The first three questions were intended to collect background data of the participants in this study. However, in the fourth question, students were asked if they believe that their pronouncing skills benefited from the exposure to the sound recognition in the interactive multimedia program. (Appendix B).

### ***Intervention***

In order to examine the effectiveness of the Rosetta Stone on the pronunciation of Arab students, the present study examined the pronunciation of students prior to and after completing the pronunciation skills section in the Rosetta Stone. The intervention required that participants mimicked Native English language speaker in the interactive multimedia.

Rosetta Stone (Fairfield, 2000) is an interactive multimedia software program. It provides a variety of activities to use in studying EFL: (a) listening and reading combined, (b) listening only, (c) reading only, (d) speaking, and (e) writing. However, the Speaking activity (Section D) was the only activity used in this study because it allowed user interactivity. It also had the mechanism of recording the user's sound to imitate a native speaker of English that was considered a major advantage for using this activity in ELL. Users could erase and record their sounds as many times as they needed to acquire the correct pronunciation. Figure 2 presents a typical page in the program.



Figure 2. sample page of Rosetta Stone program

### **Data Collection Procedures**

All participants were volunteers. They were approached by the researcher and an assistant on campus and requested to participate in the study. The selection of participants was accidental due to difficulty of accessing students' data in the selected institution. They were assured that their names wouldn't be used in the research study.

In order to solicit speech samples, participants performed different tasks that emphasized varying levels of conscious control of pronunciation. First, participants read a list of words and a short passage, both of which highlighted the difficulty in pronunciation of [P], [B], [F], [V] consonants and long vowels (see Appendix A). Afterward, participants were asked to answer four questions ((see Appendix B), which were designed to elicit a more relaxed, informal style of pronunciation and to gather data of demographic, age, major background and perceptions of using sound recognition program.

For the intervention portion of the study, participants were instructed to interact in pronunciation exercises sessions in Rosetta Stone. In addition, the program offers pertains to suprasegmentals (pitch and emphasis/stress). Students taught to practice these and were taught altogether how to interpret the program feedback.

Participants were asked to complete 40 hours in 20 sessions of two hours a week. They were instructed to listen and mimic the pronunciation of the speaker in the Rosetta Stone program as many times required to hit the green indicator in Rosetta Stone. The green indicator was an indication of making progress in pronouncing words, phrases and sentences similar to the voice in the program. The researcher monitored all participants' sessions.

The participants' readings of the passage and the list of the words were audio-taped and listened to by two raters who were native speakers of English. They were English language instructors in the institution where the study was conducted. The raters graded the participants' pronunciation on the Oral Production Interview Scale (See Appendix C). The pronunciation section in the scale was used to assess the participants' pronunciation skills before and after integrating the interactive multimedia Rosetta Stone. However, the raters were not informed of the order of the pre- and post- audio-tapes of the participants.

Figure 3 shows a native speaker and a student pronouncing the same English phrase. At point a, the voice of the native speaker lifted in pitch to mark the end of the question but the student's voice dropped in pitch. At point b, the native speaker stressed the first syllable in "smiling" but the student stressed the second syllable. At point c, the native speaker used the correct vowel sound in the second syllable of "smiling" but the student used a higher-frequency "eee" sound.

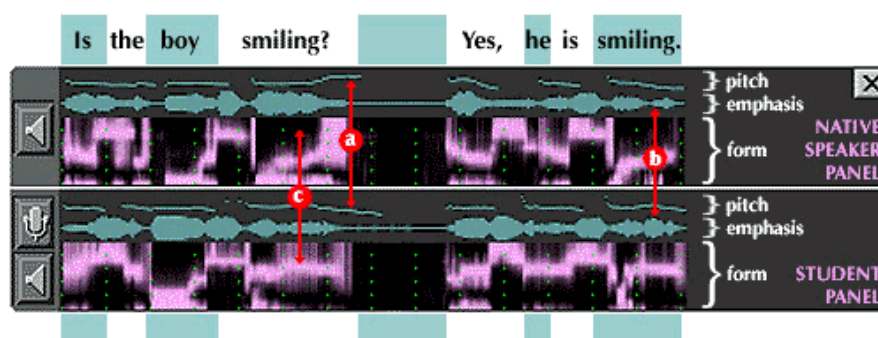


Figure 3. voiceprint comparison of native speaker and student pronouncing the same phrase.

Two native speakers of English acted as judges for listening to the students' pronunciation during reading the passage and the list of words before and after the intervention sessions. They listened to the audio taped interviews without knowing the pre- and post- readings of the students' order. The judges were trained to use an oral production interview scale (see Appendix C) to evaluate the pronunciation during reading. They revealed

a rate of inter-rater reliability of 89% in using the scale. After the training session was completed, judges were presented with the participants' voice samples from both pre- and post- interviews in random order.

The participants were required to read prior to the use of the Rosetta Stone program and after it. The interviews were audio-taped and took place in the computer lab. In the pre- and post-interviews, the participants read a passage and list of words in English. Then they answered four questions related to age, major, nationality and perceptions of using Rosetta Stone data.

### Data analysis

Descriptive statistics were conducted to analyze the background data.

Then the Paired Samples t Test was employed to examine the differences between pre-sessions scores and the post- sessions scores.

### Results

The Paired Samples t Test was used to scrutinize the results of integrating sound recognition in English pronunciation acquisition. The figures indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the pre-sessions and the post- sessions test scores. The participants' pre-sessions Mean in the Oral Production Interview Scale that measures the pronunciation skills was ( $\underline{M}$ =3.89,  $\underline{SD}$ =1.58) and improved after sessions into ( $\underline{M}$ =5.13,  $\underline{SD}$  = 1.52). The pure Mean difference ( $\underline{M}$ =1.33) indicating that students had benefited from the sound recognition sessions. The results showed that there were statistically significant differences between the two tests  $t(50) = -8.086$ ,  $p = 0.0001$ .

**Paired Samples Statistics**

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre_Sessions	3.80	51	1.588	.222
Post_Sessions	5.1373	51	1.52341	.21332

### Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Pre_Sessions - Post_Sessions	-1.33333	1.17757	.16489	-1.66453	-1.00214	-8.086	50	.000

2. Chart A referred to the participants' answers to question number 4 in the questionnaire given after sessions. It clarifies the participants' perception of using sound recognition multimedia. The majority of participants indicated that they were positive about using interactive multimedia with sound recognition to enhance their pronunciation skills. There were 38 participants (73%) who believed that using the interactive multimedia with sound recognition assisted them positively to improve their English language pronunciation skills. However, there were eight participants (15%) who believed they didn't improve their skills. The remaining of the participants (11.5%) was uncertain about the effect of the program on their skills. (See Chart A).

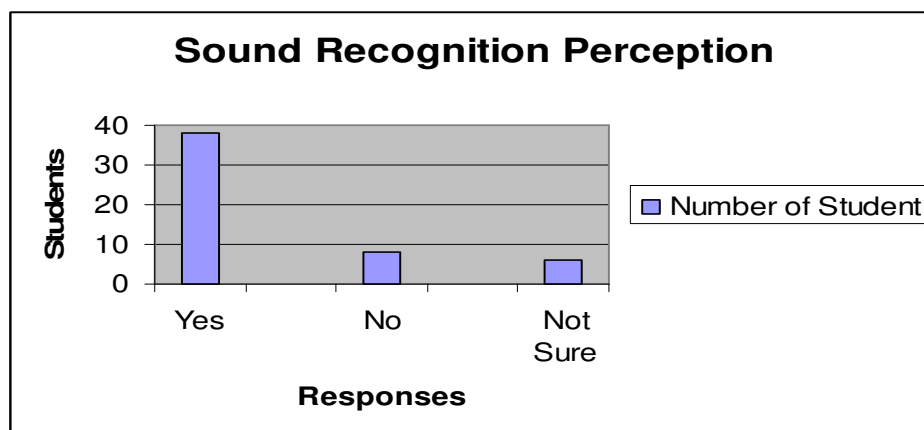


Chart A. Students' Perception of Sound Recognition Multimedia

## **Discussion**

As was stated by Paulston and Bruder (1976): "The acquisition of a good pronunciation in the target language is commonly held to be the most difficult of all tasks in language learning" (p. 81).

The researcher's study intended to observe a value-added activity of sound recognition intervention to regular pronunciation classes to investigate its efficiency on participants' pronunciation abilities.

The findings from this study provided a potential influence of sound recognition multimedia on English language pronunciation of Arab college students.

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare scores of students before and after sessions of sound recognition interventions to examine the influence of technology on pronunciation skills. These results showed a significant difference which suggest that sound recognition sessions really do have enhanced pronunciation assistance. Specifically, the results suggest that when students conduct sessions using sound recognition to mimic native speakers in the program got higher scores in the Oral Production Interview Scale.

In fact, students' scores on the oral test increased after they were exposed to the sessions. The Mean after sessions was higher than it was before conducting the sound recognition sessions. There was a significant difference in the scores of pre-sessions ( $M=3.80$ ,  $SD = 1.58$ ) and the scores of post-sessions ( $M=5.13$ ,  $SD = 1.52$ ). The results indicated that participants improved their English language pronunciation after they were exposed to the intervention sessions.

The results of the study are consistent with previous studies that discuss the benefits of multimedia integration in language learning (Al-Seghayer, 2001; Murakawa & Lambacher, 1996). This study sheds light on the difficulty of proper pronunciation when it comes to consonant and long vowels. In fact, the [P] and [V] consonants and long vowels do not exist in the Arab students' mother tongue language.

The study revealed that the interactive multimedia with sound recognition enhanced English pronunciation of participants. However, this improvement may also be attributed to participants' enthusiasm during the sessions and their excitement to improve their English language pronunciation skills. In fact, all participants reported that they were positive about

the use of interactive multimedia with sound recognition to enhance their pronunciation skills and may be ascribed to the absence of practice with native speakers in their daily life.

On the other hand, approximately 3/4 of the participants believed that using the interactive multimedia with sound recognition enriched their English language pronunciation skills where as the remaining disagreed or were uncertain about the effects of the program on their sound pronunciation.

