



## The assessment of Translating Social Deixis in Literary Texts: "Wuthering Heights" as a Case Study

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### Abstract

*Abstract: The study shows the problematic area of translating Social Deictic Expressions (SDEs) from English into Arabic which needs to be properly clarified through TQA. Deictic Expressions refer to certain words or phrases whose references differ from one text or discourse to another.*

*They are regarded as one of the basic components of the pragmatics field, as they involve a one-to-one correspondence between the structure of the language and the context in which they are employed. Accordingly, the translator has to be skillful and experienced enough to render the SDEs from English into Arabic due to dealing with two different structures.*

*The study clarifies that translating (SDEs) from English into Arabic may pose many difficulties not only for the average reader but also for professional translators. This is inevitable due to the cultural gap between the two languages and norms. The study concludes that SDEs in literary texts are rendered as covert translation more than overt translation. It is also important to use strategies such as (omitting, substituting, and deleting) which are essential in rendering SDEs from the Source Text (ST) to the Target Text (TT). The translators follow literal translation in many cases as one of the methods to create a match between ST and TT according to the intended meaning.*

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### 1.1 Introduction

English language users in general, and certain translators, may face problems when reading SDEs in literary texts (e.g. a novel, a play, a short story, etc.). For example, they may not be able to recognize who the speaker is, to whom an utterance is said, or where and when an utterance is uttered.

This shows that deixis is a problematic area with regard to its translation to another language which needs to be properly clarified. Accordingly, the translator has to be skillful and experienced enough to render the SDEs in any literary work and must take care of cultural gaps that arise in the translation process.

Translation of SDEs requires full understanding of linguistic and non- linguistic context before being initiated. Due to the fact that SDEs show a connection between the interlocutors of two different languages, so the translator faces many obstacles in his/her task and should be accurate to give the exact meaning of the referent of the SDE.

Social deixis is used in both spoken and written language, yet it may be more difficult to translate those in written language such as literary works than in spoken language, because the lack of a shared environment between the actions, the reader and writer tends to make such expressions ambiguous or confusing.

### 1.3 Aims of the Study

The current study aims at:

- 1- Producing an assessment of the translation of some SDEs in *Wuthering Heights* novel.
- 2- Exploring how SDEs in the source language text (SLT) are rendered into the target language text (TLT), namely the Arabic language. and how translators convey their knowledge when they translate SDEs in a literary text.

### 1.4 Hypotheses of The Study

The study hypothesizes that:

1. Not all English SDEs in *Wuthering Heights* have a one-to-one correspondence in Arabic, consequently the selected translators may fail to provide appropriate renditions.
2. Translating SDEs in a literary text conveys the knowledge of translators in terms of overt or covert translations.
3. The translators follow literal translation in most cases as one of the methods to create a match between ST and TT according to the intended meaning.

### 1.5 Procedures and Data Collection

The Following steps are adopted in the study

1. Selecting some different texts to be the data of the study
2. Selecting three types of SDEs from "*Wuthering Heights*" novel.
3. Shedding light on some linguistic and pragmatic characteristics of SDEs in the texts mentioned above.
4. Choosing three translated texts by two Arabic translators.

5. Adopting House's (2015) model for assessing each text under the suitable categories and subcategories, and identifying and assessing the ST under the model criteria.

### 1.6 The Models Adopted

This study follows House's model (2015) of TQA, which suggests the comparison and assessment of SL and TL according to the categories of Field, Tenor and Mode) which in turn shows the distinction between overt and covert translation. The model involves analysing the linguistic situational particularities of source and target texts, comparing the two texts and the resultant assessment of their relative match.

### 1.7 Scope of the Study

The present study is limited to assessing English SDEs translation in the novel *Wuthering Heights* into Arabic. These deictic expressions will be assessed to show how they are used in *Wuthering Heights* and rendered into Arabic from a pragmatic perspective.

### 1.8 The Notion of Deixis

The notion of deixis is mainly derived from the work of the German psychologist and philosopher of language Karl-Buhler who is the first to point out the universal existence of Deixis Expressions DEs across languages (Buhler, 1934:36). This idea has been explored and developed by linguists such as Lyons (1973,1977), Palmer (1981), Levinson (1983), Fillmore (1997) and others.

