Challenges and Strategies in Translating Newly Coined English Words and Expressions into Arabic in Media Context: A Comprehensive Review.

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Abstract

In this fast-evolving world, new words and lexicons emerge in spoken and written discourse, necessitating a continual update of one's reservoir of vocabulary and linguistic knowledge. The rapid proliferation of neologisms in the media context poses a unique challenge for novice translators, where conventional translation strategies may fall short in capturing the essence, connotations, and usage of innovative terms. This paper examines the difficulties faced by novice translators in the media context in translating these neologisms and explores research-based methods for overcoming these challenges. Through an in-depth examination of existing literature, relevant studies, and classroom practices, this research seeks to inform pedagogical practices and enhance the effectiveness of translation education at the university level.

Keywords: Media Translation- Neologism- Newly Coined words – Pedagogical Practices – Translation Education

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Introduction

As languages evolve, conventional translation strategies may fall short of capturing the essence and connotations of innovative terms. This challenge is evident in the Arabization of newly coined English words found in English media posts, newspapers, and articles, including but not limited to words created during the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g., Covidivorce, Quaranteens, Booster shot), the Delta Variant (Pingdemic, Delta surge, Delta plus), or words connected to cutting-edge technologies (e.g., Intranet, Hybrid, Metaverse, Eduverse, Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality). Neologism appears in different subject fields, such as media, business, medicine, linguistics, biology, psychology, and so on. Moghadam and Sedigh (2012) assert that the media is pivotal in introducing new ideas and emotional nuances. They maintain that terms originating from various sources, such as social sciences, slang, dialects, and transferred words, contribute significantly to the evolution of language. In the media context, for example, newly coined words may include infodemic "وبـاء معلومـاتي"[waba'ma'loumati] selfie سيلفي أو صورة ذاتية "فلوق"[selfee], Vlog "فلوق" [fuloq], Podcast "بودكـاســـت" [boodkast], meme"ميم" " [meem] cancel culture"ثقـافـة الإلـغـاء" " [thaqafat al-ilgha], Deepfake "تزوير عميق""[tazweer 'amyiq], and clickbait "مغالطة النقر" [maghaltat al-nuqur]. These are just a few examples of neologisms that have gained prominence in media discourse in recent years. Ebraheem (2021) argues, "The problem of translating new words is one of the hardest tasks facing translators; one cannot find such words in ordinary dictionaries, even the newest specialized ones, until some time has passed" (p. 1). He further argues "neologisms in English cause the dilemma of finding an Arabic equivalent" (Abid). Similarly, Hardini et al. (2019) asserts that translating neologisms is challenging for translators, as 'They have to be able to identify neologisms in the Source Language (SL) and find a correct equivalent in the Target Language (TL)' (p. 16). Sheikh (2014) points to the problem of equivalence, explaining that finding an exact equivalent in the target language is highly improbable, given that perfect equivalence between the source and target languages rarely occurs in translation. In this context, Newmark (1988) asserted that achieving the equivalent effect or producing as close a response as possible to the original text is any translation's overriding purpose and desirable result. This study assumes that successful translation of neologisms necessitates continually updating one's reservoir of vocabulary and newly coined words through effective classroom practices and continual reading of the latest media news and resources to minimize the inaccurate translation of these neologisms and grasp their meanings and connotations in context. Moreover, novice translators should consistently refer to relevant dictionaries and authentic media sources, particularly students in university-level media translation or stylistic courses. This practice enhances their comprehension of newly coined terms and usage, leading to more accurate and successful translations. Generally, students encounter difficulties finding equivalent words and expressions in the target language. They grapple with maintaining fidelity to the original text's meaning and essence and fitting the newly coined terms into the Arabic language and culture. In addition, they often resort to word-for-word translation when the newly coined words are unfamiliar or they cannot find equivalent terms in Arabic. They also focus on the literal meaning of words, ignoring the modern usage of these complex words. Additionally, their translation resources and applications may not be adequate to preserve the essence of the original text. Based on a thorough literature review of relevant papers and classroom practices, this paper aims to delve deeply into the concept and definition of neologisms, the challenges associated with Arabizing neologisms, the processes involved in their translation, and, more importantly, the effective classroom strategies and practices essential to overcome them.