### **Limitations and Recommendations**

Despite the encouraging results, few limitations and recommendations for further future research should be taken into consideration. This study investigated 52 Arab students from five different Arab countries studying in a Yemeni university funded by the government. Therefore, it is recommended to have larger population of Arab students studying in different public and private colleges and universities. This study was limited to 40 hours of sound recognition technology in English language learning, more time is needed for the intervention sessions and regular class time is recommended to investigate the effects of sound recognition multimedia on pronunciation. Moreover, it is recommended to use new and sophisticated sound recognition programs to examine the effectiveness of technology on Arab college students' pronunciation skills. It is also recommended in future studies to investigate the impact of sound recognition sessions on gender variable.

### **Conclusion**

The primary goals of pronunciation teaching are for the learner to develop intelligible speech and be able to effectively communicate in the target language (Miller, 2000; Butler-Pascoe, Wiburg, 2003). Arab students have difficulties in pronouncing the consonants "P" and "V" letters, as well as long vowel letters, and this may be attributed to the absence of these letters in their mother language (Arabic). On the other hand, Arab college students tend to speak Arabic with each other and probably evade to communicate with native speakers of English.

This study demonstrated that sound recognition multimedia is beneficial in enhancing Arab college students' pronunciation skills. The findings of this study showed that sound recognition technology can be seen as value added to regular classes and can assist in filling the gap in pronunciation practice, not only in the intensive English programs but also in the daily life of the students.

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The study revealed that the participants' positive perception reflects an understanding of the importance of sound recognition technology in learning English language and gives a picture of Arab students accepting technology in their English language classes. This perception of technology effectiveness provides a significant factor in the field of ELL and leads to implementing multimedia technology in English language classes, particularly for Arab students seeking to study in colleges and universities where English is the language of instructions.

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**Appendix: A**

## List of words

1. Ice
2. Hide
3. Virus
4. A girl
5. Very nice
6. Back
7. Park
8. Bag
9. Barking
10. Baby
11. Vary
12. Paragraph
13. A boy
14. Hid
15. University

**Passage**

Every second, 1 hectare of the world's rainforest is destroyed. That's equivalent to two football fields. An area the size of New York City is lost every day. In a year, that adds up to 31 million hectares -- more than the land area of Poland. This alarming rate of destruction has serious consequences for the environment; scientists estimate, for example, that 137 species of plant, insect or animal become extinct every day due to logging. In British Columbia, where, since 1990, thirteen rainforest valleys have been clear-cut, 142 species of salmon have already become extinct, and the habitats of grizzly bears, wolves and many other creatures are threatened. Logging, however, provides jobs, profits, taxes for the government and cheap products of all kinds for consumers, so the government is reluctant to restrict or control it.

Much of Canada's forestry production goes towards making pulp and paper. According to the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association, Canada supplies 34% of the world's wood pulp and 49% of its newsprint paper. If these paper products could be produced in some other way,

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Canadian forests could be preserved. Recently, a possible alternative way of producing paper has been suggested by agriculturalists and environmentalists: a plant called hemp.

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**Appendix: B**

1. What is your date of birth?
2. What is your nationality?
3. What is your major?
4. Did the sound recognition of the program benefit your pronunciation skills?

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### **Appendix: C**

Oral Production Interview Scale

Student No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Pronunciation

- \_\_\_\_ 10-9: native-like pronunciation, virtually no discernable accent, no errors.
- \_\_\_\_ 8-7: near-native pronunciation, slight accent, few errors.
- \_\_\_\_ 6-5: some errors; obvious accent, but doesn't interfere with comprehension.
- \_\_\_\_ 4-3: frequent errors; strong accent; some comprehension difficulties.
- \_\_\_\_ 2-1: little effort to use English pronunciation; comprehension impeded.

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## **Representation of the Syrian Conflict in Regional Newspapers: A Critical Discourse Analysis**

**Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hussein Ali Habtoor**

University of Aden, Yemen

Shabwah College of Education

### **Abstract**

*This study aims at investigating the ideological construction of representation of both Syrian government and Syrian opposition in four texts of four regional newspapers in their online versions. These newspapers are; Hurriyet Daily News(Turkey), Arab News (Saudi Arabia), Syria Times(Syria) and Al-Ahed News (Lebanon). The analysis of the news reports adheres to the analytical paradigm of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The study compares how each newspaper has represented each side of the conflict. The investigation focuses on the lexical choices, presentation of structural oppositions, presentation of speech and speakers, presentation of action or transitivity analysis, and presentation of social actors. The results show that the newspapers have represented these fighting groups differently in accordance with the ideological background each newspaper has.*

**Keywords:** *Syrian conflict, Syrian government, Syrian opposition, representational strategies, Critical Discourse Analysis, pro-revolution, anti-revolution*

### **Introduction**

The conflict in Syria has attracted several newspapers both regionally and internationally which has been of a wide coverage since the war broke out in 2011. Media coverage varies in its reports and representation of the government and the rebels in the sense that some newspapers are pro-revolution while others are anti-revolution. The rebellions in different Arab countries or what has been dubbed in the western media as the ‘Arab Spring’ was politically, socially and economically motivated; and has resulted in a general unrest in countries such as Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, Libya, Yemen, and Syria.

The subject of this study is the representation of the Syrian opposition and its fighters and the Syrian government and its forces in both pro and anti-revolution newspapers. The Syrian war began in April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2011, when a group of peaceful protesters went to the streets of Daraa asking for the release of 15 boys who were detained by the police after writing some

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slogans on the walls of their school against the regime and supporting the Arab spring. As a consequence of the above scenario, defectors from the Syrian Army formed the Free Syrian Army (FSA) in July, 2011. The conflict intensified and extended to every corner in Syria. The Syrian Government in retaliation to these protests has killed hundreds of thousands and imprisoned many more. For more than seven years of fighting the war has become increasingly violent and devastating as well. Reports have shown that more than 465,000 were killed and 12 million have been displaced from their homes (see <Al-Jazeera.com> Feb.22, 2018).

In this article an assessment of the language used by different news media coverage resources will be focused and discussed thoroughly within the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The representations of both the Syrian regime and the rebels in a selected newspapers coverage reports are politically motivated and more or less reflect the political attitudes of their countries or more specifically their governments or political parties. A selection of a range of texts taken from the websites of those newspapers from June, 2011 till August, 2014 are to be studied.

In this study four newspapers are selected for data collection. These include: *Arab News* (Saudi Arabia); *Hurriyat Daily News* (Turkey); Hezbollah owned *Al-Ahed Newspaper* (Lebanon) and *Syria Times* (Syria). One text from each source has been sampled for the purpose of this study and will be analysed. In the selection, a balance has been maintained to have an equal chance of representation for both pros and cons of media coverage so as to have a fair assessment.

### **Research questions**

1. How do the newspapers present the two sides of the Syrian conflict?
2. What are the strategies used to present these two fighting parties in Syria?
3. To what extent ideology affects the representational strategies in the discourse of war adopted by these newspapers?

### **Review of literature**

In this section a review of the theoretical background to the CDA and the approaches of this field will first be discussed to give an appropriate framework for the present work. Then, a survey of works done in connection with this study, and in more precise way, the studies conducted in the Arabian context of CDA and their relation to media will be presented.

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**Critical Discourse Analysis: A Theoretical Framework**

According to Wodak and Busch (2004). “The terms *critical linguistics* (CL) and *critical discourse analysis* (CDA) are often used interchangeably. In fact, recently, the term *CDA* seems to have been preferred and is being used to denote the theory formerly identified as CL. (p.108)”. Van Dijk (1998a) said that CDA is a field that is concerned with studying and analysing written and spoken texts to reveal the discursive sources of power, dominance, inequality and bias. It examines how these discursive sources are maintained and reproduced within specific social, political and historical contexts.

CDA as its name suggests first, is a critical device. Although it is not attached to any special theory and philosophy, it calls itself merely as a method of analysing the text (McKenna, 2004). It mainly deals with the questions of inequality and power, power institutes and the relation of language and power. So it is natural to conclude that it has a political attitude (Stubbe et al, 2003). Fairclough defines it as relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power; and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony. (1993, p. 135).

It is called interdisciplinary because it is located somewhere between sociology and linguistics. Van Dijk (2001, p. 352) writes “CDA is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context.”

Moreover, Fairclough & Wodak (1997, pp. 271-280) summarized the main tenets of CDA as follows:

1. CDA addresses social problems
2. Power relations are discursive
3. Discourse constitutes society and culture
4. Discourse does ideological work
5. Discourse is historical
6. The link between text and society is mediated
7. Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory

8. Discourse is a form of social action.

CDA can be performed at two levels of analysis of texts concerned. The micro and macro levels of text analysis. The former deals with the participants of the text or conditions, issues or people related to that text within the context, whereas the later deals with obvious and foremost topics that can be related to context in higher level and beyond the actual condition of the text. For example, in normal social behaviour, the analysis devoted to the people involved in the behaviour, the place and time of the behaviour and physical description of that behaviour consists of the micro level of the analysis while in a higher level describing and investigating the power relations among the people and groups or studying the possible ideology which exists behind the text is related to macro level of the analysis (van Dijk, 2006c; van Dijk, 2007).

### **CDA Major Approaches**

Discourse analysis has been carried out differently. These analyses differ according to the approach followed, for instance, Wood and Kroger (2000, p.18). wrote that discourse analysis oriented in branch if philosophy, sociology, linguistics and literature. Because of this reason, it is believed that discourse analysis is multi-purpose. The same thing is true about CDA. There are some cases in which CDA has been applied to a literary text or political one or social discourses where CDA oriented in the relations of participants (Graham et al, 2004; Edwards, 2004; Lazuka, 2006; Bhatia, 2006; Stubbe et al, 2003). There is an additional factor here; the same text apart from its original discipline can be interpreted from different views. This refers to the basic orientation of the interpreter and the epistemological attitude one has toward CDA. Sheyholislami (2001) encounters three main directions in CDA, which anyone is recognized with one of the main figures of critical discourse analysis.