Buhler's analysis singles out the three most primitive types of DEs *I, now, here*, indicating person, time and place, depending on the context respectively. Lyons (1995:305) calls these three as "pure deictic fields". *I, now, here* are also described as the 'zero point' and grouped under the name of index. Each index distinguishes a possible world or discourse from an alternative (ibid: 310).

Levinson (1983: 55) says that deixis belongs to the domain of pragmatics because it directly concerns the relationship between the structure of language and the context in which the DEs are used.

Hanks (2011: 315) explains that DEs are also sometimes called *indexicals*. They are among the first forms to be spoken by very young children and can be used to indicate people via person deixis (*me, you*), location via spatial deixis (*here, there*), time via temporal deixis (*now, then*) discourse analysis demonstrative article discourse deixis (*this, that, these, those*). Deixis signals a referent and relates that referent to a common ground shared by the speaker and the addressee. It is the ability to situate the speaker and hearer concerning one another and the world around them.

### 1.9 Social Deixis

Social Deixis concerns with the codification of the social status of the speaker, addressee, or a third person or entity referred to, as well as, the social relationship holding between them (Huang, 2007: 163).

Some information could be encoded in social deixis like social class, profession, kin relationship, sex, age, and ethnic group. It is worthy to mention that both social deixis and person deixis are closely associated.

Marmaridou (2000: 79-81) claims that social deixis cannot be studied separately from person deixis. Adding to that, social deixis shows the different ranking of the participants in the utterance and how it can be dealt with each one,

for instance: "Good evening, Sir." The word Sir' is considered as a social deixis that refer to the addressee who have a high rank than the speaker. There are two major types of social deixis, the absolute social deixis and relational social deixis.

### 1.9.1 The Absolute Social Deixis.

The Absolute information in social deixis has form that are used to represent only a simple reference to a referent or to the absolute status of the addressee regardless of any different rank between speaker and addressee such as your honor, your Majesty or Mr. President (AlTekreeti, 2016: 22).

### 1.9.2 The Relational Social

Deixis Relational Social Deixis can be noticed between:

1. Speaker and referent (referent honorifics), which forms are used by the speaker to obtain respect towards the referent.
2. Speaker and addressee (addressee honorifics), which forms are represented by the speaker to obtain respectfulness towards the addressee.
3. Speaker and bystander (bystander honorifics) which forms are represented by the speaker to denote respect to bystander, including participant in the role of audience and non-participant over hearers (Huang, 2007: 164).

### 1.10 Functions of Deictic Expressions

Fillmore (1975:124) affirms that DEs are one of the most crucial notions in general linguistics. It bridges the gap between linguistic expressions and the real-life environment around us.

Palmer (1981: 60) affirms that deictic expressions cannot be ignored since ordinary language is full of their use. They are always subjective, that is to say, they can be construed only with reference to the context in which they are used. Moreover, communication could never exist without DEs. So, there cannot be any language without them.

Nunberg (1998: 159) clarifies that "the meaning of deictic expressions are composite functions that take us from an element of the context to an element of a contextually restricted domain, and then drop away ". As a result of that, several functions of deictic expressions are differentiated such as, *Anaphoric Deixis* and *Cataphoric Deixis and Function*.

#### 1.10.1 Anaphoric Deixis

Anaphoric deixis is used to make reference to a preceding portion of discourse. It is used to indicate the relation between two textual components that denote the same objects. The subsequent mention of an entity already introduced is often marked by means of a specific type of a noun phrase as in :

a- I saw *Bill* yesterday. *He* looked pale. رأيت بيل البارحة ، كان يبدو شاحبا.  
Hank,(2011:315).

In (a), the pronoun " *he* " refers back to the word " *Bill* "; so, "*he*" is an anaphoric expression. Buhler (1934 : 122 ) states that psychologically, the anaphoric use of words requires that the sender and the recipient have access to a text as a whole so that one could compare it with roaming of the eyes on an optically present object

#### 1.10.2 Cataphoric Deixis

Cataphoric Deixis is used to make a reference to a one word or a following portion of discourse as in :

(b) I would never have believed *it*. They have accepted the whole scheme.

