

The Deanship of Graduate Studies  
Al-Quds University



The Translatability of English Profanity  
in Arabic Subtitles

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MA Thesis

Jerusalem-Palestine

1432/ 2011

# **The Translatability of English Profanity in Arabic Subtitles**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of requirement for  
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2011/ 1432



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1432 / 2011

## **Dedication**

As Man heritably and after all spiritually attributes to other humans of mutual appreciation and love, I would rather like to dedicate the present study to:

- my parents who supplicate Allah to bless my efforts;
- my dearly loved wife, Dalal who remains willing to be; patient and fully supportive in defiance of hard times;
- My sons;
- my brother, Ala' at the Zionist prison;
- my sisters and brothers.

Eid Mohammad Eid Bhais

**Declaration:**

I certify that this thesis, submitted for the degree of master in translation and interpretation, is the result of my own research (except where otherwise acknowledged), and that the thesis (or any part of the same) has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

Signed .....

Eid Mohammad Eid Bhais

Date: 05/ 06/ 2011

## **Acknowledgements**

I owe my deepest gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Mohammad Thawabteh, the coordinator of the Translation Programme in Al-Quds University, whose invaluable guidance, profound comments and sustainable support throughout the preparation of this study just from the beginning to the end enable me to do the best towards the completion of the research. I would like also to express special thanks and appreciation to the internal examiner, Prof. Omar An-Najjar, the head of the English Department, for his unforgettable and thoughtful recommendations throughout the courses and specially for the crucial and critical comments of his on the study. Likewise, I highly appreciate the commentary and recommendations of the external examiner, Prof. Samir Rammal the head of the English Department in Birzeit University who adds much of thought and spirit to the study. My thanks goes as well to Prof. Hazim An-Najjar from Bethlehem University and Prof. Deifallah Othman from Al-Quds Open University whose courses still echo in mind. I also extend my thanks to Prof. Jena for her valuable comments and help in editing. Besides, I express my thanks to Al-Quds University for the heavy work to establish the MA. programme in translation.

## **Abstract**

This study aims to investigate and assess the translatability of English profanity into Arabic subtitles from a pragmatic perspective. The study argues that English swearwords pose a translation challenge within the English-Arabic context. English swearwords are also thought to be unnatural when translated into Arabic.

The researcher has watched and videotaped three American movies replete with plenty of profanities. The movies, which made the corpus data, were shown on MBC2, MBC4 and MBC Action in the period from March to April, 2010. The researcher has, therefore, extracted and categorised samples of English swearwords according to their occurrence in the ST. The researcher has accordingly analysed twenty eight samples of the exchanges crucially the English sound tracks, varying in situation and context, against their Arabic subtitles.

The analysis tackles the samples from a descriptive translation studies point of view following House's (1974) model of translation assessment mainly from a pragmatic perspective. The study focuses on subtitling as its core topic and reviews concepts and constraints of subtitling cultural and lingual related issues depending on the thoughts of some translation scholars, not as exceptions, like; Gottlieb, Delabastita, Schwartz, Karamitroglou, who interestingly research in audiovisual translation (AVT). Analysis guides many conclusions about translation strategies that translators within the limits of this study. These strategies include deletion, substitution, generalisation, reduction, etc.

The study comes to conclude that translation loss is inevitable in AVT and especially in the translation of English swearwords into Arabic subtitles. Translation owes to the systematic diversity the English and Arab cultures in terms of beliefs, traditions and linguistic values. In addition, the study reveals that swearwords in Arabic subtitles within the boundaries of the present study are either deleted, clichéd, reduced or substituted.

### **Table of Abbreviations:**

<b>Abbreviations</b>	<b>Full word</b>
AVT	Audiovisual Translation
ST	Source Text
TT	Target Text
SL	Source Language
TL	Target Language
lit.	literal
LA	Lisānū al-'Arab'
MSA	Modern Standard Arabic

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# Chapter I

# Chapter I

## Introduction

In this chapter we aim to give an overview of the general theoretical background regarding translation concepts on which the present study rests. We quote definitions for swearing and profanity according to their probable contexts and usages. It also investigates the momentum that the audio-visual Translation (AVT) has gained in the Arab world. Moreover, the chapter handles interlingual and cross-cultural issues in translation, especially within the English-Arabic context. Finally, translation strategies and standards of subtitling receive due attention.

Since the Quran is considered as the major reference of both Arabic and Arab culture, quoting its verses will enhance our arguments regarding the significant role of translation in creating interactional communication. In fact, Allah, the Almighty has created the world with a diversity of things, among which is multilingualism in that He, the most Merciful says (And among His [Allah's] Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the difference of your languages and colours. Verily, in that are indeed signs for men of sound knowledge.<sup>2</sup>) Man has been forever demanding and practicing interlingual communication for many reasons that range from simple personal interaction to more complicated varieties of socialisation i.e., business, politics, trade, tourism, education, media, academics, etc. Here, translation appears to initiate the interlingual communication between foreigners as person-to-person, reader-to-writer or viewers-to-movie interactions. However, inter-lingual and cross-cultural interaction has necessarily become part of everyday life in the era of globalised space which brings foreign movies home with an AVT mode – subtitles. Meanwhile, competing satellite channels broadcast a variety of foreign language speaking films, say

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<sup>1</sup> (Surat Ar-Rum (30). Verse: 22

<sup>2</sup> Khan and Al-Hilālī's (1419 H.- 1998) translation.

English, that most of Arab audience are unable to appreciate unless they are translated into Arabic. This is what we call the individual-home-needed translation that appears due to the widespread filmic materials on TV satellite channels and in the form of **DVD** (digital video disc) or **CD** (compact disc) releases to which viewers are attracted. Consequently, a new foreign audience, though they are away from the original context, is keen to watch foreign movie translated into their tongue. In words of Chiaro (2008: 241):

The process of globali[s]ation coupled with technological progress continually allows more people to easily access vast quantities of sundry texts [where] translations and translators appear to be increasingly stepping into the global limelight.

This situation of global interlingual communication also explains the crucial work of subtitlers as interlingual and cultural mediators between foreigners. So, we claim that subtitlers are expected to face sensitive and rather troublesome linguistic and cross-cultural aspects in translating English profanities into Arabic subtitles for instance. In view of that and since subtitling is a written device that brings a movie in the language of foreign viewers, subtitlers should manipulate profanities as much as possible. This is because “swearwords seem more unacceptable when written, in particular, in subtitles, than when spoken, probably because written words seem more concrete and hard to deny than oral utterances” (Chen, Ch. 2004: 138).

Subsequently, broadcasting corporations are obliged to have their foreign shows and movies translated into the target audience language so that inter-cultural understanding can be attained. In this regard, Mimó (1998: 29) verifies that “all language communities are entitled to access to intercultural programmes, through the dissemination of adequate information, and to support for activities such as [...] translation, dubbing, post-synchronisation and subtitling.” Mimó argument indicates that translation, which is meant to facilitate interlingual and intercultural communication, is taken as a human right.

On the fact that Arab media traditionally prefers subtitling to other modes of **AVT** – dubbing, voiceover, etc (see Gamal, 2008: 3), subtitling becomes the core issue of the present study. Gottlieb (1992) as cited in Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997: 161) says “for reasons of tradition subtitles tend to be favoured [in] Egypt and throughout the Arab world.” Similarly, Gamal (2008: 2-3) claims that subtitling is preferred over other modes of **AVT** due to economic and technical considerations. Yet, we claim that subtitling is favoured in the Arab world on national attitudes to preserve the spirit of classical Arabic though subtitles are made in Modern Standard Arabic (**MSA**). In that, “**MSA** is a

simplified form of classical Arabic, and follows the same grammar” (Basata and Al Daoud, 2009: 191). **MSA**, which is the only Arabic form of writing in the modern Arab World, can work as a lingua franca for Arabs who speak various local colloquial dialects. It is to say that, although “colloquial Arabic [...] remains practical and more acceptable by the same speech community [...], it lacks the unifying elements that may serve as means of social interaction in the Arab World” (Rammal: 1997). Accordingly, English movies should be subtitled in **MSA** so that the Arab audience, who speak a wide range of colloquial dialects rather obscure to other Arab communities, can easily access to and comprehend.

Subtitling seems to retain its dominance over dubbing within the Arab **AVT** especially from English into Arabic. The researcher has randomly watched a range of foreign filmic materials mostly English speaking series and shows translated into Arabic. These series and shows are broadcast on the Saudi MBCs in addition to Egyptian, Syrian, Moroccan, Lebanese, Tunisian channels, etc. BY tracing of such Arab satellite channels’ shows, we can claim that most English movies and programmes are subtitled into Arabic. Moreover, some religious Arab satellite channels; like Iqra’<sup>1</sup> and Majd<sup>2</sup>, broadcast some of their Arabic prime-time shows subtitled into English. Iqra’ channel, for example, subtitles into English Sheik Arifi’s programme ‘Nihayet el Alam’ [lit. End of the World]. In addition, Majd TV displays Arabic recitations of the Quran with the Arabic script and the English interpretations on the screen. In addition, some documentaries, prime-time-TV talk shows; e.g., MBC4’s shows ‘Opera’ and ‘The Doctors’, for example are provided with Arabic subtitles. So many other foreign TV-cooking shows on ‘Fatafeat’<sup>3</sup>, i.e. ‘Martha’s Kitchen’ are also subtitled into Arabic. We can consequently argue that Gottlieb’s (1992) claim concerning the preference of subtitling is consequently more eligible for translating English movies and shows into Arabic.

Nonetheless, dubbing into Arabic has recently been gaining a considerable significance within **AVT**. Dubbing, in which “the foreign dialogue is adjusted to the mouth movement of actor in the film” (Dries, 1995 as cited in Shuttleworth and Cowie, 1997: 45), is introduced here only within the macro prospect of **AVT** in the Arab world. Díaz-Cintas (2003: 195) also defines dubbing as the process of:

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<sup>1</sup> A Saudi Arabic based TV satellite channel specialised in Islam-related programmes..