### **Socio-cognitive Approach to CDA**

As one of the most prominent scholars of CDA, van Dijk has published several works as significant contributions to the field, viz. the socio-cognitive approach. There are several important works by van Dijk which tackled racism and the news. He came up with some important notions such as "Us and Them", "in-groups and outgroups" and "Ideological square", which is known as the frame work of analysis regarding representations in the news. Van Dijk's (2001) proposed a model of critical discourse analysis, that comprises three components elucidate how social ideologies may be reflected. They are: discourse, cognition,

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and society. He states that "it is only the integration of these accounts that may reach descriptive, explanatory and especially critical adequacy in the study of social problems" (p. 98). Furthermore, he believes that the critical discourse analysis is not merely of analysing structures rather it may go beyond that to care for the production and reception process of the news (Boyd-Barrett, 1994). Interestingly, Van Dijk thinks that "Discourse is not simply an isolated textual or dialogic structure. Rather it is a complex communicative event that also embodies a social context, featuring participants (and their properties) as well as production and reception processes." (1988a, p. 2).

### **Sociolinguistic Ethnographical Approach**

Ruth Wodak is the main figure associated with this approach. Wodak's sociolinguistic ethnographical CDA approach is frequently referred to as the discourse-historical approach. Along with its focus on the contextualized nature of discourse within its present state of occurrence, Wodak's research tries to explain the development of discourse in its historical context. She has paid a great attention to issues such as anti-Semitism. Wodak has developed a discourse-historical method devoted to tracing the (intertextual) history of phrases and arguments (see, for example, Wodak, 1995; van Leeuwen and Wodak, 1999). According to Wodak (1996), it is not viable to decipher the discursive strategies adopted in any discourse without understanding the historical/social background against which they were created. We can summarize the main features of the discourse-historical approach (Wodak and Meyer, 2001; Reisigl and Wodak, 2001):

- a) It adheres to socio-philosophical orientation of critical theory.
- b) It embraces at least three elements: 1) "text or discourse immanent critique" which aims to discover the inconsistencies, self-contradictions, paradoxes in the text – internal, 2) "socio-diagnostic critique" which aims to demystify exposures of the manipulative feature of discursive discourse using the historical and social background to do so, 3) "prospective critique" which aims to transform and improve communication.
- c) It tries to integrate a large quantity of available knowledge about historical sources and background of social and political background in which discursive events are embedded (ibid.: 32-34)

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### **Critical Language Studies Approach**

Fairclough's (1995) approach to discourse analysis has three dimensions. They are: *text analysis*, *discursive practice analysis* and *social practices analysis*. In what follows, a general image of Fairclough's framework for analysing the communicative events is presented.

1. Text: analysing the text, Fairclough applies his analysis to all of lexicogrammatical and semantic properties of text; simultaneously he looks at text from different views as Halliday's systemic functional linguistics always does. (Metafunctions).
2. Discourse practices: this practice can be divided in two institutional process and discourse process. Discourse practice straddles the division between society and culture on one hand and discourse and language and text on the other hand.
3. Sociocultural practice: sociocultural practice for Fairclough contains the analysis of text with a special attention to economic, cultural and political aspect of communicative events. What follow are some considerations about these sociocultural elements.
  - a) Access to media: while analysing a text, it is very important that who have access to media and what implication the answer to this question will bring to the society. In Fairclough's and also van Dijk's views different people and groups don't have the same access to the news.
  - b) Economy of the media: since the economy is a key-term in analysis of the behaviour of any institute and since like any other institute, the news production institutes have something to sell. According to this, it is very important for them to satisfy the consumers. This easily can affect the process of determination of something as news and rejecting something else.
  - c) The politics of media: one of the other influential conceptions on the overall process of making news is the general policies that are followed by media. These general tendencies can also cause some special choices on the news selection mainstream.
  - d) Practices of media text production and consumption: production of the news contains some routine practices like gathering the news, selection, writing and editing (Fowler, 1991) and consumption mainly refers to the way that readers comprehend the text. As the result of some elements, like shortage of the space and selection by journalists on one hand, and different understanding of the texts by different readers caused by their different social ranks on the other hand, the producing process of news can be affected.

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### **Previous CDA Studies in Arabian Context**

For the purpose of establishing a comprehensive theoretical background to this study, another dimension of literature is sought. In this part an account of works regarding the CDA in both regional and Syrian domains has been reported. In fact, a selective survey has been carried out to cover this part of the CDA works. Media discourse and CDA, in particular, are common practice in many instances in the Arab world. The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is one of the most searched areas in this domain. Many works have been published so far and here a selection of some works has been done. Kandil (2009) studied the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in American, Arab, and British Media: Corpus-Based Critical Discourse Analysis. The study took Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Corpus Linguistics (CL) as its perspective of analysing the discursive representation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in American, Arab, and British media, represented by *CNN*, *Al Jazeera Arabic*, and *BBC* respectively. The strategies employed by each news website are to control for the positive or negative representations of the different actors involved in the conflict. Van Dijk's (1998) CDA 'ideological square' framework was adopted. On the same track, Zaher (2009) did a study on CDA of news reports on the Israeli/Palestinian conflict in selected Arab and western newspapers. Unlike Kandil's study, this study focused only on CDA approach without paying attention to corpus linguistics as a main domain of the research. Furthermore, Almeida (2011) did a comprehensive discourse analysis of US newspaper coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict over a five-year period. Almeida concluded that, "These dimensions of discourse with respect to Israeli and Palestinian authorities and civilians led to a number of conclusions that, in general, the discourse is characterized by terms denoting violence, conflict, and negative emotion (p.1586)."

Moreover, another study that focused on the Israeli-Arab conflict, particularly Israel-Hezbollah conflict, is that by Lau, Seedat, and McRitchie (2011), which examined a section of the local South African print media covering the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah to reveal the main discourse themes, their 'hidden' ideological positions and their legitimization through specific textual devices. The findings revealed a 'discursive war' between news texts representing a favourable stance on Israel and Hezbollah (Lebanon) respectively. Through characterisations and intertextual practices, both sides respectively drew upon conflicting

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ideologies ('right of existence' and 'defence against terror' versus 'the religious resistance' and 'Israel as the apartheid state'); that legitimated their grounds for violence

In an Egyptian context, Pasha (2011) investigated how Islamists are socially, discursively and linguistically represented in the Egyptian newspaper *al-Ahram*. He studied the process of news making, role of ideology, history of Islamism, and type[s] of relationships between Islamists and the regimes. He concluded that there is a constant and systematic strategy of exclusionary nature towards the Muslim Brotherhood through both sheer and soft power. Another important work dealing with the Egyptian context is that done by Bardici (2012) in which he conducted a research on CDA focused on the Egyptian revolt, social media, such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, have been transformed into effective means to fuel revolt and bring about political transformation. "[T]he media representation does ideological work. It sustains and serves corporate power as well as advances ideological claims. This discursive research enhances the current understanding of the phenomenon of social media in relation to revolution and political change, although the findings may not be generalizable (p.iv)." A third study in the Egyptian realm is that of Alhumaidi (2013), who conducted a CDA research through which he compared and contrasted *Al-Ahram* and *Aljazeera* online reporting of Egypt's 2011 Revolution. The study found differences between *Al-Ahram* and *Aljazeera*'s coverage on both the textual and discursive level. He came to conclude that "despite the role played by the media during Egypt's 2011 Revolution, it is expected that genuine, grass-roots media change in Egypt will depend on political change and consistent steps toward democracy and freedoms (p.13)."

In Tunisian context we found that, Maalej (2012) studied the last three speeches of the ousted president of Tunisia from a CDA and cognitive pragmatics perspectives. He focused on the use of deictic categories by the ousted president, viz. the two indexical dyads *I-YOU* and *WE-THEY* in his speeches and how these things are manipulated regarding the centre and periphery of the image schema. Another important work taking Tunisia as its focus is by Eskjær (2012). He did a comparative study of Danish press coverage of the uprisings in Tunisia and Syria during the early months of the Arab Spring (January-March 2011). The study based on a mixed quantitative and qualitative content analysis aimed at identifying patterns of news reporting of the Arab Spring. The study found that a number of traditional

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media patterns persist, at least in relation to media perceptions of Islam and democracy, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the ability to reform the Arab world from the inside.

In the Libyan context, one study is reported here, it is that of Chin, (2013). Chin carried corpus linguistics method of the news reporting of the 2011 Libyan civil war in two newspapers (*China Daily* and *The New York Times*). Two small corpora with a total of 22,412 tokens were compiled and compared. Chen also discussed how discursive devices are applied in news coverage of warfare.

In a more general context regarding what has been dubbed in the western media as the 'Arab Spring', Dağtaş (2013) analysed the news discourses in the reports published between January 25th and February 25th, 2011, in six Turkish national newspapers. There are two points of view of these newspapers, those backing the AKP government (*Star*, *Zaman*, and *Sabah*) and those not backing the AKP government (*Cumhuriyet*, *Hürriyet*, and *Taraf*). "To map the discursive fields employed in the news reports, this paper draws on methods from critical discourse analysis and examines news actors and their quotation patterns, lexicalization, over-lexicalization and syntactic preferences (p. 19)."