In (b) the pronoun "it" refers forward to the expression "the whole scheme" So, "it" is regarded as a cataphoric expression (Halliday and Hassan, 1976: 56 )

Clair (1973: 129) explains that these of deixis are derived from the immediate speech situation and the information required for explaining some components in the text. It is found in the text itself whether in the preceding or following one. So, both anaphora and cataphora may have a deictic reference.

### 1.11 Strategies of Translating Social Deictic Expressions

Halliday & Hassan (1976) and Halliday(2004) state that there are some strategies for translating SDEs such as **addition, replacement, omissions** and **shifting**. These are briefly explained in the following:

#### A-Addition

Addition is used when there is need to state something that is not in the S.T., but is understandable from the whole or part of the text. It is either added to the T.T. or as a footnote. Adding is very useful in translation, and in the case of SDEs it helps the hearer to understand the S.T. texts.

#### B-Replacement

Munday (1997:53) shows that replacement is also observed in translation and is proved to be helpful if and only if the meaning is preserved . It is especially useful in translating deictic expressions with two different cultures.

#### C- Omission

Omission is also used as a literary device in translating literature texts. On the other hand, translators may use omission as a strategy to avoid misunderstanding on the target reader's side in translating some SDEs.

Crystal (1985) states that omission is more challenging in translation. The challenge lies in the fact that while the translator tries to be faithful to the source text (S.T.), the result may be ungrammatical and unidiomatic in the target text (T.T.). Due to the structural differences between languages, an equivalent to omission cannot always be found in the T.L.

#### D-Shifting

Munday (1997) indicates some kind of translational deictic shifts which can bring about the changes in the original narrative point of view. Translational deictic shifts may occur when the translator, either intentionally or unintentionally, intervenes in the text and makes shifts in the original temporal and spatial setting such as dropping and adding a deictic or shifting from proximal to a distal deictic element (i.e., 'this' to 'that', 'now' to 'then').

Temporal deictic shifts occur when rendering from S.T. to T.T. which includes adding a proximal or distal time deictic (e.g., 'now' or 'that moment'). Social deictic shift includes changing of honorific title or expressions between the characters. Discourse deictic shifts such as 'that' and 'this' shift a demonstrative pronoun to an explicit nominal phrase.

#### E- Naturalization

This strategy allows the translator to omit the cultural gap word and involve a cultural target word. By doing so, the translator gives the text the color of the target culture.



## 2.1 The Adopted Model of Translation Assessment

House's (2015) model is adopted with the procedures and strategies to assess the three types of texts. She bases her model on comparative ST analysis leading to the translation assessment by highlighting the statements of assessment, namely matches, mismatches, using cultural filters and the overt or covert translation. This model focuses on the syntax and textual means used to construct register. Her concept of register covers a variety of elements. These are:

**Field:** refers to the subject matter, social action and covers the specificity of lexical items.

**Tenor:** includes the addresser's temporal, social relationships (between the interlocutors), social attitude by using formal or informal style and participation whether monologue or dialogue .

**Mode:** refers to the channel (spoken or written) and the degree of participation between addresser and addressee (monologue or dialogue).

House's steps of analysis are:

1. Producing a profile of the ST register.
2. A description of the ST genre that is realized by the added register.
3. The same descriptive process is executed for the TT.
4. The TT profile is compared to the ST profile depending on mismatches, matches, cultural filters, and overt and covert standards.

Finally, a 'statement of quality' of the translation is presented according to the above standards, to assess which of the rendered translations are matches of SLT to TLT in an understandable method. (House, 2015:165).

## 2.2 Data Analysis

To fulfill the desirable aims of the present paper and examine the soundness of the previously mentioned hypotheses, the following technique of data analysis is adopted:

- a. Choosing four different renditions of *Wuthering Heights* by two Arabic translators, namely (A'zat Mohamed, 2017( **T1** ), (Mamdouh Haki,1964 ( **T2** ). from English to Arabic.
- b. The rendition provided by the selected translators is assessed according to House's criteria for assessment such as **overt and covert** translation. The symbols (-) and (+) are used as indicators of the achievement or the loss of these criteria.