<sup>2</sup> A TV satellite channel based in Saudi Arabia and of interest in the Quran.

<sup>3</sup> A new Cairo-Dubai-based satellite channel specialised in broadcasting cooking shows.

replacing the original soundtrack containing the actors' dialogue with a **TL** recording that reproduces the original message, while at the same time ensuring that the **TL** sounds and the actors' lip movements are more or less synchronised.

The researcher finds necessary to note that dubbing is favourable in translating Turkish and Spanish series usually dubbed into the Syrian or the Lebanese dialect, or into **MSA** on occasion. Other examples show some Asian movies dubbed into **MSA**. In a French-Arabic context, some Arab channels like LBC and the Maroc TV 2M either subtitle or dub French films. As for cartoons, dubbing captures most Arabic translations of cartoon movies. These dubs are mostly made into **MSA** and exceptionally into some local Arabic dialects like the Egyptian. Such movies are usually shown on MBC3, Spacetoon, Children Nile Channels among many others.

Meanwhile, it is arguable that the year 2010 has witnessed the birth of a new era in the world of Arabic **AVT**. The newly established era witnesses that some Arab broadcasting corporations like the MBCs and Abu Dhabi have recently – during the first third of 2010 started to display Indian movies dubbed into Kuwaiti Arabic in addition to English speaking movies with Syrian or Egyptian Arabic dubs. Lately, MBC1 has introduced Persian series dubbed into Arabic. Dubbing some English and Indian movies makes shift in the Arab **AVT** and adds to the momentum that dubbing has been gaining throughout the last few years. Meanwhile, the MBCs especially MBC2 and MBC4 have been actively promoting a campaign for dubbing against subtitling. The advertisement launched during the early of April, 2010, redirects audience attention away from subtitles in order to create a pro-dubbing attitude among the Arab audience. The advertisement is designed to insist that subtitles distract the viewers from the movie or show events as they lose parts of the movie while following subtitles on the screen. However, it seems for the researcher that some Arab channels intend to limit the use of **MSA** in mass media and to intensively apply spoken dialects instead.

Since we attempt to assess the translation of English profanities into Arabic the terms translatability and untranslatability receive due attention. The term translatability is the opposite of untranslatability as the occurrence of any of the two rejects the other's (Pym and Turk, 1998: 273). In this context, Pym and Turk (1998: *ibid*) argue that “translatability [...] as the capacity for some kind of meaning to be transferred from one language to another without undergoing radical change.” In addition, the two concepts refer to the

degree to which a word, phrase or text can be translated into a foreign language (Shuttleworth and Cowie 1997: 179).

Delabastita (1990: 97) argues that “translation process in mass communication plays a very effective role in both the shaping of cultures and the relations between them”, as such subtitling amongst other forms of **AVT**, mainly subtitling, is expected to bridge the gap between people of diverse cultures and languages. In this regard, Kapsaskis (2008: 42) demonstrates that “the role of subtitling is to facilitate access to audio-visual products in a foreign language.” In the words of Schwarz (2002), meanwhile says:

It appears obvious that subtitles are for an audience who could otherwise not understand the film. Their main aim must be clarity and ease of reading. At the same time, however, the superimposed text must be shown as discreetly as possible, so as not to interfere too much with the action on the screen.

Whitman as cited in Martínez-Sierra (2010: 122) claims that “any film is the mirror of the culture in which it folds.” Similarly, Petit (2004: 25) notes that:

Media plays an important role in this age of globalisation and global communications. The introduction and subsequent boom in satellite television, plus the internet, has made the world a much smaller place, allowing different peoples, culture and languages to interact more frequently. The “screen” is a primary vehicle for this interaction and as a result, the audio-visual translator has an increasingly important role to play.

Such global mixture of languages, cultures and ethnicities therefore obligate translators to carefully consider the essence of the cultures to or from which they translate. Since English and Arabic contradict with regard to rendering English swearwords into Arabic subtitles, translators seem to play a crucial role on linguistic, sociopragmatic and cultural aspects. In this sense, Gadacha (1998: 42) claims that:

Although all the countries across the world are closely connected and therefore dependent on each other in every respect, cross-cultural communication remains the most problematic area in translation. Even genetically-related languages continue to diverge over time. Consequently, the translator must strike some balance whether at the level of content, expression, or sound effect.

Cultures, which reflect the reality of people, appear to inevitably depict their customs, beliefs, traditions and means of expressing feelings, attitudes, etc. Nida (2001: 13) perceives “culture, as the totality of beliefs and practices of a society.” Nevertheless, the world appears to have diverse cultures of which values are not easily transferred. It is consequently thought that translating English profanities or swearwords into Arabic is a topic of question. For example, the translators are expected to make adaptation, manipulation or change on their effort to render the **ST** with the least loss in the **TT**. The

translation procedures depend on cultural related factors like censorship. Another factor to think of is the capacity of **MSA** to allow the occurrence of such linguistic expressions.

We can claim that the degree of cultural difference influences translating from one language into another and hence the strategies for which subtitlers opt when undertaking their task. Correspondingly, Neves (2004: 119) demonstrates that:

Subtitling behaves like any other form of translation: the greater the culture divide, the greater the risk of translational shift, and possibly the greater the need to render interactional moves as well as narrative structuring dialogue.

Similarly, Cronin (2009: 24) states that despite “the use of [...] subtitling to deal with international distribution in a multilingual world, it does not eradicate the continued presence of language and culture difference.” Referring to cross-cultural interpretation of verbal offensiveness of profanity, Baker (1992: 234) clarifies that:

Different cultures [...] have different norms [...] about what is not a ‘taboo’ area. Sex, religion, and defecation are taboo subjects in many societies, but not necessarily to the same degree within similar situations.

Respectively, believing that the world cultural diversity takes place and makes a substantive difference in translation, Schwarz (2003) claims that:

Although more and more concepts are shared and understood between different cultures, there are still many terms and expressions which reflect the morals and values of a particular culture and have no true equivalent in the TL. To deal with these cultural terms successfully, a translator has to be not only bilingual but also bi-cultural. One of the most difficult areas in [...] television series, is the use of bad language or swearwords. The first step for the translator is to recognise the term and understand how ‘bad’ it is.

In an English-Arabic context, it seems that subtitles themselves make a primary shift in that ordinary, spoken English dialogues are rendered in the form of **MSA** subtitles. With this in mind, it is thought that formal language conventions are unable to transfer what an everyday dialect does. Accordingly, Neves states that uttering taboos (i.e., swearwords) in a spoken discourse is less aggressive than writing them down (2005: 219), or putting them at the bottom of screen in the format of one- or two-line subtitles. Therefore, we can claim that translation loss seems much more potential if subtitlers intend to manipulate the **ST**’s offensive words for instance in accordance with the **TT**’s linguistic and cultural conventions.

Furthermore, Neves (2004: 119) says “across wider culture gaps, more of the interactional information may get lost if only the essence of the message is subtitled.” With regard to subtitles, since much of **SL** sound tracks are eliminated or adapted in the **TL** subtitles on the basis of verbal or nonverbal channels of meaning (Gottlieb 2004: 86), the **ST** conveyed

message into the **TL** appears to lack much of the original's. As a result, subtitlers necessarily condense the translation in the **TT**. Here, Gottlieb either attributes condensation to the reading speed a given audience bears to do as people's speaking ability is a bit faster than their capacity to read efficiently or due to "oral features prone to condensation are also stylistically important ones like colloquialisms, slang, cursing, pragmatic particles and repetitions" (2005: 51).

Because subtitling is the integration of many elements in that meaning is conveyed through verbal and nonverbal audiovisual channels, translators appear to consider cross-cultural, linguistic and contextual aspects in addition to other techniques of subtitling (Gottlieb, 1998: 245). On that, Ramière (2006: 152) demonstrates that:

Language and culture are deeply intertwined, and translators obviously do not translate individual words deprived of context, but whole texts which are culturally embedded and based on a community of references predictably shared by most members of the source culture – thus creating 'moments of resistance' for translation. Since it brings cultures into contact with one another, translation for [...] the audio-visual world in general, raises considerable cross-cultural issue.

This verification of Ramière is claimed to cover the translation of English profanity into Arabic as to be taken within context but not as isolated items. The word 'fuck', for example, should not be taken as an independent word and should not be also translated the same if it originally occurs in various contexts where it is uttered for different purposes. The following examples show how the word 'fuck' is translated the same though it occurs in different situations. The two examples below show that the word 'fuck' is used in (a) to insult the addressee whereas in (b) it is used as an interjection. Nevertheless, the translators provide the same rendition in Arabic – تباً.

Example (a)

ST:

Hey, **fuck** you! Huh **fuck** you.

Fuck you, I don't give a fuck what kind of evidence you got. You know why?

TT:

تباً لك، تباً لك

لا يهمني أية إثباتات لديك  
أتعرف السبب

(Negotiator: 1998)

Example (b)

ST:

- Come here! Bring her.

- Come here.

- **Fuck**

-John

TT:

- أحضرها

- تعالي إلى هنا.

- تباً

- (جون)

(The Marine: 2006)

## 1.1. Profanity and Swearing

### 1.1.1 Definition and Conceptualisation

As it is mentioned above, profanity and swearing are used interchangeably throughout this study to avoid repetition. These concepts of irreverent connotations and obscene denotations usually indicate foul, vulgar or indecent forms of offensive language relatively vary within interlingual-cultural contexts where foreign norms, morals and values are perceived to clash, or even to overlap sometimes. It is to state below some terminology taken from dictionary surveys and concepts given in other socio-pragmatic and sociolinguistic resources.