Finally, there are some important studies that are dedicated to CDA in the Syrian context. A survey has been made to select the most closely related ones to the current work. Koskina (2012), for example, did a CDA to analyse the media coverage of the Syrian military conflict in Russia and in the United States. She found that "covering the military conflict media imposes a great impact on people's minds, sometimes hidden and manipulative and its messages are strategically formed to propagate certain ideas and ideology (p. 1)." In another work, Kinali and Nerso (2013) focused on *Al-Jazeera's* representation of the Syrian conflict of 2011. The main findings of their research, *Al-Jazeera* represents the Syrian conflict as a conflict of domestic political oppression from the governments towards the Syrian population with an overwhelming power of oppression to the Syrian people of articulating any political attitudes. In another instance, it is worth reporting that Amin and Jalilifar (2013) examined the relationships between language and ideology and how ideology is constructed and presented via different language choices in English editorials published in different socio-cultural contexts. "Qualitative analysis indicates that the three newspapers focus on different aspects of reality and, by using various language strategies, influence readers' understanding of the events (p.1)". Another important work is done by Khodadady and Khosravany (2014), they

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discussed the ideologies of the BBC and Press TV that cover the Syrian crisis through analysing schemata of two opposed news media. They found that "the BBC and Press TV employed not only exclusive but also common schemata, which were significantly different in number hammering their contrasting perspectives in the minds of their viewers"(p.,47). Further, Mirzaee and Gharibeh (2015), conducted a CDA on the style of representation of Syrian civil war in Tehran-Times and Asharq Al-Awsat newspapers. The study revealed that the newspapers passivized, downgraded, legitimized, delegitimized, euphemized, and demonized the involved parties in the war in order to show their desired parties' standpoint as positive, their positive actions overstated and their negative actions understated. Finally, Hameededdin and Murad. (2016) studied the discourse on the Syrian war and the accompanying U.S. military operations through 71 images and captions appearing on the front pages of *The Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, and *The Washington Post* newspapers during January and November of 2013. The results showed that "U.S. media addressed different aspects of the Syrian conflict such as war casualties, refugees, and food aid in order to coerce the American public into military involvement in Syria (p.33)."

## **Method**

### **Data Collection**

The data for this research have been collected from four regional newspapers online versions. They are *Hurriyat Daily News*, *Arb News*, *Syria Times* and *Al-Ahed News*. An account on each one of these four will be given below.

### **Pro-Revolution Media**

The sources of this stream include different news items from two countries holding nearly the same attitude against the Syrian government regarding the war that broke out in 2011. These are: *Arab News* (KSA), and *Hurriyat Daily Newspaper*, (Turkey). A brief introduction to each newspaper is to be outlined in the next paragraphs.

### **The Arab News**

The *Arab News* (ARN) is a Saudi government-run daily newspaper established by Hashim and Mohammed Ali Hafiz in 1975. It is published by Saudi Research and Publishing Company (SRPC). It is an English language newspaper that has established itself as a leading paper with a wide circulation of a great number of readership in the kingdom and abroad on both print and online versions. The paper offers a wide range of material on national, regional

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and international news and reports. The *Arab News* reveals the official viewpoint of Saudi Arabia, and offers a wide range of national, regional and international news. The readership profile of the paper indicates that 85% of the readers are non-Arabs, and only 15% are Arabs. (Zaher, 2009).

### **The Hurriyet Daily News**

The *Hürriyet Daily News* (HDN) formerly *Hürriyet Daily News* and *Economic Review* and *Turkish Daily News*, is the oldest current English-language daily in Turkey, founded in 1961. The paper was bought by the Doğan Media Group in 2001 and has been under the media group's flagship *Hürriyet* since 2006. *Hürriyet Daily News* takes a secular and liberal or centre-left position on most political issues. The paper contains domestic, regional, and international news coverage, economic and cultural reporting, as well as regular opinion pieces from leading Turkish journalists and thinkers.

(see <http://www.hurriyetaidailynews.com/>).

### **Anti-Revolution Media**

On the other hand, the contrary position is represented by two different sources from two different countries holding nearly the same attitude in supporting the regime in this issue. These are: *Al- Ahad Newspaper* (Lebanon), and *Syria Times* (Syria).

### **Syria Times**

*Syria Times* was published by Tishreen Organization for Press and Publishing, a government-owned company that publishes the leading Arabic daily *Tishreen*. As of 2000, these two newspapers had a circulation of 5,000 and 60,000, respectively. In March and April 2003 the *Syria Times* received some international attention because of its harsh condemnation of the US-led war against Iraq, well in line with the official Syrian discourse in the debates of the UN Security Council. It is established for an important mission to communicate with the non-speakers of Arabic all over the world as the information minister of Syria stated. The main contents of the daily focus on issues and topics related to national reconciliation, dialogue, society, politics, Syrian Expatriates, environment, tourism, archaeology, sports, economy, culture, as well on other interactive varied topics and issues of debate.(see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syria\\_Times](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syria_Times)).

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### **Al-Ahed Newspaper**

It is a weekly political inclusive Lebanese newspaper run by Hezbollah. It is interested in regional and international issues. It additionally has different stable sections such as sports, culture and entertainment. Recently, it has been developed to be an internet-based newspaper. It is considered as a pro-government newspaper in supporting the Syrian army and the government as well.

### **Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings**

The discourse analysis of the texts of the selected newspapers is to be carried out in two steps. A general account of the newspapers discourse in the headlines and leads is first outlined, with a focus on particular discursive strategies that have been likely to cherish ideological meaning in these important components of any news story. Subsequently, a detailed and through analysis of some texts selected for contrastive purposes is to be carried out on the construction of political ideology entrenched within the discourse structure of these newspapers to be clarified.

### **Newspapers Headlines and Leads**

One of the most important features that can be analysed in newspapers discourse is the headline and/ or the lead. The importance of headlines and leads lies in the summary they give to the most significant points in the article and give it its direction. According to van Dijk (1987b) headlines may be 'biased' because they may express secondary topic. Biased leads also do the same. To make sure if they reflect the main topic or not will give a clear idea about their bias mode. The following tables show the classification of pro-revolution newspapers headlines and leads. A discussion will be given to each category separately.

Table 1 Pro-Revolution Newspapers Headlines and Leads

Source	Headlines and Leads
Hurriyet	<i>Anti-regime activists in Syria have called for "Children's Friday"</i>
Daily News (6/2/2011)	<i>protests, snubbing government concessions after a week in which they said security forces killed more than 60 people.</i> Anti-regime activists in Syria have called for "Children's Friday" protests, snubbing government concessions after a week in which they said security forces killed more than 60 people. The fresh protests are to honour the children killed in the

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uprising, such as 13-year-old Hamza al-Khatib whom activists say was tortured to death, a charge denied by the authorities.

**Arab News**      *Syria fighters hit air base used to attack Aleppo.*

**(3/8/2012)**      Syrian rebels shelled yesterday an air base being used by regime forces to pound the northern city of Aleppo, as a rights watchdog reported 43 people killed in a raid near Damascus.

The HDN headline reflects the main topic of the article as a whole. The lexical choices made in constructing the headline are selected carefully to reflect what comes next in the topic as a whole. '**Security forces**', '**snubbing government concessions**', '**killed more than 60 people**'. all these lexical preferences reflect the ruthless and brutal actions of the government against innocent people. On the other hand, we find that the opposition is shown through other lexical choices, '**anti-regime activists**', '**children's Friday**', and '**protests**'. These words connote with ambition for better future for freedom and for normal democratic atmosphere. The lead of HDN continues to prepare the reader for the whole text story. It has got similar lexical choices such as, '**fresh protests**', '**honour the children**', and '**was tortured to death**'. These also give the impression that the regime is using an overwhelming force against children as well.

The same thing is expressed in the ARN headline and lead regarding the lexical choices. In its headline that says '*Syria fighters hit air base used to attack Aleppo*', ARN used words to express its attitude towards the revolution. It names the rebels as the '**Syrian Fighters**', which gives them a more acceptable social role in this article as being connoting with '**freedom fighters**' or '**defenders**' of their rights and their own town, Aleppo. Showing them in a brave situation in using lexical items like these in the lead; '*Syrian rebels shelled yesterday an air base being used by regime forces to pound the northern city of Aleppo*'.

The transitivity analysis of the headlines and leads of these two newspapers show that material processes and verbal processes are used to represent the action. These processes are reflected in using verbs like, '**called for**', as a verb for a verbal process of transitivity, whereas the verbs '**killed**' and '**tortured**' are the verbs of material process of transitivity. In

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the above headlines and leads the actors of the news stories are the '**anti-regime activists**', '**the government security forces**', and '**the Syrian freedom fighters**'.

Table 2 Anti-Revolution Newspapers Headlines and Leads

Source	Headlines and leads
Syria Times (15 /4/ 2014)	<i>Syrian Arab Army Defeats Terrorists from Two More Towns in Al-Qalamon Area, Advances in Homs Old City</i>  Important achievements have been registered by the army units in the ongoing battles in Homs province and al-Qalamon area outside Damascus province, according to military sources  <i>Terrorists Commit Massacre on 11 People in Homs, Army Operates in</i>
Al-Ahed News (18 /8/ 2013)	<i>Aleppo.</i>  Syrian Army units on Saturday killed armed terrorist groups in a series of operations carried out in the neighbourhoods of Aleppo city and its countryside as a massacre against innocent civilians killed 11 in Homs.

Certainly, SRT headline also introduces the main topic of the article that the newspaper is going to tackle. Lexical preferences made by SRT in composing the headline are carefully selected to reflect what comes next in the topic as a whole. The headline says: '*Syrian Arab Army Defeats Terrorists from Two More Towns in Al-Qalamon Area, Advances in Homs Old City*'. The wording of the headline reflects the attitude of SRT in supporting the Syrian government and relinquishing and distorting the opposition at the same time. We found that the opposition is shown through negative lexical choices, like '**defeats terrorists**'. Such words connote with illegal groups and enemies doing criminal riots in the country. The lead of SRT talks about the achievements scored by the Syrian security forces and the army to demolish the terrorists.

AHN headline gives a summary of the whole story to be discussed in the article. We can observe that a balanced sentence being constructed here, where in one part the terrorists commit a massacre and on the other the army is operating. Operating is a legal and positive, even if its demolishing the whole life, and is still lawful whereas the other party is dubbed as a terrorist who has no claim over any sort of rights.

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Transitivity construction in the headlines and the leads can be seen clearly in the analysis of the sentences used in these two important elements of the SRT and AHN newspapers. In this example of the headline of SRT, *Syrian Arab Army Defeats Terrorists*. We find that a material process of transitivity is adopted in structuring the headline. The actor of this process is the '**Syrian Arab army**', while the verb of the process is '**defeats**' and the goal of the process is the term '**terrorists**'. Passive structure is used in the lead of SRT with another material process in which the '**Syrian Arab army**' is an agent and the verb of the process is '**has been registered**'. In all instances, the examples entail that army is doing its national duty in demolishing terrorists and fugitive groups. AHN headline and lead are also in the same track. As an example, we take the headline which says: "*terrorists Commit Massacre on 11 People in Homs*" '**terrorists**' are the actors of this material process and '**commit**' is the verb of such process, while '**11 people**' are the recipients of such criminal act.