Significance of the Study

The paper provides valuable insights into improving translation education, particularly in the media context, where translating neologisms into the target language may raise challenges. The study aimed to enhance translation instruction's effectiveness by focusing on classroom best practices, which would ultimately benefit students and educators. Drawing on a comprehensive literature review, relevant studies, and classroom practices, the author explored novice translators' challenges in this domain and identified translation processes and classroom best practices to remedy and mitigate these challenges. The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To define the concept of neologism.
2. To identify and understand the challenges associated with Arabizing neologisms.

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3. To highlight research-based methods and processes involved in their translation.
4. To explore effective classroom practices to hone students' translation skills.

Review of the Literature

1. What is Neologism?

Newmark (1988) defines neologism as "newly coined lexical units or existing lexical units that acquire a new sense" (p. 140). According to the Cambridge English Dictionary, a neologism is 'a new word or expression, or a new meaning for an existing word.' This definition aligns with Merriam-Webster's dictionary, which defines a neologism as 'a new word, usage, or expression.' Similarly, the Oxford English Dictionary defines a neologism as "A word or phrase which is new to the language; one which is newly coined." The term 'neology' is borrowed from the French word 'Neologisme,' with the roots of the word tracing back to ancient Greek, where 'neo' means 'new' and 'logos' means 'word' (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). According to the SIL International's Glossary of Linguistics, the related terms to neologism include "blending, borrowing, innovation, lexical creation, neology, and word coinage." The mainstream literature defines neologism as the recently coined words that have become mainstream language. It is the process of creating new words or expressions to describe emerging concepts, technologies, or social phenomena. It encompasses the formation of words through various linguistic processes such as blending, borrowing, compounding, and derivation (Aziz & Muftah, 2000; Ebraheem, 2021; Sheikh, 2014; Zhiri, 2015). Newmark (1988) suggested different types of neologisms, including adding new senses to existing words, 'coined words,' 'derived words,' 'abbreviations' and 'acronyms,' 'collocations,' 'phrasal words,' 'transferred words' (p. 140-142), and many other types. The mainstream literature distinguishes various categories of neologism based on their origins, meanings, and usage. The most common neologies include semantic, phonological, syntactic, morphological, lexical, and blend neologies (Moghadam & Sedigh, 2012; Newmark, 1988; Nida, 1985; Sayadi, 2011)

- Semantic neologisms: new words created to express new ideas or concepts. An example includes the word "Selfie" سيلفي/صورة ذاتية

- Phonological neologisms: new words formed through alterations in pronunciation or sound patterns. These may include blends, truncations, or sound substitutions.
- Morphological neologisms: new words formed by changing the structure or combining elements of words that already exist. Examples include affixation, compounding, and conversion (changing the part of speech).
- Lexical neologisms: new words or expressions derived from other languages through borrowing, invention, or adaptation.
- Syntactic neologisms: new structures or patterns that may involve changes in word order, sentence structure, or grammatical constructions.
- Loan neologisms: new words borrowed from other languages, often to fill lexical gaps or to describe concepts for which no native term exists. Examples include "Podcast بودكاست" "Vlog فيديو and "Webinar وبينار," "بلوق.
- Blend neologisms are new words formed by combining parts of two or more existing words. Examples include "brunch" (breakfast + lunch) أو وجبة الضحى وجبة صباحية متأخرةand" smog" (smoke + fog) ضباب دخاني.

The use of some forms of neologisms in media, in general, and social media content, in particular, is very common (Hardini et al., 2019). These words or jargons include new meanings, such as the word "Brexit," which is a combination of "Britain" and "exit," and it refers to the withdrawal of Britain from the European Union (EU) "خروج بريطانيا عن الوحدة الأوروبية"[kuruj britanya min alwihda aloropya]. In addition, some words introduced in media add new meanings to old words. For example, 'stream تيار'traditionally refers to "a body of running water, (such as a river or creek), flowing on the earth" (Merriam-Webster's Dictionary). However, modern media usage refers to the continuous flow of digital content. For instance, watching a live stream"مشاهدة بث مباشر" [mouchadat bth moubashar] refers to accessing and consuming digital content in real-time over the internet. This new meaning has emerged due to the widespread availability of high-speed internet connections, which enable people to access and enjoy digital media content. Another example includes the word 'cookie,' traditionally referring to a sweet baked cake. However, the modern use of a cookie "ملف تعريف الارتباط" [milaf ta'reef alirtibat] in Internet Technology refers to a small piece of data stored on a user's device, which tracks and stores information about the user's

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browsing behavior and usage. A further example includes the word 'viral,' which means the quick spread of a virus or disease (of, relating to, or caused by a virus- Merriam-Webster's Dictionary). In the context of social media, particularly on the internet, the term 'viral' has a new meaning, and it refers to the rapid spread of online content, such as videos, memes, or articles across the internet.