Swearing, which is obscene or taboo in origin, has many other related terms that reflect verbal aggression. Profanity, for example is taken as a negative perspective within the whole sense of obscenity and taboo. Profane expressions are markedly used to blame, insult or curse some people in a given situation. However, they also harm others beyond that situation, usually readers, viewers or casual passersby. Profanity usually includes blasphemy, obscenity, swearwords, etc. Accordingly, the following lexicons will establish a range of theoretical conceptualisation in relation to swearing and profanity.

First, according to *The Random House Dictionary of the English Language: Unabridged Dictionary* (1973: 1148) profanity is “characterised by irreverence or contempt for God or sacred principles or things; irreligious” or “to treat anything sacred with irreverence.” Whereas swearing is the “use [of] profane oaths or language as in imprecation or anger or for mere emphasis” (ibid: 1436), a swearword is “a word used in swearing or cursing; a profane or obscene word” (ibid). Then, profanities like swearwords express pejorative attitudes speakers either assume towards other people or react to certain events.

Second, *Longman English Dictionary* (1990: 1122) explains that “profanity refers to negative or offensive disrespectful verbal or nonverbal speech or activity toward what originally deserves reverence.” And a swearword is “a word used as a curse” (ibid).

Third, according to the *WordWeb Electronic and Online Dictionary*, profanity refers to “vulgar or irreverent speech or action.” The dictionary reveals that swearwords signify “profane or obscene expression usually of surprise or anger” or “the use of language considered offensive or taboo especially in movies and films.”

Fourth, *Longman English Dictionary* (1990: 383) defines the word expletive as “an often meaningless word used for swearing, to express violent feeling; oath or curse: ‘damn’, ‘shit’, and ‘fuck’ are all used as expletives.” However, in the *WordWeb Electronic and Online Dictionary* expletives are said to be used as “profane or obscene expression usually of surprise or anger.”

Fifth, *Cambridge Advance Learner’s Dictionary* (2008: 1473) indicates that swearing is the use of “a rude or offensive word” whereas profanity refers to “disrespect for a god or a religion often through language.”

These dictionary previews mentioned above have perceived profanity and swearing as near synonyms throughout the present study in the sense that “profanity [is] often used as a synonym for swearing and cursing” (Montagu, 1967: 105). The two concepts overlap, for they share an amount of verbal offensiveness that speakers use consciously or unconsciously. Nevertheless, swearing still makes a super ordinate for profanity which “is a form of swearing” (ibid).

Notwithstanding, according to *Longman English Dictionary* (1990), *Cambridge Dictionary* (2008) and *WordWeb Electronic and Online Dictionary* dictionaries, swearing has different connotations, which contradict in nature. Swearing is either meant to utter profanities like ‘fuck’, ‘damn’ among many others or to declare solemnly and formally as true swear of oath; e.g., ‘before God I swear I am innocent’.

Although ‘swearing’ has two different English perceptions (Abd el-Jawad, 2000: 217), it seems that swearing in Arabic does not have the exact sense of English. While the Arabic term القسم (lit. ‘to swear an oath’) appears to make the right literal equivalent for the English term ‘to swear’, Arabic has other terms like لعن أو أقذع as equivalents but not as synonyms for the English concepts of profanity, swearing or cursing. The Arabic unabridged monolingual dictionary; *Lisānūl-Arab’* (henceforth LA), provides a number of words used as Arabic curses and expletives. For example, the term لعن (lit. ‘to deprive from Allah’s mercy’) in the expression اللعن... بمعنى اللعن كالثنينة (lit. ‘to damn or curse’), القذع أو الإقذاع (lit. ‘to profane or to utter obscene’) is another term provided in LA originally means الفحش من الكلام الذي يُفصح ذكْرُهُ (lit. ‘obscene indecent profane utterances of which mentioning is

dislikeable in public'). Profanity indicates another meaning رماء بالفحش وأساء القول فيه (lit. 'to swear at someone using indecent offensive words').

It ensues therefore that the dictionary surveys indicate two different, rather controversial concepts of swearing. One assumes religious and juridical sense whereas the other refers to taboo expressions of certain functions. In the words of Abd el-Jawad (2000: 217):

Swearing [...] in its original form [...] is defined as the 'act of adding a linguistic formula to what one says or does' as a 'solemn or formal appeal to God [...] in witness to the truth of a statement, or the binding character of a promise or undertaking. However, as used widely in [w]estern communities, swearing does not only refer to the act of making oaths but more of that to the act of using the tabooed, profane, bad [...] language forms for cursing or insulting others or in the expression of anger.

Accordingly, the present study will approach the latter sense of swearing with much regard to the translation of English profanities into Arabic subtitles. Cross-cultural differences between the two peoples – Arab and Americans will receive due attention. The discussion will entirely consider semantic, pragmatic and the related semiotic aspects of the translation.

Jay and Danks (1977) as cited in Jay (1981: 30) claim that "dirty words are unique because connotative meaning is dominant over denotative meaning, and these two aspects of meaning can be easily separated [,so] dirty-word expressions are typically interpreted connotatively." In this sense, Jay (1981: 30) also proceeds to confirm that:

An interesting question is how connotation and denotation affect our feelings about the objects or people so described. Dirty-word analysis is helpful [...] because it is easy to separate these aspects using the same word. If the meaning of a message containing a dirty word is interpreted connotatively, the message usually expresses negative emotion. Interpreted denotatively, the dirty-word message should not express such a strong negative emotion toward the referent. [...] For example, when we call someone a bastard we are not questioning the legitimacy of his birth but expressing dislike for him. Connotation is generally linked to emotional expression, not to denoting a specific feature of the person in question. E.g. 'Bill is shitty' would normally express the speaker's dislike for Bill. However, if Bill is a one-year-old with diarrhoea, then the description may be denotatively accurate.

Jay suggests two notions about profane words; that these rude abusive linguistic chunks should not be taken in their literal or technical sense (ibid: 30). Nevertheless, having in mind that profanities are thought to be finer in their connotation, no one can disregard the amount of verbal aggression conveyed by uttering swearwords. Take this example which shows the way the negotiator irreverently refers to himself; saying 'I'm the son of the bitch' [sic]<sup>1</sup>. Although the profane expression produces a shameful vulgarism on word

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<sup>1</sup> From the film 'Negotiator (1998)'.

level, its implicature indicates an emphasis of anger but not any sign of illegitimacy on the part of the speaker.

Claiming that dictionary meaning cannot equal the real sense of obscenity that the original situation occurrence can, Ames (1990: 193) demonstrates that:

In the narrow sense, obscene words are those words in a language that are defined by the existing sociolinguistic codes as belonging to a class not to be uttered in “polite society”, that is to say, within the respectable functioning of the official culture.

Ames point of view is helpful in recognising the occurrence of vulgar expressions depending on the profaner’s standpoint either within group relation (Dewaele (2004: 205) or within formal or public situations. A group of vandals, for instance may swear at each others so as to concrete their unity whereas a police officer might profane against a criminal to indicate another purpose.

Since “profanity and obscenity are encountered so frequently in the street and [...] increasingly monotonous regularity on the television and at the movies” (Hughes, 2006: 3), we can claim that translating profane words into Arabic subtitles remains a translation troublesome that translators unavoidably encounter. Consequently, subtitlers are expected to seek a potential treatment at the ever least translation loss of both quality and form.

A question is to be raised about the nature of swearwords so that people can well recognise and rightly perceive them. More explanation is meant to reveal their actual use, context and interpretation. Montagu (1967: 105) defines swearing as “the act of verbally expressing the feeling of aggressiveness that follows upon frustration in words possessing strong emotional associations.” More specifically, Drescher (2000) as cited in Dewaele (2004: 205) defines swearwords as:

S-T [swear-taboo] words are multifunctional, pragmatic units which assume, in addition to the expression of emotional attitudes, various discourse functions. They contribute, for instance, to the coordination of the interlocutors, the organisation of the interaction and the structuring of verbal exchange; in that they are similar to discourse markers.

Drescher (2000) as cited in Dewaele (ibid) says that “the use of S-T words is also a linguistic device used to affirm in-group membership and establish boundaries and social norms for language use.” Ljung (1984) as cited in Karjalainen (2002: 21) also sees swearwords as the “expressions that are seen as signals of certain emotions and attitudes in a speaker using taboo words in a non-technical way.” In addition Jay (1992) as cited in

Janschewits and Jay (2008: 268) demonstrates that “swearing is the use of taboo language with the purpose of expressing the speaker’s emotional state and communicating that information to listeners.” Likewise, Anderson and Hirsh (1984) as cited in Karjalainen (2002: 22) claim that “a swearword should have a taboo connotation, socially unacceptable and used to manifest strong emotions and attitudes.”

Semantically, swearwords stem from different sources that profaners find suitable to harm others. Tysdahl for example categorises swearwords from a semantic perspective into ‘religion, sex, other bodily parts and functions [and] animals.’ (2008: 69)

In addition to Tysdal’s typology, the data of this study will provide additional types of swearwords. We can claim that profanities within the boundaries of the present study include other categories like the discriminating expressions against social classes on colour or ethnic group and against foreign people on ethnicity or religion.

Even though, people still find it surprising about the reasons and situations beyond the use of profanities. Profaners do not seem to use foul words as part of routinely uttered words. However, if profanities are arbitrarily and unpurposefully used, then profaners do have particular situations where they unintentionally use vulgar words. Indeed, people have more than one reason to swear. Claiming that the use of swearing usually belongs to its context, Janschewits and Jay (2008: 285) claim that:

Interpersonal swearing is a complex communicative act that is influenced by contextual variables such as speaker-listener relationship, social and [physical] setting, and the topic of discussion. As an analysis of the speech situations that give rise to swearing, much of what we have addressed in this paper contributes to our understanding of politeness behaviours regarding swearing in public. Generally speaking, swearing is appropriate and not impolite amongst peers in casual settings. In formal contexts and with participants of unequal status, swearing is not expected.