### **Pro-Revolution Newspapers:**

In this part the discursive strategies made by the pro-revolution newspapers will be carried out. This analysis will focus on the paragraphs other than the headlines and leads of the papers under investigation. The analysis will begin with *Hurriyet Daly News* (HDN) and then with the *Arab News* (ARN).

#### **HDN Main Text**

A lexical analysis of the text extracted from the HDN dated 6/2/2011, (see appendix A), reveals that there are several lexical expressions and words that have been chosen to fit in with the attitudes of the newspaper. A closer look at these chosen words that have been used to show the violent and merciless confrontation of Assad's regime with the civilians' peaceful uprisings demanding freedom across Syria, as the newspaper is trying to depict, show 'over-lexicalisation'. Teo (2000: 20) show that over-lexicalisation 'results when a surfeit of repetitious, quasi-synonymous terms is woven into the fabric of news discourse, giving rise to a sense of over-completeness'. Adjectives like '**autocratic**' being attributed to the name '**rule**' gives a debauched verbal image of the regime itself, that paid no mercy over the peaceful uprisings in a country where he possesses unlimited power. In the same way, other adjectives such as '**brutal**', '**heavy**', '**embattled**' are also attributed to other nouns to convey how such a regime is dealing with the civilians as being reported by this newspaper. '**Embattled**', which means 'beset by problems or difficulties' is an adjective that can be used to convey to what

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extent the Assad's forces engaged in battle, conflict, or controversy, whereas the adjective **'brutal'**, that has negative connotation, is being used to express suitability to one who lacks intelligence, sensitivity, or compassion. The nouns attributed by the above discussed adjectives give the impression that they need some elaboration in the sense that they signal a deviation from social convention or expectation. Anyway, these lexical choices are cues to the dominant ideological background of the source of the newspapers under investigation. On the other hand, we find that there is a lexical absence of the violence created by the rebels in this text by HDN, if compared with the anti-revolution newspapers assigned in this study, as we can see later in this work.

To represent the opposition, we can find that the HDN used different lexical choices. **'At least 30 children'**, is an example of how the regime forces are attacking the peaceful uprisings and protests indiscriminately with devastation and destruction as HDN wants to show the reader. We find the word **'revolt'** in **'the revolt against Bashar Al-Assad's autocratic rule'**, which according to Oxford Dictionary means "refuse to acknowledge someone or something as having authority". Other words like **'erupted'** as a verb means to break out suddenly and dramatically and this shows the uncontrollable uprisings coming from nowhere all over Syria. Likewise, we find similar lexical choices that express the sympathy of the HDN with the people getting its freedom. These may include the following: **'the people want the fall of the regime'**, **'children's Friday'**, **'against injustice'**, **shot dead 15 civilians'**, **'human rights activist'**, **'four people were killed\_during raids More than 1,100 civilians have been killed at least 10,000 arrested'** once the **'violence ends'**, **'political prisoners are freed'** and **'reforms adopted'**. These words show the positive attitude towards the revolution along with other lexical choices that support the people for its freedom and justice. These expressions give the feeling of mercy to the people. Repetitious use of words like **'people'**, **'children'**, **'civilians'**, and **'human rights activists'**, which also show some sort of over-lexicalisation with the excessive use of such words.

As for structural oppositions in the lexical choices made by HDN, one can observe that there are several expressions utilised here to show the ideological views of the newspaper itself. We find lexical items such as **'revolt'** in the side of the rebels against **'autocratic regime'** for the Syrian government and its forces; whereas **'uprising'** and **'against injustice'** represents these fighting parties respectively. Other lexical choices used for the Syrian people

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such as '**civilian**', '**protests**', '**children**' to oppose other lexical choices like '**gunmen**', '**security agents**', and '**heavy machinegun**' that depict the government or the regime, as it is referred to by HDN in several occasions. These lexical choices are in conformity with what van Dijk (2000, p. 44) described as the 'ideological square' in the manifestation of 'Us' and 'Them' when he proposed the following four possibilities: 1. Emphasize positive things about Us. 2. Emphasize negative things about Them. 3. De-emphasize negative things about Us. 4. De-emphasize positive things about Them.

The quoting verbs used in HDN are '**say**', '**saying**', '**announced**' and '**dismissed**'. The verb '**say**' as in the example, "*The U.N. children's agency **says** at least 30 children have been shot dead*", is neutral structuring verb since it introduced a saying without evaluating it at all. This carry no particular guidance to the reader as to how he should think about this statement. "So, if we say that someone '**cried**' and '**whispered**', the reader is drawn to empathise with them much more so than with a person who only '**said**' " (Machin & Mayer, 2012, p. 59). The verb '**dismissed**' as in "*the opposition has previously **dismissed** the call for dialogue, **saying** that this can take place only once the violence ends.*" is a directive metapositional verb, which marks the journalist's interpretation of the speaker. This verb is similar to verbs like, '**declare**', '**urge**' and '**grumble**'. They are assertive, directive, and expressive respectively. The quoting verb '**announced**' is also assertive metapositional verb.

The HDN followed certain representational strategies to portray the social actors of both the opposition and the government in the Syrian conflict. Personalisation and impersonalisation are two of these strategies. We find that HDN used the personal name of the Syrian president as in the example, "*the revolt against **President Bashar Al-Assad's** autocratic rule...*" this strategy includes both personalisation and functionalisation. '**President**' is a functional name for him as of concentrating on what he is doing as an official man, whereas '**Bashar Al-Assad**' is a nomination telling us who is he. This can have different effects. "Use of functionalisation can sound more official, whereas nomination can sound more personal. Functionalisation can also reduce people to a role which may in fact be assigned by the writer or be generic." (op. cit., p. 81). In two more example, HDN used both nomination and functionalisation: "*A **witness, Talal al-Tillawi**, meanwhile said gunfire was also heard in Talbisa, another town in the same region.*" The other one is: "*...according to **Rami Abdel Rahman** of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights four people were killed*

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during raids on Wednesday night in the town of Hiraq." In these two examples nomination and functionalisation are used. In addition to what has been discussed regarding nomination and functionalisation there is another representational strategy that can be seen in the HDN text. It is the use of 'honorific' or precisely what is known as 'functional honorific', which are terms used to suggest a degree of seniority or a role that requires a degree of respect. These terms signal the importance of the social actor or specialisation. This is also clear about the examples given above regarding **Assad**, **Rami Abdel Rahman** and Talal *al-Tillawi* all of them are described as president, head, and witness respectively.

Transitivity analysis of the HDN text shows that several verb processes have been used in presenting the actions all over the text under investigation. Van Dijk (2000) has demonstrated that ethnic minorities are mostly shown as active agents where they do something bad. Where things are done for or against them, they are represented in a passive role. Halliday (1994) identified six verb processes: material, mental, behavioural, verbal, relational and existential. According to Simpson and Mayr (2010: 66) when analysing agency (who does what to whom) and action (what gets done) we are interested in describing three aspects of meaning:

1. **Participants** (which includes both the 'doers' of the process as well as the 'done-tos' who are at receiving end of action: participants may be people, things or abstract concepts)
2. **Process** (represented by verbs or verb groups)
3. **Circumstances** (these are adverbial groups or prepositional phrases, detailing where, when, and how something has occurred). (quoted in Machin & Mayer 2012, p. 105)

HDN employed transitivity in different forms and some examples from the text will make this clear. There are some examples of material processes such as "*security forces armed with heavy machine-guns **shot dead** 15 civilians in Rastan.*" In this example the verb process is a material one, in which a concrete action that have a material result or consequence. '**Security forces**' are the actor of this process where as 'the 15 civilians' are the goal of this process and 'in Rastan' is the circumstances which locates the process in a spatial context. Another example of material processes is "*four people **were killed** during raids.*", in which who carried the action is missing in this passive form of the verb. Likewise, there are other types of processes in this HDN text such as mental and verbal processes. These are three verbal

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process examples. The first on, "*UNICEF says at least 30 children have been shot in the revolt.*" In this example we have the sayers 'UNICEF' the verb of the process 'says' and the verbiage of this process 'at least 30 children have been shot in the revolt'. The second example, Talal al-Tillawi, *meanwhile said gunfire was also heard in Talbisa*. The third one is: "*the activists announced tomorrow is the Children's Friday*". In the last example, the verbal process is expressed through the verb 'announce' the sayers is 'the activists' whereas 'tomorrow is the Children's Friday' is the verbiage of this verbal process.

### ARN Main Text

In this text taken from ARN dated 3.8.2012, (see appendix B) the lexical choices will be dealt with in two-fold analysis. Firstly, an analysis of the lexical choices made to describe the Syrian government and secondly, an analysis will be carried out to show the way in which lexical choices have been made to describe the rebels. In this example, *the Syrian military use a fighter jet to attack rebels*, the lexical choices here show how the ARN is dealing with Syrian government which uses an excessive force against peaceful people. Other expressions such as *major military offensive*, also gives the impression to the reader that the word '**offensive**' causing someone to feel resentful, upset, or annoyed. Along with the other words that connote negatively and create a feeling of fear and destruction. **Airbase Assault**, is another example of lexical choice which connotes with the action of bombarding with something undesirable or unpleasant, which is utilised by ARN to depict the viciousness of the Syrian government against its people. In this example: *security forces raid south west Damascus killed 43 people some of them were tortured and executed*, we find the words '**security forces**' '**raid**,' '**tortured**' and '**executed**' are chosen carefully by the writer to express the image of the government and its demolishing and evil doing. Again we can find some other lexical choices that negatively connote in this context of describing the Syrian government actions in this fighting as in '*the army had shelled the village*', '*28 civilians killed in the raid*', and '*there is no body, not one shop opened; the houses have been deserted by their inhabitants fearing violence – everyone has fled.*' In these three examples expressions like '**shelled the village**', '**28 civilians**', '**deserted**', '**fearing violence**', and '**fled**'. All of them selected carefully to show the gloomy side of the war that have been launched against innocent civilians. '**Shell**' for instance has got a connotation with heavy artillery attack that cause massive destruction to any target. Other words like deserted, fearing, and fled, give the

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reader a clear picture of the of people leaving their hometowns and villages looking for a safe refuge. 'More than 20000 people have died since mid-March last year' is another example that shows the size of destruction and heavy losses in souls. Using figures in such texts of the news creates more credibility in the readership side. Generally speaking, one can see an over-lexicalisation of the tyrannical action of the government through the lexical choices by ARN in the text under study.