2. Challenges Associated with Arabizing Neologisms

Translating neologisms poses a challenge, particularly when novice translators are unfamiliar with their modern usage or lack specific strategies for translating these newly coined words. Additionally, novices' lack of mastery of source and target languages may hinder their ability to produce accurate translations (Ebraheem, 2021). Similarly, Sheikh (2014) points out that challenges involve novice translators' linguistic background and knowledge, cross-cultural awareness, and appropriate translation strategies. Similarly, Al-Sohbani and Muthanna (2013) argue that the main challenges include "insufficiency of lexical knowledge, inadequate knowledge and practice of grammar, little cultural backgrounds, and inappropriate teaching atmosphere and methodology (as cited in Akki, 2021, p. 36). Alhaysony (2017) pointed to semantic constraints and lack of vocabulary as the main difficulties hindering accurate translation. Students must first understand the meaning of a neologism in the source language context and find its equivalent in Arabic. Without a clear understanding of the conceptual and contextualized meaning of the word in the source language, it will not be easy to produce an accurate translation (Hindiri et al., 2019). Additionally, relying solely on word-for-word translation may not be applicable in all contexts and may not always convey the same meaning as in the source language. Another issue is that novice translators may heavily rely on machine translation to assist them in translating these newly coined words. However, these online tools may not convey the accurate or updated usage of the new word, leading to confusion. Google Translate, as an example, often provides literal or approximate equivalent words or outdated usage rather than the precise meaning of these new terms (Holzer et al., 2011). For instance, Google translates the word "iconoclast" as " محطم الأصنام" (Image destroyer) [pronounced: mouh'atim al'assnam]. The destruction in modern usage is figurative, referring to individuals who are innovative, rebellious, or nonconformist in their thinking or

actions (source: Merriam-Webster's Dictionary). Therefore, students' heavy reliance on Google Translate services and other machine translations may pose an additional concern, potentially impeding their translation practices and hindering improvement. This perspective resonates with Farghal (1995), who highlighted that "over-dependence on dictionaries, either unilingual or bilingual, could lead to awkward and unnatural translations' (as cited in Akki, 2021, p. 36).

Common Methods for Translating Neologisms

Several methods commonly used for translating neologisms into another language include transliteration, adaptation, loan translation, borrowing, explanatory and descriptive translation, and direct inclusion (Hardini et al., 2019; Newmark, 19881, 1988; Nida, 1985; Sayadi, 2011)

a. Transliteration

Transliteration, as described in Merriam-Webster Dictionary, is the representation or spelling of the characters of another alphabet. Simply put, it is converting a text from one alphabet into another. In the context of the English-Arabic translation, transliteration involves replacing the characters of the English writing system with characters of the Arabic writing system while preserving the pronunciation of the original text. Examples include (VLOG=فيديو فلوق – Webinar=وبينـار - Intranet= انترانـت – Meme =ميم). Adaptation can be used when the English term is more familiar to the target audience than the translated Arabic word. For example, the popular American series 'Game of Thrones' can be directly translated into 'صـراع الـعـروش.[sira' alu'rush]' Though the literal translation captures the essence of the original title while adapting it to the Arabic language, it may not appeal to the Arabic-speaking audience, which is more familiar with the English title. In such cases, transliteration '[جيـم أف ثرونـز]' is more effective for capturing the attention of the audience.

b. Adaptation

Adaptation is another technique that can facilitate the comprehension and translation of neologisms. It is the process of adjusting the newly coined words to fit the linguistic and cultural context of the target language. The translation of the words 'blog مـدونـة (mudawanah)' and 'tweet تـغـريـدة [taghreeda] are examples of adaptations of English widespread words.

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c. Loan Translation (Calque)

Loan translation, or calque, is a translation technique that involves literal word-for-word translation of each word or morpheme (Sayadi, 2011). The original word's meaning is maintained, but the structure and idiomatic expressions of the target language are used. For example, the English phrase 'Skyscrapers' is a loan translation from the French word "gratte-ciel," and its equivalent in Arabic is "ناطحات السحاب". In the three languages, the meaning refers to very tall buildings.