Janschewits and Jay’s intend to state that the pragmatic force of swearwords should not be judged out the basis of the situation where they occur. Moreover, swearwords can be divided into two broad categories namely propositional vs. non-propositional swearwords. Propositional are instances of utterances that one intends and probably pre-plans to say in advance. However, the non-propositional swearwords are probably uttered with no pre-intention in mind (ibid: 269-270).

### **1.1.2. Profanity in the West**

Strawson (1986) as cited in Abd el-Jawad (2000: 217) says “people [westerns] are free agents in that they are capable of being truly responsible for their actions.” This notion is taken within a western socio-cultural context where individuals take significant and dominant roles in ruling their private everyday life.

Swearing is as old as human being, for people simply swear to show their seriousness in proving righteous nature of whatever they deliver in certain forms of speech in given contexts (Abd el-Jawad, 2000: 220). Still, one wonders whether humankind has maintained old forms of swearing or not. Here, Abd el-Jawad (2000: 220) states that:

Historically, people used to swear by God, books, messengers, gospel, relatives, and worldly objects. This habit of swearing is an old universal practice used by people in different cultures to invoke the powers of what they swear by to provide a firm backing of something powerful to what they say, state, promise, contract, or claim. It is believed that the power of an oath is derived from its moral and spiritual value and force: the swearer puts all the valuable things he swears by on his word.

However, swearing seems to lose its sacred value, usage and meaning due to various manmade destructive factors which Echols (1980) as cited in (ibid) attributes to the regression of religion status in the west saying:

Since religion ceased to be a central dominant theme in [w]estern culture following the weakening of the power of the church in the modern age [...], it has become associated with interjectional oaths or the act of using profane and tabooed expressions in daily conversations for cursing, insulting or expressing anger.

Respectively, Kaye and Sapolsky (2004) as cited in Near, et al (2009: 117) claim that:

Although profanity has existed throughout human history, it has recently lost much of its status as a taboo linguistic practice, becoming more commonplace in everyday discourse as well as on network television.

This notion of Kaye and Sapolsky (ibid) reinforces Strawson and Echols’s (1980) argument regarding the acceptance of using rude and probably juicy language publicly widely without making them even milder.

### **1.1.3. Profanity in the Arab World**

Although profanity has recently manifested the western perception of swearing as it has been introduced above, swearing in Arabic still according to Abd el-Jawad (2000) in most cases refers to swearing an oath. In comparison to oath, Abd el-Jawad (ibid: 217) adds that “swearing has retained its original form and function in the Arab world but has not

developed the western senses of imprecation, cursing, blasphemy or the like.” In this regard, the Arab culture appeals to contradict with the western interpretation of swearing as being dominantly restricted to forms of obscene expressions. The refusal of using profanities in Arabic is viewed in verses of the Quran and within the Prophet’s Sunna (Hadith)<sup>1</sup>, which among social traditions, highly value morals even in everyone’s choice of verbal lexis, whereas vulgar or cursing language, though used, is considered as sinful and not recommended at all. Accordingly, Prophet Mohammad, says:

”ليس المؤمن بالطعان ولا اللعان ولا الفاحش ولا البذيء.“

[Muslim<sup>2</sup> Narration]

[Believers are neither foul-mouthed nor to be profaner nor vulgar-tongued.]

(Researcher’s translation)

”من قال في الإسلام شعراً مُقذعاً فلسأله هدر.“

(Researcher’s translation) [Who he creates profaning poetry against Islam loses his tongue.]

Clearly, the prophet’s saying prohibits Muslims from using foul expressions as profanities are regarded immoral and generally against the tenets of Islam. Accordingly, we can say that since Muslims are not expected to utter bad words, such expressions should neither be recommended nor be expressed nor be revealed within the interlingual contexts of any mode within **AVT**, subtitling in particular.

However, by observing Arabs everyday life, it is to be claimed that Arab society has been negatively influenced by the western culture as long as the political regimes have imposed a western model of ruling and ideology with much secular perspectives. Arabic language movies, which are shown on a range of Arab TVs and satellite channels, provide lots of swearwords and expletives, yet with less offensive sense than English swearwords. This seems to suit the proposition of Al-Qadi (2009: 18) “in Arabic, the context sometimes requires mentioning obscene expressions. If it is so, the native speakers’ recourse is to use some euphemistic formulas to mitigate that horrible meaning.” In this regard, ath-Tha‘ālibi claims that Arabic, prefers the use of equivocate formulas to express obscene situations (1991: 12). ath-Tha‘ālibi enhances his argument with real situations from the Quran, Hadith and Arabic literature. ath-Tha‘ālibi (1991: 12) proclaims his book as a model manipulating profane words in Arabic:

هذا كتاب [...] في الكنايات عما: يُستهجن ذكره، ويُستقبح نشره، أو يُستحيا من تسميته [...] أو يُسترفع ويُصان عنه؛ بألفاظ مقبولة تؤدي المعنى [...] وتُحسنُ القبيح.

This book explores metonymies regarding whatever utterance taken as offensive, ill-favoured and shameful to mention but replacing them with acceptable utterances that make sense and would in turn soften vulgar items.

(Researcher’s translation)

<sup>1</sup> The speeches, practices and recommendations of Prophet Mohammad

<sup>2</sup> Narrator and collector of Prophet Mohammad Traditions.

Obviously, ath-Tha‘ālibi (1991: 27) provides some Arabic examples in which profanities or obscene words are avoided as in *عَمِدْتَ إِلَى مَالِ اللَّهِ فَوَضَعْتَهُ تَحْتَ ذَيْلِكَ* (lit. ‘you have deliberately seized public wealth and put it beneath your tail’). According to ath-Tha‘ālibi (ibid) the word *ذَيْلِكَ* (lit. tail) is used to mean *إِسْتِكَ* (lit. your ass) but the speaker preferred the euphemistic option *ذَيْلِكَ* over the dysphemistic use. The following verses from the Quran are mentioned here to provoke the notion of ath-Tha‘ālibi regarding the euphemistic nature of Arabic. The verses show how the language of the Quran avoids the straightforwardly mentioning the process of intercourse as the terms *أَفْضَى بَعْضُكُمْ* and *تَغَشَّاهَا* indicate.

فَلَمَّا تَغَشَّاهَا حَمَلَتْ حَمْلًا خَفِيًّا فَمَرَّتْ بِهِ.<sup>1</sup>

(lit. When he had sexual relation with her, she became pregnant and she carried it about lightly.<sup>2</sup>)

وَكَيْفَ تَأْخُذُونَهُ وَقَدْ أَفْضَى بَعْضُكُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ وَأَخَذْنَ مِنْكُمْ مِيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا.<sup>3</sup>

(lit. ‘And how could you take it (back) while you have gone in unto each other.’<sup>4</sup>)

#### 1.1.4. Arab Culture, Subtitling in Arabic and Swearing

Subtitling like other forms of AVT “allow audio-visual programmes to travel across linguistic barriers” (Díaz-Cintas, 2008: 2), and likely “make audio-visual text accessible to viewers who would otherwise have limited access to the original text” (Neves: 2005: 133). So, it is claimed that subtitles, being the device of the TL audience to access into the ST (Gottlieb 2004: 86); (Gambier 2009: 18), need to consider the TL’s conventions which alternatively require a great sense of fidelity with due respect to the so called norms of the target language and culture.

Hence, Chen, Sh. (2004: 122) perceives subtitling as “a process of information transfer from the SL to the TL and information construction in the TL, following the TL writing conventions.” The view of Chen, Sh. as embedded in his term ‘construction’, clarifies that the process of translation seems to have a double shift between the ST and TT. The shift is expected to occur when the spoken dialect is rendered into a written variety.

As for Gambier (2009: 18) subtitling “involves the shift from the oral to the written code, and transposition from one or several languages to another or perhaps to two others, as in the case of bilingual subtitling.” Accordingly, and since Arabic has only one written dialect

<sup>1</sup> (Surah Al A’raf (7), Verse: 189)

<sup>2</sup> Khan and Al-Hilali’s (1419 H.- 1998) Translation.

<sup>3</sup> (Surah An-Nisa (4), Verse: 21)

<sup>4</sup> Khan and Al-Hilali’s (1419 H.- 1998) Translation.

(Hatim and Mason 1997: 90) originally relying on classical Arabic, Arabic subtitles should therefore follow those norms of the written dialect. According to Roman (1990) as cited in Gadacha (1998: 19):

Given that the case is rather peculiar, I suggest we should rely on the Quran on the ground that it is considered as the final authority, the highest linguistic achievement of the Arabic language that everybody should try humbly to emulate. In other words, nothing should be written which does not comply with the linguistic, idiomatic and rhetorical conditions obtained in the Quran.

Consequently, as subtitling was firstly originated in the West, it is arguable whether this sub-mode of translation is expected to transfer its original conventions and norms i.e., technical, lingual or cultural to other non-western subtitling countries like the Arab world. In view of Gamal, only technical perspectives of European subtitling – number of lines per subtitle, their positioning and alike were adopted in Egypt for subtitling, whereas lingual-cultural related issues have been localised or approximated in accordance with Arab culture (2008: 3). However, cultural and political factors have played a significant role, so Gamal (ibid) states “the censor general would determine whether a film would be released into the local market before it was subtitled.” In view of that, Gamal (2008: 3) says that “no explicit sexual language, no blasphemous reference to the Almighty Allah, prophets or revealed books and no swearwords were allowed.” Further more, Gamal (ibid) views subtitling into Arabic as “a practice of rendering a foreign spoken discourse into a refined Arabic written text”. So “; swearwords had to be sanitised, sexual references deleted, and blasphemous references expunged” (Gamal, 2008: 4).