**Text No.(1): Social Deixis (Relational )**

**SLT:** "*Then she looked round for Heathcliff .Mr. and Mrs. Earnshaw watched their meeting anxiously,*".

## TLT:

1. التفتت وهي تبحث عن هيتكاليف وهي اللحظة التي كان السيد ايرناشو وزوجته يراقبانها في لهفة وقلق / T1
2. اخذت تلتفت حولها ، بينما ايرناشو وزوجته يتراقبان هذا اللقاء بلهفة . / T2

**Discussion**

Social deixis encodes the social status of the participants of communication or the social relationship between them, exemplified by using specific expressions, kinship terms, or surnames. The typical social deixis in the text above is honorifics exemplified by 'Mr.' and 'Mrs.'

The narrator of the above text is Mrs. Dean speaking to Mr. Lockwood. Catherine's brother, Hindley, and his wife watch how she will meet her friend Heathcliff. Mrs. Dean, the narrator and servant of the House.

The honorific titles 'Mrs.' and 'Mr.' with the surname 'Earnshaw' refer to Hindley and his wife.

The social deixis ( relational ) in SL reflects the relationship between the interlocutors. (T1) shows the first category of analysis field as family life and literary text. T1 adds lexical expressions in TT like 'at the moment' " في تلك اللحظة " to show the closeness between the narrator and the events.

In the second category tenor, T1 shows that Mrs. Dean as a servant uses honorific words to express the different social ranks with the hearer.

In the social action category, T1 translates the SDE into TT as a means of communication between the speaker and hearer.

In the social attitude category, T1 uses a formal style according to the context of the TT. T1 uses syntactic means represented by a simple structure of clauses throughout the TT.

In the mode category, T1 gives the exact rendering as in ST and uses simple expressions in the TT.

T2 renders the 'social deixis in the first category field according to context as a means of communication and as cohesive in ordinary life. T2 renders the "social deixis" as a means of expressing the interaction between speakers in the subcategory, a social action.

T2 uses the omission category in translating the social deixis 'honorific' 'Mr.' and 'Mrs.' into TT ( وكان برناشو وزوجته ). The omission involves removing the honorific title mentioned by the narrator before and after the names.

This omission of social deixis in TT shows that there are no social distances between the speaker and hearer in the TT. Moreover, T2 uses informal translation and simple spoken language in his rendition to TT.

The two translators used simple expressions with contextual means in rendering into TT and using narration style of the events.

Table (1): Social Deixis (Relational )

SLT: "Then she looked round for Heathcliff . <u>Mr.</u> and <u>Mrs.</u> Earnshaw watched their meeting anxiously,".			
No.	TLTs	Orientation	
		Overt Translation	Covert Translation
T1	كان السيد ارناشوا وزوجته	+	-
T2	بينما ارناشو وزوجته يترقبان	+	-

Text No.(2): Social Deixis (Absolute )

SLT: "what are you doing there, Nelly?"

*My work, Miss," I replied "Mr. Hindley had given me directions to be the third part in any visits in Linton's family."*

TLT :

1. ماذا تفعلين هنا، نيلي؟ انه واجبي يامولاتي / . T1
2. نيلي! ماذا تفعلين هنا؟ اقوم ببعض الاعمال سيدتي / . T2

## Discussion

The text is a conversation between Miss Catherine and her servant, Nelly. According to the context in ST, Nelly uses the honorific 'Miss' to address Catherine. The honorific 'Miss' conveys the difference in social status between the speaker and hearer.

The analysis of the text is conducted by applying House's TQA model to ST &TT and comparing them according to House's criteria. It led to the fact that there is a similarity in one or more aspects of the field category but differences in many others.

T1 renders the social deixis 'absolute' from ST into TT in the subject matter category as a family life event between the speaker and hearer, depending on the context of a situation and the dialogue between Miss Catherine &Nelly.

T1 renders the conversation into TT using indirect speech. T1 translates the ST in the social action category as a request, showing that the social relationship is asymmetrical into TT.

T1 uses syntactic means in the TT (interrogative) and shifts the structure of ST into ( ماذا تفعلين هنا يا نيلي؟ ). The text shows the readers (the TT) that Catherine's social class is higher than Nelly and the use of a formal style of conversation.