On the other hand, we can find that AN also have managed to give a clear picture for the rebels and the freedom fighters in Syria. We find ARN lexical choices to represent the 'freedom fighters' or the Syrian rebels in examples like, *rebels battling President Bashar Assad's regime now had heavy armour*, the word '**rebels**' has been repeated seven times in this text. It is a connotation of resistance against tyranny and injustice or renouncing by force the authority of one's government and particularly those autocratic regimes. The word '**regime**' itself is chosen here in this context to connote with government, especially an authoritarian one. *Rebels have captured a number of tanks, and some armoured units have defeated with their vehicles*, is another example where we can find lexical choices in support of the rebels and showing their triumphant action against the government and its well-equipped armed forces. Words like '**captured**', '**some armoured units**' and '**a number of tanks**' give the reader the impression that they are capable now of fulfilling a victory at a wide range in the battle field, and can gain over the government systematic army. In this example, *Washington was providing more intelligence support to anti-Assad forces than had previously been made*, we can spot words like, '**anti-Assad forces**' to describe the freedom fighters. Even giving the name '**Assad**' in this context is to denounce the government or to delegitimise the government of Syria by the ARN journalist. As a final point, over-lexicalisation can also be seen in the lexical choices strategies followed by ARN in showing a positive image of the rebels or the freedom fighters, as has been discussed above.

Lexical absence of the rebels' violence can be observed here in the ARN text. This makes it clear about what is behind such use or non-use of certain terms which is ideologically motivated. Empathy is expressed through an excessive use of words which give the feeling that the rebels are performing a righteous job in fighting for the Syrian people's freedom. This may take us to understand not only the ARN attitude but also the official and governmental attitude to back up the Syrian people in fighting for its right against the 'regime'. Contrary to

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over-lexicalisation, suppression or lexical absence can be found in some texts. There are certain terms that the reader may expect are absent. As it is the case in many texts we can ask what lexical terms are missing that we might expect to be included. (Machin and Mayr, 2012, p. 38-39). Furthermore, if there are absences in terms of activities, element or participants, then we can think about why it was the case that the text producer did not want us to think of these.

ARN made some lexical choices that reflect structural oppositions in the same way HDN has done. We find that there are several structural oppositions that represent both parties in this study. This can easily show the ideological views of ARN in such a matter. This can be seen in utilising certain lexical choices to represent both the rebels and the government. Expressions like, in addition to the words and expressions used above we can also have some other expressions that give a negative and bad connotation on the side of the government like **'bombarDED', 'captured', 'regime', and 'heavy armour'**, while there are words of positive attitude that have been used to describe the rebels such as *'rebels have captured a number of tanks, and some armoured units have defected with their vehicles'*, which show the brave deeds of the rebels as denoted by ARN positively. While we can find in the concerned text some more structural oppositions that also represent the negativity of the Syrian government and its armed forces as being the 'outgroup' in contrast to the rebels who are considered as the 'ingroup' in the discourse of the ARN. Other examples for the government are like, *Syrian military use a fighter jet to attack rebels, mobile phone and Internet services in Aleppo have been cut, regime forces, and arrested around 100 young people who were taken to a school and tortured*. These example illustrate what van Dijk (op. cit.) considered as the 'ideological square' in which the ARN writes good things about the rebels and bad things about the government. The rebels are **'civilians', 'freedom fighters', 'young people', 'anti-Assad', 'inhabitants' 'fearing violence' and 'residents' all these** lexical choices are to give a positive effect on the reader in manipulating such an ideological framing of the revolution.

ARN used several quoting verbs such as **'said', 'reported', 'told' 'citing, 'declined' , 'rule out' and 'estimated'**. Some of these verbs carry a neutral nature while others have different qualities. The verb **'say'** and **'said'** are dominant quoting verbs of ARN in this text under study; it has been used more than eight times. This verb carries no particular guidance to the reader as to how he should think about this statement. Which give the impression that

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the newspaper is seeking the non-bias position in its reporting of the stories in the news as in the example, *"Menagh military airport was bombarded yesterday morning by a tank captured previously by the rebels," the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.* Other verbs like **'declined'**, **'ruled out'** and **'estimated'** are directive metapropositional verbs, which mark the journalist's interpretation of the speaker.

The social actors of both the opposition and the government in the Syrian conflict are represented differently in this text of ARN. The Syrian president as in the example, *"the United Nations confirmed on Wednesday that rebels battling President Bashar Assad's regime now had heavy armour"* is personalised in giving him his personal name in addition to his functional official one at the same time. Personalisation and impersonalisation are two of these strategies used by ARN as well as by HDN as discussed above to represent the concerned groups in these texts. On the other hand, we can find that ARN used other strategies to represent the social actors in the text. Functionalisation is used to represent the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which is unlike the HDN which represented this entity by referring to its director personal name viz. Rami Abel Rahman. The words **'observatory'** and **'activist'**, as functional names, are being used instead of personal names in the example *"the Observatory and an activist said mobile phone and Internet services in Aleppo have been cut since Wednesday."* Some functional honorifics are also used in this text either to represent people belong to the fighting parties or other people mentioned in the text like **'president'** for Bashar Al Assad, **'US Defence Secretary'**, for 'Leon Panetta', and **'US president'** for Barack Obama. "The use of functional honorific makes the speaker appear more important and authoritative. A person's level of authority can be strategically diminished by removing honorifics and making them sound more generic." (Machin and Mayr, p. 82).

As for transitivity analysis we find that ARN has got some verb processes to represent the actions in this text. In some examples under study we found that material transitivity is being employed as in *"rebels have captured a number of tanks"*. A concrete action with a material result or consequence took place in this example, in which the word **'rebels'** is the actor, the verb process is **'have captured'** and **'a number of tanks'** is the goal of this process. Another transitivity process is the verbal one, which has been used in the text in examples like, *"the observatory had reported on Wednesday 28 civilians killed in the raid."* In this example we find that the sayer is the **'observatory'**, the receiver to whom this has been reported or said is

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'ARN', and the verbiage is '**28 civilians being killed**'. The circumstances of this process is revealed in a temporal way in mentioning the time of the raid itself, that is, '**Wednesday**'. In transitivity analysis some people regarding actions, thinking or saying are presented differently. We may find some people are presented as doers of material processes while other have much more to say, so they are closely associated with thinking or reporting events. What has been discussed in this paragraph is to show how a newspaper like ARN is presenting actions in association with the social actors in its representation of the discourse of war as in the Syrian case.

### **Anti-Revolution Newspapers**

In this part the discursive strategies made by the anti-revolution newspapers will be carried out. This analysis will focus on the paragraphs other than the headlines and leads of the papers under investigation. The analysis will begin with Syria Times (SRT) and then with the Al-Ahed News (AHN).

#### **SRT Main Text**

SRT as a pro-government, and in fact a government-owned, newspaper used several lexical choices in this article to represent the Syrian government and its forces (see appendix C). These lexical choices can be traced in examples like *"the first achievement was manifested in the restoration of stability and security to towns of Asal al-Ward and Jab'adin in al-Qalamon area in Damascus countryside"*. The newspaper here uses some lexical items that reflect its support to the Syrian government in its military campaign in eliminating the people's peaceful revolution. '**First achievement**', and '**restoration of stability and security**' are used in the above example to give the reader an impression that the army is carrying on its strategic plan to restore peace and tranquillity. This example legitimises the war as in the SRT point of view and consider it as a war against terrorism. Another example is *"locals welcomed the soldiers and raised the national flags."* In this example we can have a clear image regarding the lexical choice SRT is trying to give to the reader, in the sense that the army is widely accepted and warmly welcomed by people, as being dubbed '**locals**' full of the zeal and zest of national flag raising high. *"The locals of Jab'adin town rallied in support of the Syrian Arab army that restored stability and security to their town."*, is another example in which SRT repeats the same lexical items, **rallied**, **the locals**, **restored**, **stability** and **security**. The over-lexicalisation of such words reflects SRT ideological background. '**The**

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**Syrian Arab army**' is another expression that has been in over-lexicalisation mode in the language of SRT and Syrian Government media in general to give it more and more legitimate position in its mission. Lexical preferences by SRT include other important expressions and words as in this example, *"the second achievement was scored in the old city of Homs as the army units regained control of several buildings"*. As we can see, we have a **'second achievement'**, **'army units'**, and **'regained control'**, as examples of showing victorious regain over what they refer to as 'terrorists' in the context of war in Syria. Some lexical items have been over-lexicalised to give more legal power and legal identity to them such as **'the army units'**, which has been repeated more than six times in this text. Again we have some more examples to illustrate the SRT attitude and ideological motive in depicting the legality of Syrian Arab army over the 'enemies', the peaceful protesters as in this one, *"the army units are doing their national duties in cleansing quarters of the old city of Homs and have made an important progress"*. Lexical choices made here include **'national duties'**, **'cleansing quarters'**, and **'important progress'**.