We can claim then that despite the importance of syntactic, semantic and pragmatic dealings within the Arab cultural and lingual context when subtitles are done, European style of technical constraints should somehow be modified to suit certain conventions of written Arabic namely, inflectional remarks and the Arabic script of various fonts, the question that Gamal (2008) has excluded from his argument. Yet, Yahgout (2002: 78) indicates that Arabic is distinguished from English in that:

هناك فرق ملحوظ بين العربية من ناحية والإنجليزية من ناحية أخرى، ذلك أن اللغة العربية لغة مُعرَّبة.  
[Arabic is considerably different from English in the sense that Arabic is an inflectional language.] (Researcher's translation)

It seems that Yahgout intends to say that Arabic inflection markers do not only function as signs of format but they also affect meaning and disambiguate vagueness.

Meanwhile, Thawabteh (forthcoming) initiates a crucial debate concerning the most suitable Arabic script and fonts that subtitlers may opt for. He distinguishes between two categories of fonts namely preferable or unpreferable on the basis of the space they capture on screen, their form or appearance and consequently the impact of certain formats on viewers' ability to recognise words and to read them fast. Thawabteh's (ibid) attempt to categorise Arabic fonts with regard to subtitling is expected to initiate a set of constraints for subtitles in Arabic.

However, Athamneh and Zitawi (1999) as cited in Zitawi (2003: 238) support Gamal's afore mentioned view towards achieving an Arab standpoint in **AVT**, their argument is based on taking into consideration the integration of Arab language, culture and religion when translating from English:

Arab translators arguably have more factors to aware of while translating children's cartoon for dubbing purposes. They attempt to adapt the [ST] in accordance with religious, cultural, educational and marketing considerations. Swearwords [...] for example are omitted or replaced with totally different words.

So, we can generally expand or generalise the argument of Athamneh and Zitawi (1999) to include interlingual subtitling as an English-Arabic-English practice, where adaptation and manipulation become vital when rendering English dialogues with much vulgar words into **MSA** subtitles.

## 1.2. Diglossia

Although subtitling is an integral translation task of both textual and technical elements, subtitles are not only restricted to spatiotemporal or other technical standards but also to other linguistic factors. In this regard, Parmiggiani (2002) as cited in (Brutti 2006: 168) demonstrates that:

The transformation from the oral script to the written subtitles also contributes to the quality of the language, which becomes more formal and neat, almost devoid of the many sociolinguistic and pragmatic markers that give spoken language its natural flavour.

As for the present study, language shift from a **SL** low variety into a **TL** higher one seems to be inevitable. The data within the boundaries of this study will indicate occurrences of interlingual diglossia from English into Arabic. The following example indicates a diglossic situation as the English clause 'I'm gonna pin medal' is subtitled in Arabic as سأعلق وساماً. (see also example 8 in 4.2.3.3.)

ST:  
I'm gonna pin a medal

TT:  
سأعلق وساماً على صدر

on an Iraqi named **Saddam**.

عراقي يدعى (صدام)  
(Crash: 2004)

It is claimed that no one of the spoken or informal Arabic dialects are written but the **MSA** (Trudgill, 1974: 120), which originally stems from the classical Arabic profoundly inspired by the language of the Quran (see Gadacha, 1998 in 1.1.4. above) and other Arabic poetics of literature. Furthermore, “the religious aspect plays a great role in preserving [its] high variety” (Rammal: 1997). Hatim and Mason (1997: 90) add “classical Arabic is felt by many to be the only variety compatible with the written mode.” Ferguson (1959) as cited in Wardhaugh (2010: 85) argues that “in the Arabic situation, the two varieties are Classical Arabic (**H**) [high] and the various regional colloquial varieties (**L**) [low].” Ferguson (1959) as cited in Wardhaugh (ibid) also clarifies that “diglossic situation exists in a society when it has two distinct codes to show clear functional separation; that is one code is employed in one set of circumstances and the other in an entirely different set.” Likewise, Trudgill (1974: 117) views diglossia as “a particular kind of language standardisation where two distinct varieties of a language exist side by side throughout the speech community and where each of the two varieties is assigned a definite social function.” In accordance with that, and assuming that profanities are related to diglossia in translating English swearwords into Arabic subtitles, El-Badarien and Zughoul (2004: 451) argue:

The use of four letter words and other taboo words, odd usage, slang, and colloquialisms, which show the socioeconomic and educational level of the speaker [are not] reflected in the Arabic translation. Just the opposite, the speaker is reflected in the translation as a speaker of Standard Arabic, the High variety which is a prestige marker and a sign of a high level of education.

This argument raises the question of sociopragmatic and linguistic status that the **SL** speaker partially gains or loses in Arabic subtitles. Anyhow, translation loss seems to be unavoidable.

Ferguson (ibid), as cited in Hudson (1996: 49) and lately in Wardhaugh (2010: 85), clarifies the occurrences of diglossia where each of the low and high varieties probably takes place:

Diglossia is relatively a stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or local standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified [...] superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation.

Similarly, Higgins, et al (2002: 167) define diglossia as the:

Situation where two very different varieties of a language co-occur throughout a community of speakers, each having a distinct range of social functions. These varieties are felt to be alternatives by native speakers, each having a distinct range of functions [...]. It is customary to talk in terms of high variety and low variety, corresponding broadly to a difference in formality; the high variety is learnt in school, and tends to be used in religious contexts, on radio programmes, in serious literature, formal lectures, etc. Accordingly it has greater social prestige. The low variety, by contrast, is in family conversations, in other relatively informal settings.

This preview of diglossia indicates the considerable status that the **MSA** achieves. Rammal (1997) verifies that “Classical Arabic is highly esteemed and respected by the speakers of Arabic who insist on using it irrespective of their lack of good knowledge of its grammatical system, or even sophisticated vocabulary.” In reality, People do not make use of **MSA** in ordinary speeches but more likely in academic and official governmental contexts mostly as written and also in official and formal spoken discourses. However, local spoken dialects manifest everyday dialogues of Arabs in different countries. Although translators use some Arabic local dialects such as Syrian spoken dialect in dubbing, they cannot use local dialects in making subtitles but the **MSA**. This partially refers to the fact that **MSA** has been the only written variety of Arabic and that the spoken varieties once written as it sometimes occur in some novels (Trudgill, 1974: 120), still diverse at various levels of syntax, semantics and pragmatics as well.

### **1.2.1. Intralingual vs. Interlingual Diglossia**

It is assumed that diglossia has two distinct types – intralingual and interlingual. The ‘intralingual-diglossic’ situation occurs when two language varieties co-exist within one language like English or Arabic – **MSA** vs. spoken dialects. (see Trudgill (1974) and also Rammal (1997)). We claim another category of diglossia to be the ‘interlingual-diglossic’ in which the **SL** spoken dialect – colloquial English is translated into a higher **TL** written or spoken dialect, **MSA** for example. ‘Interlingual-diglossia’ is claimed here depending on El-Badarien and Zughoul who (2004) have generally reconsidered the influence of dialect shift on the translation in terms of syntactic, semantic and pragmatic prospects. ‘Interlingual diglossia’ will be used throughout the present study referring to the occurrence of **TT** variety higher or lower than the **ST**’s. El-Badarien and Zughoul provide English-Arabic examples of diglossia (see, *ibid*: 450-453). Gamal also mention the phenomenon of diglossia claiming that translation students are still trained to work on written texts which often lack diglossic occurrences (see Gamal, 2008: 6). It seems consequently, of significant for translation academic and training programmes to give

much attention to interlingual-diglossia context on which translation students and trainees can work.

Nevertheless, examples on ‘interlingual-diglossia’ like the one below are found in the data of the present study.

ST:  
Oh, so we **wanna** start playing the blame game,  
**huh?** Always want to blame the black man.

**Whoa, whoa, whoa,** (Morgan),  
You are one crazy **son of a bitch**.

TT:  
إذا الآن سنبدأ بالملامات؟  
تريدون دوماً لوم الرجل الأسود  
مهلاً، مهلاً، (مورغان)  
أنت وغد مجنون.  
(The Marine: 2006)

The example above shows the interlingual shift from informal English as in ‘wanna start’ and ‘whoa’ into formal Arabic as إذا الآن سنبدأ and مهلاً. The examples are real indications of ‘interlingual diglossia’ where shift in variety becomes unavoidable, simply because Arabic subtitles are usually in **MSA** which cannot reflect “forms like wanna, gonna, [and] the use of [...] taboo words, odd usage, slang, and colloquialisms” (El-Badarien and Zughoul, 2004: 451). More diglossic occurrences will be tackled when coming to handle analysis and discussion in **Chapter IV**.

### 1.3. Subtitling and Censorship

Referring to Gamal’s view that Arabic subtitles should be written in a refined language and that irreverent utterances about sacred topics should not be allowed (Gamal, 2008: 3). So, applying censorship to subtitles becomes crucial when translating English profanities into Arabic subtitles.

According to Scandura, censoring translation is applied to defend the **TT** audience from any inconvenient utterances that are culturally or religiously thought of as dreadful expressions (2004: 125). Obviously, translation censorship is also applied due to personal attitudes of viewers and translators in addition to national policy. Scandura accordingly (ibid: 126) states:

In the case of media translation, censorship is sometimes present when [...] subtitling mask[s] the deletion or replacement of erotic, vulgar or inconvenient sentences, allusions or references. But the most interesting aspect of censorship is perhaps the fact that it occurs not only when external sources like governments, distribution companies or networks force a show or movie to change something or translators to replace certain parts of their translations in order to adhere to what they consider “politically correct,” but also when translators become self-censors by being unaware of sexual connotations, puns on words, taboo elements, etc. or when, in spite of being aware of them, they still decide to modify them to protect the audience.

