



**Semantic and Cultural Problems in Translating Arabic
Political Figures' Statements as Presented in the Yemeni
English Newspapers: A Pragmatic/Semiotic Approach**

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Literature, Faculty of Arts, Ain Shams University in fulfillment of the
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"وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَأَلْوَانِكُمْ ۚ
إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ" سورة الروم الآية 22.

And among His Signs is the creation of the Heavens and the earth, and the variations in your languages and your colors: Verily in that are signs for those who know. 22 Sura Ar-Rum, or the Romans.

Ali (1998, p. 908).

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Abstract

This study is an attempt to investigate the semantic and cultural problems in the translations of Arab political figures' statements in Yemeni English newspapers. The data are taken from news reports and interviews published during (2011-2013) in two Yemeni English newspapers, namely, the biweekly *Yemen Times* and the daily *Yemen Fox*. The findings of the study show that translation plays a vital role in Yemeni English newspapers and this role is almost *visible* rather than invisible. Contrary to the results of scholars such as Bielsa & Bassnett (2009) and Schaffner & Bassnett (2010) who claim that in news reporting *transediting* is the dominating activity and translation in the traditional sense is non-existence, the findings of this study reveal that *complete*

and *selective* translations are still much practiced in news reporting and interviews published in Yemeni English newspapers. The meaning losses in this study can be described as *avertable* which are basically related to the incompetency of Yemeni journalist translators and *inevitable* which are related to the huge differences between Arabic and English. The study uncovers that distortions in meaning seem to be the result of a host of reasons among which are the lack of competency in English and lack of knowledge of the English culture on the translators' part. The absence of performing quality control measures before a translation is published is another reason. Moreover, the tight time constraints and pressures journalists experience are causes behind some meaning losses. This in turn makes them get caught up in 'getting the job done' at the expense of producing accurate and adequate translations. The study also reveals that the translated statements are *comprehensible* but *hardly acceptable* to the English native speakers. With respect to the translation strategies, too much omission constitutes in addition to literal translation the major strategies employed in this study.

Keywords: semantic problems, cultural problems, translation, Yemeni English newspapers, pragmatic approach, semiotic approach.

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DEDICATION

- To my father and mother
- To Dr. Fowzia Salem of Aden University, my mother in academia
- To my wife and children
- To my siblings , especially Abdullah

List of Abbreviations

Translation abbreviations

SL	Source Language
ST	Source Text.
TL	Target Language
TS	Translation Studies
TT	Target Text.

Political abbreviations

AFP	Agence France- Presse
GCC	Gulf Cooperative Council
JMP	Joint Meeting Parties
NDC	National Dialogue Conference
PGC	People's General Congress
SM	Southern Movement
UN	United Nations
YCR	Yemeni Congregation for Reform
YSP	Yemeni Socialist Party

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