d. Borrowing

Borrowing involves adopting the neologism directly from the source language into the target language, typically without translation. It occurs when the literal translation of a new word does not convey the essence of the original word. In this sense, borrowing preserves the original word's meaning, style, and connotation. Borrowing is commonly used when the neologism has gained widespread acceptance in the target language community. For example, the word "computer" is borrowed directly into Arabic as كمبيوتر. This borrowing is widely used in the Arabic-speaking countries. Other examples include social media سوشيال ميديا and Hashtag هاشتاق. These words are commonly used in the social media of Arabic-speaking countries.

e. Explanatory and Descriptive translation

When equivalent words in the target language are non-existent, especially when these newly coined words occur within a specific period and under certain circumstances, such as the COVID-19 pandemic era, the translator can use explanatory and descriptive techniques or paraphrasing for effective translation and to enhance the clarity of the meaning (Sayadi, 2011). For example, consider this headline: 'An expert offers tips on how to deal with CoviDivorce and salvage our Relationships.' It could be translated as follows: ' خبير يقدم نصـائح في كيفية التعامل مع الطلاق بسـبب كورونا وإنقاذ علاقاتنا', or alternatively, ' نصـائح في كيفية التعامل مع الطلاق بسـبب كورونا وإنقاذ علاقاتنا'. The newly coined term (CoviDivorce) lacks an equivalent term in Arabic, but novices can use explanatory and descriptive translations to convey the same meaning. Another example where this strategy can be applied perfectly is illustrated in this sentence: 'Quaranteens expect a muted version of student life.' Combining the terms 'quarantine' and 'teenagers' yields a new term. The sentence could be translated as follows: ' مراهقو

كورونا ينتظرون حياة جامعية هادئة'. The word 'muted' should not be translated literally, as it may confuse the target language. In Arabic, the term 'muted' literally means 'silent,' while in the original context, it means 'calm'.

f. Direct inclusion

In the context of neologism translation, Sayadi (2011) suggested the direct inclusion technique to refer to the straightforward inclusion of a newly coined word or phrase from the source language into the target language without significant adaptation or modification.

3. Effective Teaching Strategies to Overcome These Challenges

Familiarizing novice translators with the translation methods and processes involved in capturing the essence of newly coined English words is crucial; however, translation teachers should help students bridge the gap between theoretical processes and classroom practice. That is to say, students may confuse the use of specific strategies, such as adaptation, transliteration, or borrowing, and apply one uniformly across all contexts. This practice may result in poor translations and, consequently, lead to ambiguity and a loss of the essence of the original meaning (Al-Sohbani & Muthanna, 2013; Akki, 2021; Hardini et al., 2019; Holzer et al., 2011; Sayadi, 2011; Sheikh, 2014). For this reason, the researcher recommends the following classroom practices for translation teachers to help their students cultivate good translation skills.

- Use authentic media material, including headlines, ads, posts, and short news, to practice translating neologisms.
- Include in-class group reading activities of English daily newspapers to enhance students' vocabulary.
- Utilize peer and group translation and peer teaching to increase motivation and translation mastery.
- Assign online investigation of neologisms in social media content and ask students to present their findings in class.
- Provide students with good and accessible linguistic resources to support their translation.
- Encourage active participation through discussions on translation choices to allow students to justify their selections.

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- Introduce real-world examples of successful translations to inspire students and demonstrate effective strategies.
- Incorporate multimedia resources, such as videos or podcasts, which feature discussions on language and translation topics relevant to the course.
- Organize guest lectures or invite professionals from the translation field to share insights and experiences with the students.
- Provide regular feedback on translation assignments and highlight strengths and areas for improvement to foster continuous learning and development.
- Offer supplementary materials, such as online quizzes or interactive exercises, to reinforce vocabulary related to neologisms and translation.
- Encourage collaborative learning through peer review sessions, where students can exchange feedback to enhance each other's translations.
- Incorporate cultural exploration activities to deepen students' understanding of the cultural contexts behind neologisms to help them with more accurate translations.
- Assign translation projects requiring students to work on longer texts or multimedia content, allowing them to practice their skills in the real world.
- Foster a supportive and inclusive classroom environment where students feel comfortable experimenting with translation techniques and expressing their ideas openly.

Conclusion

Translating neologisms can be very challenging for novice Arab translators enrolled in translation or stylistics courses at the university level for various reasons. Students may lack linguistic or conceptual knowledge of these novel words or apply one translation method uniformly in all contexts. To address these challenges, translation teachers should equip students with interactive translation tasks, use authentic materials for translation, and incorporate other active learning and cultural exploration activities to enhance students' translation skills. The English language is evolving, and updating one's reservoir of new vocabulary is paramount to increasing one's understanding of the essence and nuances of novel words.

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