It seems that censoring translation is thought to be a preventive measure that translators or any other related contributors apply to forbid the transference of **ST** threatening verbal aggression into the TT. Regarding an English-Arabic potential context within this study, applying somehow censorship to subtitles become critically essential to reduce the offensive load of profanities that English speaking movies generally comprise. However, censoring the Arabic translation appears to turn things badly wrong and translation loss is then become a straightforward consequence. However, translation loss is sometimes deliberately done for cultural, religious or social considerations. For example, favouring politeness to rudeness, gentleness to profanity becomes a forceful factor that urges translators to apply censorship. In this regard, and from a translation broader perspective, Baker (1992: 234) argues:

In some translation contexts, being polite can be far more important than being accurate. A translator may decide to omit or replace whole stretches of text which violate the reader's expectations of how a taboo subject should be handled—if at all—in order to avoid giving offence.

Roberto and Veiga (2003) as cited in Neves (2005: 219) also argues that “translating taboo language is one of the most complex tasks for translators, as it is particularly marked by cultural and sociological references and value mores.” Neves (ibid) claims that “guidelines for interlingual subtitling are less worried about censorship and often refer to the fact that taboo language is far more aggressive in its written form than when used orally.” Clearly, Neves claims that language variety usually censors the occurrence of vulgar juicy utterances. So, it seems that this proposition of Neves proves the pre-mentioned argument of ath-Tha‘ālibi about masking indecent and vulgar expressions (see section 1.1.3 above). **MSA** is therefore unable to explicit vulgar utterances unless they are toned down or made milder. Moreover, Gamal (2008) talks about the topics that an Arab translator or editor mostly censors. He introduces some rules that censorship usually imposes on the Arabic subtitles of foreign movies. He (2008: 3) (emphasis is original) explains that:

The emerging of subtitling industry worked closely with the censorship office applying the rules it imposed on foreign films particularly to the language of subtitling. No explicit sexual language, no blasphemous reference to the Almighty, prophets or revealed books and no swearwords were allowed. Thus the language of subtitling appearing on screens emerged as a genre *sui generis*. This issue was to become more noticeable with the advent of television and with it a growing body of viewer criticism.

In view of that, it appears that Arab countries are expected to censor the Arabic subtitles of English films regardless the **SL** verbal and nonverbal content. However, censorship will be at the end a major factor for translation loss with regard to **AVT**.

#### **1.4. Subtitling vs. Translation**

It seems that translation develops new sub-modes with a bit change in aims, function and audience. According to Newmark (2003: 56) “the form of a translation may change depending on its function [...] in accordance with the different [...] conventions of the target language culture.” And so, subtitling, as a translation sub-discipline, has some norms that make it distinguished from written translation, for example. The norms include linguistic-, audience- and technical-related issues.

Translation, the transfer of “meaning from one text and integrating it into another language for a new and sometimes different readership” (Newmark, 2003: 55), has many disciplines, rather with a wider range of scopes. Translation inspires all other sub-modes; subtitling, dubbing, interpreting and voice-over. However, exploring each mode of translation in particular is essential in the epoch of having critical changes at both levels of theory and practice. For example, Lukeyn (1991) as cited in Nedergaard-Larsen (1993: 212) verifies:

Subtitling [...] consists of three interlocking parts of theoretically separate, but in practical terms, simultaneous activities the transfer from one language to another, an abbreviation or condensation of the text; the transfer from the spoken to the written language.

Subtitlers also have particular issues yet to think of while doing their projects. This is a consequent of technical revolution in translation utilising the hi-tech revolutionary means of communication and media. Finally, in spite of all divergent modes, translation appears to be the same but with more complications. Similarly, Gottlieb and Gambier (2001: X) clarify that:

Translation is not a simple transfer from one language to another, but a complex process, a set of activities including at least such basics as review, layout, respect for writing and punctuation conventions, converting currencies and ways of giving time, dates and addresses, minding legal, fiscal and security regulations, etc.

In addition, Orero (2004: VIII) explains that “technological developments which have changed paper oriented society towards media oriented society have also made **AVT** the most dynamic field of translation studies.” The shift from paper to media refers to the widespread of TV satellite and internet channels utilising the accessible open space at a

time of rapid demand for translated versions of foreign language speaking movies. Chiaro (2008: 247) adds:

Furthermore, in an age which has generated so many new forms of communication, the time honoured typology of translation in which written words on paper were converted from language A into language(s) B, C and D seems outnumbered by 'other' forms of translation which go from the various categories of interpreting to present-day digital translations required for videogames on portable consoles and mobile phones. It is especially the latter category of translation, namely those for the screen (i.e. film, TV, DVD, videogames, hypertexts, on the World Wide Web, etc) which may well be among the most abundant translations carried out at present.

Although subtitling is a sub-mode of translation, the subtitler, being a translator though, still has much more effort to do and many other elements to consider. Neves (2004: 135) contrasts **AVT** to literary translation in view of fidelity and adds that:

Fidelity factor is dictated by constraints that lie beyond words or languages. Whereas in written translation fidelity lies in [...] the source-text or the target-text, in [**AVT**] fidelity is particularly due to an audience that, like the receiver of simultaneous interpretation, is in need of communicative effectiveness, rather than in search of artistic effect.

The translator of a written text, for example, has a text to work on with little attention to other external factors. And so, the reader will have only the **TT** in hand with no effect of the **ST**. In case of subtitling, the translator is expected to think of all factors; i.e., technicalities, target audience, culture etc. Even viewers are expected to infer and add to the verbal auditory of the film through other visual and nonverbal content (Philips 2002 as cited in Gamal: *ibid*). In addition, viewers of subtitled movies still have the **ST** – film dialogues to compare with the subtitles. In view of Gottlieb (1998: 245) who differentiates between the translator being a 'monosemiotic'-text dealer and the 'polysemiotic' translator (subtitler) finally indicates:

Monosemiotic texts use only one channel of communication and the translator therefore controls the entire medium of expression. A good example would be an un-illustrated book where the medium of expression is restricted to writing. [However,] in polysemiotic texts, [...] the translator is constrained by the communicative channel: visual or auditory. In films and film programmes, the translator [subtitler] has four simultaneous channels to consider: verbal auditory channel, the non verbal auditory channel, the verbal visual channel and the nonverbal visual channel.

In accordance with that, since the film has multiple conveyors of meaning – Gottlieb's four channels, subtitlers can neither provide their translation depending on a film script nor be satisfied with the meaning transferred through the auditory channel – sound tracks of characters narrating the theme of a filmed story (Gamal, 2009: 8). (see also Gottlieb: 1998: 245). It is obvious that subtitling is not more than a device that facilitates the access of

foreign viewers into a foreign movie (Kapsaskis, 2008: 42). So, subtitles should not be taken out of their context – the movie as a unity.

Similarly, regarding the analogy between subtitlers and literary (text) translators, Gottlieb (1991) as cited in Nedergaard-Larsen (1993: 214) explores that:

A literary translator has nothing but words to communicate a message which both in form, content and reference to time and place is far removed from the reader he believes to be translating for [...]. Compared to certain types of literature it is relatively easy to obtain a successful translation in the visual media, precisely due to constraints they impose – on the translator as well.

Spatial elements refer to the occurrence of subtitles at the screen's bottom with two lines of maximum forty characters each. Temporal factors, on the other hand, refer to the duration that each subtitle can last on the screen (ibid: 214). In this regard, text translation vs. subtitling survey indicates code switching from oral discourse into written subtitles while the **ST** sound tracks with all audio-visual components still present at the time of showing the **TT** subtitles on screen (De Linde and Kay 1999: 3).

### 1.5. Subtitling Constraints

Furthermore, it becomes vital to introduce some norms or guidelines of subtitling. Karamitroglou (2000: 5) reviews Gottlieb (1994), Lukeyn et al (1991) and Delabastita (1989) and says “subtitling can be defined as the translation of the spoken (or written) **ST** of an audio-visual product into a written **TT** which is added onto the images of the original product, usually at the bottom of the screen.” Karamitroglou (ibid: 10) also argues that:

It is true that there are a number of constraints that derive mainly from the audio-visual nature of the original and target products and which distinguish [**AVT**] from (written) literary translation, the latter being the main inspiration for general translation theory.

Like Gottlieb (1991), Karamitroglou (ibid: 10) argues that subtitling has many particular constraints that distinguished it from other disciplines of translation, typical written translation in particular. These interdependent factors include spatiotemporal, audio-visual, **ST** cultural elements in addition to other semiotics. Gottlieb (2004: 86) says:

As for semiotic texture, films and other multi-channel text types- in the following referred to as polysemiotic- from a basis for translation very different to one-channel types- monosemiotic texts. When translating polysemiotic texts, the content of the non-verbal channels has to be taken into account. What is expressed monosemiotically in a novel, solely through writing, occupies four channels in a film: dialogue, music and effect, picture, and – a smaller part-writing (displays and [subtitles]).

Gottlieb (2004: 86) defines subtitling as “the rendering in a different language of verbal messages in filmic media, in the shape of one or more lines of written text, presented on

the screen in [synchronisation] with original verbal message.” Clearly, Gottlieb ignores the film’s none verbal elements like body language, signs and gestures. Nevertheless, Lately, Gottlieb (2005: 19) redefines subtitling as the “written language acting as an additive and synchronous semiotic channel, as part of a transient and polysemiotic text.”