In contrast to its positive representation of the Syrian government and its armed forces, SRT adopted a negative representation through certain lexical choices for the opposition and protesters since the early beginnings of the war in Syria. They are, **'terrorist groups'**, **'terrorists'** and **'criminals'**. In this example, *"the army units targeted terrorist groupings in Ein Hussien, al-Amereyeh, al-Dar al-Kabira outside Homs"*, the expression **'terrorist groupings'** is one of these lexical preferences all over the text. It connotes very negatively with unlawful group of people who has no rights in the society and should be cut from the roots. *"After eliminating large numbers of terrorists there"*, is another example written in this text to report the Syrian Arab army achievements against such an unlawful group. In another example like *"some nine gunmen from Jab'adin and Ma'aloula towns turned themselves in to the competent authorities"*, they were described as **'gunmen'** who turned themselves to the Syrian authorities that were described as **'competent authorities'**. This show the 'Us-They' dichotomy of description, in the sense that saying negative things about them and positive things about us, do not say positive things about them and do not say negative things about us. This reflects what van Dijk (1998) also called 'ideological square'. There are several examples in the text which show the excessive use of such lexical items like: *terrorist groups strongholds; their criminal acts against civilians; many terrorists; more terrorists were*

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*crushed; terrorists' hideouts, and armed terrorist groups.* These lexical preferences are the best descriptions the SRT can use to depict the opposition and freedom fighters as a pro-government newspaper, which is in a complete contrast with the pro-revolution newspapers.

Lexical absence or suppression practiced by SRT is very clear in the text. It never shows any sort of criticism of the excessive use of power by the government and its army against civilians, rather they are doing their '**national duty**' in killing or what has been described as '**cleansing**' of towns and villages from what they call terrorists. It is really a cleansing but in another form; its 'ethnic cleansing' of Sunni Arabs of Syria. No good qualities have been pointed out regarding the opposition. Opposition, even if it is peaceful, is dubbed as being '**terrorist**', '**militant**' and '**fugitive**' groups evil doing.

Structural oppositions are very clear in SRT text. They give a very contrastive image of both parties through positive and negative qualities; the government and its armed forces are doing 'good', and the opposition is doing 'bad'. Although it is not overtly said that good and bad are expressed, these things might be implied in texts through structuring concepts. (see Machin and Mayr 2012). We find that the Syrian government and the army are in the process of '**the restoration of stability**', whereas there are '**large numbers of terrorists**'. The army units are to '**restore peace**', while the opposition fighting them as '**armed terrorist groups**'. The army doing its '**national duty**' with full support of the '**rallying people**' in following terrorists into their '**hideouts**'.

Quoting verbs in the SRT text are of three types. The first one is '**say**', the second is '**report**' and the third is '**clarify**'. The way these quoting verbs are chosen, or describing how someone has spoken, can have considerable impact on the way that authors can shape perceptions of events. In using verbs like 'said', nothing can be evaluated because it is a neutral structuring verb, but in using verbs like 'report' one may have the impression that, this is a metalinguistic verb where the language used by the speaker is specified. '**Clarify**' also is another important quoting verb, which is assertive metapositional verb, which marks the author's interpretation of the speaker.

SRT used some specific strategies to represent the social actors in the text under study. In reporting the clashes between the opposition rebels and the Syrian army, SRT employed impersonalisation as a representation strategy for the social actors in the text as '**a military source**', without even giving the functional name of this source of news report. On the other

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hand, the government forces are referred to here as '**Syrian Arab Army**', which is a functionalisation strategy that connotes legitimacy. This name of the forces of the government is also over-lexicalised as has been discussed earlier. Collectivisation is another representational strategy used in this text. '**Army Units**' are being collectivised all over the text and with an over-lexicalisation. SRT also represented the rebels as '**terrorist groups**', '**terrorist groupings**', '**terrorists**', and '**gunmen**'. All these are collectivised, generic names.

SRT transitivity analysis shows that there are different verb processes used to represent the action in the text. There are many examples in which SRT used material processes to represent action as in these three examples, 1) *the army units targeted terrorist groupings*, 2) *the army units shelled terrorist groupings*, and 3) *the army units stormed terrorists' hideouts*. In all these examples the actor in these material processes is '**the army units**', the verbs of these processes are, targeted, shelled, and stormed respectively; while the goals of the processes are '**terrorist groupings**', as in the first two and '**terrorists' hideouts**' as in the last one. Another material process is in the example, *locals welcomed the soldiers and raised the national flags*. In this process locals are the actor, whereas '**welcomed**' is the verb process and the soldiers are the goal of this process. Passivisation is used by SRT more than the other newspapers. There are more than six sentences in which passive verbs are constructed. Here are two examples, 1) *the first achievement was manifested in the restoration of stability and security*, 2) *a car bomb containing 100kg of explosives was defused*. In these two examples although agent in this process is not mentioned but it is understood from the context that the agent is the Syrian Arab Army. These are two examples of material processes.

### **AHN Main Text**

AHN employed several lexical preferences strategies to represent both the Syrian government and its armed forces in the one hand and the revolution freedom fighters on the other, but each in a different way of representation. Firstly, an account on the Syrian government and how it is represented in the discourse of the news reports by this newspaper. Secondly, the opposition and its rebels will be dealt with. As for the lexical choices made to represent the Syrian government, we can see that several examples have been used in the concerned text (see appendix D). For instance, *"Army units clashed with terrorists in the neighborhoods of Bustan al-Qasr, al-Zobdiyah, al-Rashideen, Bustan al-Basha and Old Aleppo in the city, killing many terrorists and injuring others"*. In this example lexical items

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such as '**army units**', '**clashed**', and '**killing**', are common as has been traced in the examples taken from SRT above. Both newspapers are sharing a common ground of the same attitude in backing up the government's campaign. This expression connotes with legitimacy, systematicity and authority which the government is practicing over the Syrian soil. Another example is, *army units destroyed big amounts of weapons and ammunition in cars on al-Bab-Aleppo road, al-Mislimiyeh road and Atareb-Aleppo road*, in which almost similar lexical choices have been made as '**army units**' and '**destroyed**'. The use of verb destroyed here gives the impression to the reader that the government army is doing nothing but heroic deeds to protect the country from the terrorist groups. This, in fact, is a positive representation to this party in the conflict.

The opposition and its rebels are also represented here by AHN, but with negative lexical preferences. We can find many examples such as, *"armed terrorist groups committed a massacre on Saturday killing 11 people"*. In this example a negative portray for the rebels is being depicted through the lexical choices, '**armed terrorist groups**', '**committed**', '**massacre**', '**killing**', and '**11 people**'. This example is loaded with all negative connotations one might imagine to describe a group of people who started their protests in peaceful means. All these are commonly used in the media of autocratic states as pretexts for more violent action against such groups, and they think this will give full right to the government to demolish protesters ruthlessly. In this example, *terrorist Abu Ammar al-Qais, leader of the operation room of the so-called "al-Baraa Brigade" and member of the so-called "The Military Council in al-Ghouta"*, the word '**terrorist**' here is attributed to the name of the man, '**Ammar al-Qais**', of the '**al-Baraa Brigade**', which is one of the fighting factions of the opposition against the brutal attacks of the Syrian government armed forces against the civilians. In another example, *"...that killed all members of an armed terrorist group and destroyed their weapons and ammunition"*. It is clear that the AHN is utilising appropriate representation for the opposition that conforms with its attitude and mission. The adjective '**armed**' is attributed to the noun phrase '**terrorist group**' which is itself also another lexical choice to give an impression about the opposition unlawful situation as this newspaper proliferates.

AHN used some structural oppositions through its lexical choices made to represent both the government and the opposition according to its ideology. Words such as '**army units**', is

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used several times in the text to show the positive side of the government in the sense that a government is fighting a group of terrorists. '**Terrorists**' and '**terrorist groups**' are used to show the negative image of the opposition. On the one hand, the government is doing lawful action, on the other hand, the opposition is doing unlawful action.

Quoting verbs used by AHN in this text are; '**told**', '**stated**', '**added**', and '**pointed out**'. The quoting verb '**told**' is a neutral structuring verb, in which a saying is introduced without assessing it explicitly. The verb '**stated**' is assertive metapositional quoting verb, while '**added**' is a transcript verb, particularly of relation to other parts of discourse. '**Pointed out**', as a quoting verb, is considered a metalinguistic one. Compared to what we have seen in the previous parts of this analysis, AHN utilised verbs which are different from other newspapers to represent speech and speakers. The speaker in the examples presented by AHN is usually '**an official source**' with all these verbs, which is repeated five times in the text.

AHN presented the two sides of the conflict in Syria by adopting some representational strategies. The first one that can be observed is the anonymisation of the speakers or the sources quoted in this text of the news. '**An official source**' is repeated several times in the text anonymously, that is without giving a particular name to the speaker. Collectivisation strategy is used to represent '**army units**' always in the whole text. Aggregation as another representation strategy adopted by AHN that can be found in expressions like '**many terrorists**'. Personalisation strategy also used to represent two entities in the text. They are; '**Ammar al-Qais**', and '**al-Baraa Brigade**'. This is to expose what they consider as terrorist leader of a terrorist brigade. Calling them by name is not an honour, rather it is a disgrace, especially in a structure like, '**so-called al-Baraa Brigade**' and '**so-called the Military Council in al-Ghouta**.' which reflects the non-recognition of such entities.

Transitivity as one of the strategies in presenting action of the social actors of news in this report by AHN has been used in different manifestations. Material process is one of the verb processes in transitivity analysis. Example like, *armed terrorist groups committed a massacre on Saturday*, shows that a material process takes place here in this sentence. We find that the noun phrase, '**armed terrorist groups**', is the actor of this process, '**committed**', the process, '**a massacre**' is the goal of the process and '**on Saturday**' is the circumstances in which the process took place, which is framed in a temporal mode. These groups through such criminal action are evil doing in the eyes of AHN, which wants to market this to a greater number of

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readers. Another example of the material process in transitivity is, *army units destroyed big amounts of weapons and ammunition in cars on al-Bab-Aleppo road*, in which '**army units**' assigned the role of actor, while '**destroyed**' as the process verb, and '**big amounts of weapons and ammunition**' as the goal of the process. Army units have got the full right to carry out such action to eliminate the peaceful protesters or what they labelled as '**terrorists**' all over the country. This shows the victorious mode of AHN in presenting examples like these. Their destruction is for the good of the country, while the fighting back of the opposition is a criminal and illegitimate act. Another strategy to represent action is the verbal process. We can find some examples here related to the government and its forces, while no voice is presented for the opposition, which reflects the bias of AHN to the Syrian government and its armed forces battling what so-called 'terrorism'. This is an example: "*Al-Qais, the source pointed out, was killed in an operation.*" The military source announced this item of news, in which **the source** is the sayer of the verbal process, **AHN** is the receiver and verbiage is **al-Qais was killed in the operation**. The other party in the conflict has no voice here as to say or report to AHN.