T1 matches in his rendering of the social deixis 'Miss' in ST as absolute deixis (مولاتي) into Arabic as TT instead of (سيده) to show a kind of respectfulness in his rendering as he addresses the monarch of Catherine as queen.

T1 renders the tenor category's social deixis 'absolute' as a communication between the interlocutors according to the intended meaning. T1 shows the formality of style and dialogue between the participants. T1 uses contextual means



such as simple spoken language without redundancy of expressions used in the medium subcategory of the mode category to make the TT understandable by TT readers.

(T2) renders the social deixis 'absolute' as a conversational style between two characters in the novel *Wuthering Heights*. In the subcategory of subject matter in the field category, the context shows the different social ranks between the speaker and hearer.

T2 uses exclamations in translating Catherine's speech to Nelly into TT. According to the context of the situation, Catherine uses an illocutionary act with Nelly to tell her to be out of the room. T2 shows the symmetrical relationship between the speaker and hearer in the social action subcategory of the category field.

T2 renders the DE in the social attitude subcategory in a formal style, conversational dialogue, and spoken form.

### Table (2): Social Deixis (Relational )

SLT: "what are you doing there , Nelly? My work, <u>Miss</u> ," I replied "Mr. Hindley had given me directions to be third part in any visits Linton's family"			
No.	TLTs	Orientation	
		Overt Translation	Covert Translation
T1	انه واجبي يامولاتي	+	-
T2	اقوم ببعض الاعمال ياسيديتي	+	-

### Text No.(3): Social Deixis

SLT: *You are late Nilly?*

*The Roades, Miss," I replied "the roades were quait and deep dark tonight  
"your majesty*

TLT :

1. انت متاخرة هذه الليلة يا نيلي؟ الطرق كانت هادئة و حالكة الظلام هذه الليلة ! سموك ./T1

2.وصلتي متاخرة ؟ ببلي ؟ الطرق موحشة الظلام هذه الليلة ! يا صاحبة الجلالة ./T2

### Discussion

(T1) renders the social deixis of the ST pragmatically. In the ST, the question is an indirect speech act when Miss Catherine asks Nelly' You are late Nilly?', which means"why? " The social action subcategory is a request in the TT.

T1 shifts the social deixis in ST 'Miss' into honorific into "سموك" in TT.

According to context, (T1) introduces Catherine as a queen for the TT reader and Miss Nelly as a servant in the house. There is a mismatch in his translation.

T1 keeps the spirit of TT culture in his translation by using formal language expressions.

T2 renders the social deixis in the social action subcategory of the field category a means of a request. It shows the relationship between the speaker and hearer as an asymmetrical relationship TT.

For the tenor category, (T2) substitutes the social deixis 'Miss' in ST as (يا صاحبة الجلالة), meaning 'your excellency' as the honorific in Arabic TT. The substitution of SDE gives the

TT an aesthetic flavor and makes the TT reader feel as if in the ST culture. In the mode category, (T2) uses simple language expressions and structures in TT to make it easy for the reader to understand.

**Table (3): Social Deixis**

LT: <i>You are late Nilly?</i> <i>The Roades, Miss, " I replied "The roads were quit and deep dark tonight "your</i>			
No.	TLTs	Orientation	
		Overt Translation	Covert Translation
T1	حالكة الظلام هذه الليلة ! سموك	-	+
T2	الطرق موحشة الظلام هذه الليلة ! يا صاحبة الجلالة	-	+

### Conclusions

Social Deictic expressions exist in both English and Arabic, but one-to-one matching is very rare between the two languages due to the different languages families they belong to. So, the translators under study fail to render the intended meaning in the TT. Some translators render DEs by adopting covert and overt translations in a similar proportion. Some translators follow literal translation in many cases as one of the methods to create a match between ST and TT according to the intended meaning. Following the strategies proposed by House (2015), It is an appropriate means to translate SDEs.

Translating SDEs in literary texts needs specific strategies to be adopted by the translators such as (omission, substitution, and addition). Context and intended meaning have a significant role in facilitating the translation of SDEs in any literary work.

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