### **1.5.1. Troubles Threatening Subtitling**

Subtitling has many problematic issues for translators and researchers to consider. Antenini and Chiaro (2005) as cited in Chiaro (2008: 251) list instances of troublesome issues subtitlers probably face like:

Cultural-specific references [...], lingual-specific turbulence (translating terms of address, taboo language, written language, etc.), areas of overlapping between language and culture (songs, rhymes, jokes, etc) and visuals (culture specific examples void of language).” (see also Nedergaard-Larson: 1993)

Moreover, Gamal has classified subtitling difficulties into two broad categories namely linguistic and technical. The former includes issues like high formality, deletion as main strategy, clichéing of taboos and mistranslation of cultural specifics, free translation of movie titles and that language of subtitling becomes a genre in addition to some potential linguistic mistakes. However, the technical troubles refer to the size and colour of subtitles in addition to spatiotemporal factors (2008: 5-6).

### **1.5.2. Technical Constraints of Subtitling**

In this section, we review the technical constraints of subtitling in accordance with De Linde and Kay (1999), Karamitroglou (2000) and Gottlieb’s (2004) definitions of this dynamic mode of translation. The constraints include spatiotemporal rules in addition to synchronisation.

#### *1.5.2.1. Spatiotemporal Factors*

It seems that subtitles cannot be made depending on the **TT** and **ST** only but they are dependent to other technical factors. These primarily belong to elements of time, space, and the audio-visual material in addition to synchronisation. In other words, the **TT** two-line subtitles at the bottom of the screen are spontaneously presented against the **ST**, which is conveyed through the verbal auditory channel – movie dialogues. Similarly, De Linde and Kay verify that subtitling has few conditions that put more impact on the translation product. These include text combined to sound and image in addition to viewer’s reading capacity and the spatiotemporal restrictions (1999: 5). Yet, these constraints “place special

demands on a subtitler, meaning that the transfer of dialogue into written subtitles is not a straight forward [issue] of transcribing a lexical sequence” (ibid: 6) but rather the integration of linguistic and technical parameters that the translator needs to deal with.

Since “the function of the subtitles is to make the narrative coherent to the viewers” (Schwarz, 2002), they are expected to be well formed and easily read. Meanwhile, subtitles need to correspond with the spoken dialogue in terms of time and the visual shot as well.

Link and Schubert (2008: 155) explains that:

The translation work done for subtitling is heavily restricted by time constraints. Leaving technical subtleties aside, one can say that a subtitle needs to be displayed while the corresponding piece of text is spoken. Since we normally speak faster than we read, it is necessary to shorten the target compared to the [ST]. Furthermore, the subtitle needs to be displayed for at least as much time as is required for an ordinary reader to read and understand it. And finally, it is necessary to stop displaying the subtitle when there is a cut in the film, because, when a new picture appears, the human eye will start reading the subtitle again.

Karamitroglou introduces other technical constraints that subtitlers in particular should take into account. First of all, subtitles in their format aim to “provide maximum appreciation and comprehension of the target film as a whole by maximising the legibility and readability of the inserted subtitled text.” (1998)

#### *1.5.2.1.1. Spatial Factors*

Karamitroglou also introduces subtitles spatial regulations to indicate that the placement of subtitles usually of two lines with approximately thirty five characters each (ibid) but “not more than forty” (De Linde and Kay: 1999: 6). According to Karamitroglou none of the two lines should capture more than eight per cent ‘1/12’ from the whole screen. As for font type and colour, pale white with transparent background and font type without serifs are recommended (1998). De Linde and Kay (1999: 6) also clarify that “the actual space of each subtitle is also a function of [...] the comparative properties of source and target languages.” In Arabic language, for example, “the elision of short vowels, and the use of superscripts” enable Arabic subtitles to capture less space on screen (ibid). E.g., the Arabic present verb يستطيع (lit. is able to) becomes يستطيع (lit. is able to) when preceded by the jussive particle لم. So, the word يستطيع will become of five characters instead of six. Examples on Arabic vowel ellipsis when vowels occur at the end of imperative verbs. This verse from the Quran; ادع<sup>1</sup> إلى سبيل ربك بالحكمة والموعظة الحسنة indicates the elision of the

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<sup>1</sup> Surah An-Nahl (16), verse (125)

vowel ‘و’ from the verb أَدْعُ originally أَدْعُو (lit. call to). Obviously, the vowel ‘و’ is substituted by the nominative marker ضمة ‘damma<sup>1</sup>’ ( ’ ) (see Fayyad, 1995: 281-2).

#### *1.5.2.1.2. Temporal Factors*

Another audio-visual crucial topic is the subject of time, which according to De Linde and Kay (ibid: 6) refer to “the need for synchronicity and the reading speeds of viewers.” Obviously, the element of time within interlingual subtitling refers to the period entailed for a subtitle to display, to last for on the screen and finally to disappear. It is acceptable for a two-line subtitle to last for six to three seconds whereas a one-word subtitle takes three to a half second (Karamitroglou: 1998).

#### *1.5.2..2. Synchronisation*

As subtitles are made of integral elements; space, time, spoken and written discourses beside image, these parts ought to go in harmony with each others. That is synchronisation “where (written) linguistic expressions must coordinate with the visual image.” (De Linde and Kay, 1999: 7) De Linde and Kay (ibid) furthermore explain that synchronisation includes the harmonious integration of the verbal and nonverbal four channels of meaning in the movie. (see also Gottlieb: 1998: 245 in 1.1.4. above)

### **1.5.3. Linguistic Related Issue: Punctuation**

As long as subtitles follow the conventions of written texts mainly the **TT**'s (Chen, Sh. 2004: 122), punctuation marks should be applied to make the subtitles more coherent and easier to follow. Punctuations can help reader to perceive the speaker's tone of speech when asking questions or making an exclamation for example.

Punctuation is a further crucial factor to affect meaning and style in subtitles. Hatim and Mason say translators are expected to consider punctuation marks as crucial elements of functional significance and not as neutral markers of form. E.g., the three dot ellipsis (...) is used to express hesitation whereas exclamation mark (!) intends to reflect surprise (1997: 78). Thus, applying punctuation marks will become significant even in subtitles as written texts. Punctuations also include the three sequence dots which come at the end of the first subtitles whereas the linking three dots come at the beginning of the next subtitle. In both cases, no space character will be inserted and the next subtitle should not be capitalised. Dashes are also of significance as they are used with an initial one-character space to show

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<sup>1</sup> A diacritic marker placed above the letter to represent the short Arabic vowel /u/.

the case of having dialogue between speakers (Karamitroglou 1998). (see also Schwarz, 2002)

## 1.6. Translation Strategies in Subtitling

Translation “strategies involve the basic tasks of choosing the foreign text to be translated and developing a method to translate it” (Venuti 1998: 240). It is obvious that Venuti provides a broad definition for translation strategies and that gives translators, especially subtitlers a range of procedures of opt for.

**AVT** requires a range of strategies translators selectively opt for in accordance with subtitling verbal conventions and many other technical restrictions. Likewise, Alderman and Díaz-Cintas (2009:14) claim that:

[The] most distinctive feature of subtitling is the need for economy of translation. There is rarely enough space and time to fill all potentially transferable material in an audio-visual programme onto the stipulated number of lines and characters.

It seems that text reduction will be a common strategy as in subtitling “the dialogue has to be condensed, which in turns means selecting particular features of the **ST** to be omitted, by straight deletion or reductive paraphrasing (De Linde and Kay, 1999: 4). In view of Liu and Zhang (2009: 213):

In order not to breach [technical] limitations, subtitlers adopt different strategies in their attempts to convey film plots or content to [**TL**] audiences, thereby creating an interface between culture and technology in the context of translation.

Notwithstanding, word economy in subtitling seems to be an audience-bound approach regarding their speed of reading or to other considerations like avoiding redundancy and vulgar obscenity (Gottlieb 2004: 86). It is to claim that subtitles being the **TT** provide fewer words than what the **ST** dialogues do. However, this reduction is not always an optional choice but relatively technical and pragmatic-related.

Translation strategies have been tackled by many scholars of translation in general and **AVT** in particular. The scholars include Venuti, Gottlieb, among many others. Venuti; for example, distinguishes between two major strategies of translation, namely ‘domestication’ and ‘foreignisation’. The former occurs when the **ST** element corresponds with the **TL** and culture. The latter, on the other hand, preserves the **ST**’s essence in the **TT** (Venuti, 1998:

240). Hence, the product of translation is either **TT** oriented – domesticated or **ST** oriented – foreignised. Nonetheless, since culture captures a considerable deal of the present study, and since two divergent apart cultures will be in clash in terms of vulgar expressions, domestication with its sub-categories is thought to be more preferable than foreignisation. We can claim that opting for foreignisation to translate English profanities into Arabic subtitles will be of harm to both Arab culture and audience. Whereas, opting for domestication will help translators to avoid the use of aggressive English swearwords in Arabic.

More translation strategies will be reviewed below, particularly those expected to suit the translating of English profanities expressions into Arabic subtitles. The strategies have to consider the **TL** audience’s expectations to read refined Arabic subtitles (Gamal, 2008: 7) that respect their beliefs and values. The following strategies have been discussed by translation scholars like, Baker (1992), Venuti (1995 and 1998), Gottlieb (1998), Larsen (1992), Pedersen (2005), etc.

As a point of departure, opting for a translation strategy should not be arbitrarily done, in that translators or subtitlers need to analyse and explore their texts or discourses in advance. We claim that translators should depend on watching the filmic material they translate but not on scripts of the dialogues. Translators As for translating profanities, translators should carefully recognise the occurrence of vulgar locutions first so that they can decide on applying the best suitable strategy of translation (Schwarz, 2003).

#### 1. Substitution

This strategy indicates the replacement of the **ST** item with a different **TT**’s that provide a cultural substitution or paraphrasing (Pedersen, 2005). The following example indicated the strategy of substitution in that the English offensive word ‘finger-fucking’ is substituted with the Arabic item ‘التحرش’.