### Conclusion

This paper presents a study in CDA that inspects news reports that deal with war in Syria. It is mainly concerned with the representation of the two sides of war; the Syrian government and its armed forces, on the one hand, and the Syrian opposition and its forces, on the other hand. The study aims at comparing the way members of each side and their actions are represented in reports of newspapers from Syria, Lebanon, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia that have different attitudes towards the two sides of fighting. The role of ideology behind the representation of these fighting factions is also discussed. The study investigated five important aspects: lexical choices, presentation of social actors, presentation of speech and speakers, presentation of action, presentation of structural oppositions and finally transitivity.

The study started by giving an account on the social background to the context of the problem and the war in Syria, in particular. Then the sources of the data have been discussed, and a theoretical framework is reported. A review of the major approaches to CDA have been written. In its methodology of analysis, the headlines and the leads are investigated and then the five aspects mentioned above were thoroughly examined through the analysis of the four texts under study.

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The results of this study showed that realities are subject to change, reproduced, reversed, or even reinforced according to implementation of discursive strategies. Positive and negative attitudes can be manipulated through the discourse of the news framing. In this study, discursive strategies played a great role in giving a 'bad' or 'good' image of each party in the Syrian context of war. This is ideologically motivated, so each newspaper unquestionably has got its own attitude which is manifested through language and through the employment of discourse strategies. For instance, HDN and ARN adopted a positive policy towards the revolution in Syria, while the other two newspapers, SRT and AHN on the other hand, take another extreme attitude. So they represented the rebels and the revolution in a very negative and gloomy portray showing them as terrorists, evil doing, cause of crisis, and norm and value violation. On the other side, with both HDN and ARN we find that the Syrian government and its army and security forces are viewed as being autocratic regime, killing its people, doing all types of evil, cause troubles for millions of its people, confronting peaceful protests with excessive use of power, and as a source of threat to Syrian civilians. The SRT and AHN took an extreme attitude in all their representations of Syrian government framing it as peace restoring, stability making, and law and order implementing entity. The violence against civilians by the government and the violation of human rights is seen by these two newspapers as a normal rather righteous action and it should continue at all circumstances.

Finally, language is the carrier of all sort of attitudes and debates, in the sense it is a political tool of expression and a great weapon of fighting. Those who know how to manipulate their language can reach to a wider scope of audiences and can change many conditions around them. As a concluding remark regarding this study, these two categories of newspapers, i.e., pro-revolution newspapers and anti-revolution ones, have done their best to convey the language in the way their ideology and attitudes may shape it. So, objectivity and non-bias presentation of balanced discourse in the news is far reached goal.

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**Appendix A****HDN text**

The U.N. children's agency UNICEF says at least 30 children have been shot dead in the revolt against President Bashar al-Assad's autocratic rule which erupted in mid-March.

"The people want the fall of the regime. Tomorrow, it's 'Children's Friday' of rising up against injustice, like the adults," the activists announced on their Facebook page Syrian Revolution 2011, an engine of the revolt.

Security forces armed with heavy machine-guns shot dead 15 civilians in Rastan on Thursday, a human rights activist said, adding to a toll of at least 43 killed in towns of the flashpoint Homs region since Sunday.

A witness, Talal al-Tillawi, meanwhile, said gunfire was also heard in Talbisa, another town in the same region. "Security agents in army uniform are carrying out searches. They're smashing up everything they see, refrigerators, televisions, cars" in Talbisa, which like Rastan the army has encircled since Sunday, he said.

Clashes also occurred in the Daraa area, a hotbed in southern Syria, where according to Rami Abdel Rahman of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights four people were killed during raids on Wednesday night in the town of Hiraq.

More than 1,100 civilians have been killed and at least 10,000 arrested in a brutal crackdown across the country, according to rights organizations. The protests and clashes come despite concessions by embattled Assad, who on Wednesday launched a "national dialogue" while freeing hundreds of political prisoners in a general amnesty.

The opposition has previously dismissed calls for dialogue, saying that this can take place only once the violence ends, political prisoners are freed and reforms adopted.

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**Appendix B****ARN text**

"Menagh military airport was bombarded yesterday morning by a tank captured previously by the rebels," the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said of the base 30 kilometres (18 miles). northwest of the country's commercial capital.

An AFP reporter who witnessed the bombardment said rebels told him it was "an attack to take this airport being used by helicopters and planes that are firing on Aleppo."

The United Nations confirmed on Wednesday that rebels battling President Bashar Assad's regime now had heavy armour, and that its military observers had seen the Syrian military use a fighter jet to attack rebels in Aleppo.

AFP correspondents on the ground have reported that rebels have captured a number of tanks, and some armoured units have defected with their vehicles.

It is difficult to get an overall picture of the situation inside Aleppo itself because of a lack of independent sources and restrictions on journalists.

The Observatory and an activist said mobile phone and Internet services in Aleppo have been cut since Wednesday, and a security source in Damascus told AFP such cuts are "generally the precursor to a major military offensive."

Yesterday's air base assault comes after US President Barack Obama was reported to have signed a covert document authorizing US support for the rebels.

The directive was contained in a "finding" — a device authorizing clandestine action by the Central Intelligence Agency, TV channels said, citing unidentified sources.

White House officials declined to comment, but did not specifically rule out the idea that Washington was providing more intelligence support to anti-Assad forces than had previously been made public.

US Defense Secretary Leon Panetta was in Jordan yesterday for talks on Syria.

"Both of our nations share concerns about what is happening in Syria and the impact that that could have on regional stability," he told reporters.

The Observatory said a security forces raid southwest of Damascus killed 43 people, some of whom were tortured and executed.

"Regime forces entered the JdaidetArtuz district on Wednesday and arrested around 100 young people who were taken to a school and tortured," it said.

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"On Thursday morning after the operation the bodies of 43 people were recovered. Some of them had been summarily executed."

The Observatory had reported on Wednesday 28 civilians killed in the raid. A resident of neighbouring Artuz said the army had shelled the village from Jdaidet Artuz.

"There's nobody. Not one shop is open; the houses have been deserted by their inhabitants fearing violence — everyone has fled," the resident said. Nationwide, 163 people were killed on Wednesday including 98 civilians and 20 rebels, said the Observatory, which has estimated that more than 20,000 people have died since mid-March last year.

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## Appendix C

### SRT Text

The first achievement was manifested in the restoration of stability and security to towns of Asal al-Ward and Jab'adin in al-Qalamon area in Damascus countryside after eliminating large numbers of terrorists there.

A military source was quoted on the official news agency (SANA). as saying: "The Asal al-Ward town' locals welcomed the soldiers and raised the national flags. While the locals of Jab'adin town rallied in support of the Syrian Arab army that restored stability and security to their town."

The fresh gain comes a day after the army units restored stability and security to towns of Maaloula, al-Sarkha and al-Jobbeh in the same area [ al-Qalamon].

Some nine gunmen from Jab'adin and Ma'aloula towns turned themselves in to the competent authorities, the official agency said, noting that Other 14 gunmen from the quarters of al-Qarabis, Bab al-Sba'a and Jeb al-Jandali in Homs province surrendered too.

#### National duty

While the second achievement was scored in the old city of Homs as the army units regained control of several buildings that had been used by terrorist groups as strongholds for their criminal acts against civilians.

A military source clarified that the army units are doing their national duties in cleansing quarters of the old city of Homs and have made an important progress on axes of Joret al-Shayyah, Wadi al-Sayeh, al-Khaledeyeh, Bab Hod, Jeb al-Jandali, Bab al-Sba'a, al-Qarabis and al-Waer.

It added that the army units targeted terrorist groupings in EinHussien, al-Amereyeh, al-Dar al-Kabira outside Homs where many terrorists were reported killed.

#### Clashes in Der Ezzour's quarters

More terrorists were crushed when the army units shelled terrorist groupings in several areas in Damascus countryside, Aleppo, Idleb and Daraa provinces and on the outskirts of Jabal al-Nisr in the northern countryside of Lattakia.

Moreover, the army units stormed terrorists' hideouts in Qminas town outside Idleb and clashed with armed terrorist groups in the quarters of al-Reshdeyeh, al-Hweqa, al-Jbeleh and al-Sena'a in Der Ezzour province.

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Car bomb defused

In another development, the agency reported that a car bomb containing 100kg of explosives was defused in al-Zein Street in the eastern quarter of al-Moaddameyeh town outside Damascus.

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## **Appendix D**

### **AHN Text**

An official source told SANA that army units clashed with terrorists in the neighborhoods of Bustan al-Qasr, al-Zobdiyeh, al-Rashideen, Bustan al-Basha and Old Aleppo in the city, killing many terrorists and injuring others.

Meanwhile, armed terrorist groups committed a massacre on Saturday killing 11 people near Ain al-Ajouz crossroads in Homs countryside, an official source stated.

The source added that army units destroyed big amounts of weapons and ammunition in cars on al-Bab-Aleppo road, al-Mislmiyeh road and Atareb-Aleppo road.

Also, terrorists were killed in Hmeima and al-Jdeida villages located in the southeast Aleppo and their weapons destroyed.

Moreover, an official source told SANA that a unit of the armed forces terrorist Abu Ammar al-Qais, leader of the operation room of the so-called "al-Baraa Brigade" and member of the so-called "The Military Council in al-Ghouta".

Al-Qais, the source pointed out, was killed in an operation that killed all members of an armed terrorist group in al-Qaboun neighborhood in Damascus and destroyed their weapons and ammunition.