ST:	TT:
You sure to let me know next time you wanna <b>finger-fucking</b> my wife.	”أعلمني حين ترغب ثانية في التحرش بزوجتي.“ (Crash: 2004)

#### 2. Paraphrase with Sense Transfer

Translators usually opt for this strategy “when [...] the **ST** [item] is removed, but its sense or relevant connotations are kept by using a paraphrase” Pederson (2005). The example below shows how the translator opts for ‘عندما تخونني مع ذلك البدين’ in the Arabic subtitles as

a paraphrase for the **ST** profanities ‘**sucking that fat prick’s cock**’. It is obvious that the translator has retained the original sense of vulgarity using different and rather milder Arabic words.

ST:	TT:
I want her to think; about that When she’s <b>sucking that fat prick’s cock</b> .	أريدها أن تفكر في ذلك عندما تخونني مع ذاك البدين (Negotiator: 1998)

### 3. Situational Paraphrase

When using this strategy, the **ST** vulgar utterance is completely removed, and replaced by something that fits the situation, regardless of the sense of the original. The following exchange shows how the English ‘pimp’ is completely deleted. The translator paraphrases the item in Arabic using ‘المسئول عنهم’ to avoid the original sense of vulgarity.

ST:	TT:
Where is (sic) the other <b>whores</b> ? Where is their <b>pimp</b> ?	أين السافلات الأخريات؟ أين المسئول عنهم؟ (The Marine: 2006)

### 4. Omission

Translators opt for omission as a strategy by removing the **ST** item or part of it but rendering no **TT** equivalent. This is helpful in translating offensive language like swearwords. The dialogue below shows how the translator completely omits the English term ‘fucking’ as line two ‘لا مزيد من الكلام’ of the Arabic subtitle indicates.

ST:	TT:
-Omar, listen to me. -No more <b>fucking</b> talk.	- (عمر) أصغ إليّ - لا مزيد من الكلام (Negotiator: 1998)

## 1.7. Pragmatic Review

In this present research we follow the pragmatic contextual situational approach (see **Chapter III**), thus it is rather necessary to review some theoretical pragmatic related concepts.

### 1.7.1. Pragmatics

Pragmatics, could be considered as the invisible part of meaning masked beyond the evident sphere of words, simply refers to “the study of the principles which governs language in use.” (Malmkjar, 2002: 418)

### 1.7.2. Grice's Cooperative Principle

Discussions will shed light on principles of speech namely Grice's four maxims as they previewed in Yule and Brown (1983), Levinson (1983) and Baker (1992), they introduce Grice's cooperative principle of speech and the well known four maxims. Levinson (1983: 101) refers to Grice's principle of speech and simply reviewed it as:

Grice's second theory, in which he develops the concept of implicature, is essentially a theory about how people use language. Grice's suggestion is that there is a set of over-arching assumptions guiding the conduct of conversation. These arise; it seems from basic rational considerations and may be formulated as guidelines for this sort of four basic maxims of conversation or general principles underlying the efficient co-operative use of language, which jointly express a general co-operative principle.

Regarding the factors that govern the principle of communication, Grice (1975) as cited in Baker (1992: 225) also in Yule and Brown (1983: 31) states that communication participants are expected to "make [their] contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which [they] are engaged." By doing this, participants show their willingness and sincerity to observe such features of conversation as to conduct a right interpretation and understanding towards achieving the cooperation principles.

Having quoted Grice (1975), Baker (1992), Levinson (1983) and Yule and Brown (1983) introduce the four maxims that speakers observe whenever they conduct conversation. The maxims enhanced with examples from the present study's data will be like this:

#### 1.7.2.1. Maxim of Quality

Speakers, once observing this maxim should truly not falsely contribute their speech with adequate evidence. In the words of Baker (1992: 225) "try to make your contribution one that is true, specifically, do not say what you believe to be false [and] do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence." Consider the exchange between speakers (A) and (B) below where (B) cooperates with (A) regarding his question.

ST:	TT:
A- What shall we do with this bitch.	ماذا سنفعل بهذه السافلة؟ سنحصل على بوليصة تأمين.
B- We gonna have insurance policy.	(The Marine: 2006)

The exchange above indicates how speaker B cooperates with speaker (A) in that the former intends to say something beyond the exact words of his that the hijacked woman, referred to as an 'insurance policy', will be the guarantee to save the group's lives.

### 1.7.2.2. Maxim of Quantity

It is recommended that a speech should provide as much information as required no more, no less. Grice as cited in Levinson (1983: 101) says “make your contribution as informative as it is required for the current purposes of an exchange. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.” In the following exchange, speaker (B) replies giving as much information as speaker (A) requires, no more no less.

ST:

A- Is that the closest you can come to English?

B- Yes, I speak English.

TT:

- أهذه إجادتك للغة الإنجليزية؟

- أجل أتكلم الإنجليزية.

(Negotiator: 1998)

### 1.7.2.3. Maxim of Relevance

Participants' cooperative share is thought to be relevant to the topic they deal with. In this bilingual subtitle, speaker (A) neither cooperates to the question of speaker (B) in the **ST** nor does the translator, i.e., the **ST** question ‘what’s his name?’ is rendered the **TT** ‘ما اسمه؟’. The answer as the exchange below shows ‘He is Iraqi?’ إنه عراقي whereas the possibly right exchange seems to be like ‘what’s his name?’ (ما اسمه) and ‘his name is Saddam’ (اسمه صدام). Clearly, speaker (B) flouts the maxim of relevance as he provides irrelevant information that the other speaker expects. Speaker (A) has flouted the maxim of relevance to show that it is nonsense to mention the name of the man while he is not American but Iraqi. (see also Example III of 4.3 ahead)

ST:

A-Bruce?

The firefighter. The one who saved the camp or something Northridge.

**A-what’s his name?**

**B-He is Iraqi.**

A-He is Iraqi as well he looks black.

TT:

(بروس)؟

رجل الإطفاء الذي أنقذ القوم

الذين كانوا يخيمون في (نورث روج).

- ما اسمه؟

- إنه عراقي.

عراقي؟ لكنه يبدو أسود

(Crash: 2004)

### 1.7.2.4. Maxim of Manner

Words and utterances should be rather clear and definite, well ordered and not vague. So, speakers need to avoid obscure expressions and also to briefly and orderly express themselves (Baker, 1992: 225). Speaker B of the dialogue below gives an ambiguous answer showing no cooperative attempt to the conversation. Instead of answering the question directly by giving the name speaker (A) looks for, speaker (B) intends to tell his partner that there is something more important than giving the man’s name, his origin.

ST:

A- what's his name?

B- He is Iraqi.

TT:

- ما اسمه؟

- إنه عراقي

(Crash: 2004)

### 1.7.3. Politeness

Leech (1983: 131) claims that “politeness concerns a relationship between two participants whom we may call self and the other.” Accordingly, regarding his principle of politeness, Leech (2005: 6) demonstrates that:

The principle of politeness [...] is a constraint observed in human communicative behaviour, influencing us to avoid communicative discord or offence, and maintain communicative concord. What I mean by ‘communicative discord’ is a situation in which two people, x and y, can be assumed, on the basis of what meanings have been communicated, to entertain mutually incompatible goals.

So, politeness is observed by people interactive communication towards the exchange of verbal politeness (House, (1998: 54). Meanwhile, Lackoff (1990) as cited in House (ibid) defines politeness as “a system of interpersonal relations designed to facilitate interaction by minimising the potential for conflict and confrontation inherent in all human interchange.”

### 1.8. Framework of the Study

The present study will constitute five chapters, each of which contributes to produce a coherent study that tackles all interrelated issues regarding the translatability of English profanity into Arabic subtitles.

**Chapter I** sheds light on translation and subtitling theory in relation with cross-culture interaction. Translation strategies and troubles will receive due attention. In addition, the chapter will provide a brief description on the **AVT** situation in the Arab Region.

**Chapter II** previews the previous related studies carried out in the present study's proposition almost within the field of **AVT**, particularly subtitling.

**Chapter III** introduces the research methodology adopted to achieve the objectives of this study. The chapter includes the study's questions and hypotheses, state of problem, significance of the study, data and means of its collection and the method chosen for analysis.

**Chapter IV** introduces the samples the researcher extracted out of the data in a particular typology. The analysis includes examples that are semantically, culturally and

pragmatically analysed. This chapter is claimed to be the most significant as it directs the study towards conclusions and finally the possible findings. Examples of swearwords from the chosen movies, which are the **TT** subtitles in parallel to the **ST** dialogues, are categorised and then analysed to reveal the strategies opted for translation.

**Chapter V**, done in light of **chapter IV**, is a record of conclusions, findings and recommendations we finally conclude with at the end of this study.

### **1.9. Summary**

In this chapter, we attempted to briefly introduce **AVT** related theoretical issues in relation with translating English profanities into Arabic subtitles. We also looked into the status that **AVT** has gained in the Arab world. **Chapter I** is a review of crosscultural and interlingual communication between the Arab World and the West. In addition, this chapter discusses a number of translation strategies with due regard to pragmatic contexts. Finally, it has a skeleton of the study's five chapters.

# Chapter II

## **Chapter II**

### **Review of Related Literature**

#### **2.1. Overview:**

In this chapter we aim to provide a revision of the previous literature by providing a range of related researches the present study correlates to in topic and objectives. The previous researches deal with the translation of English swearwords into other languages mostly in the form of subtitles. Various research-works have also shown how culturally English swearwords differ when translated into other languages like Chinese, Spanish, etc. In this chapter we aim at contributing to the debate that the previous studies initiate regarding cultural and linguistic differences that translators attempt to deal with even to avoid when translating movie in particular. So, we expect **Chapter V** to correlate with the findings of some previous studies. Below are the previous related studies, chronologically listed in addition to some university theses made by Arab researchers, which deal with subtitling-relating topics.

#### **2.2. Review of the Studies**

##### **2.2.1. English Profanity in Swedish Translation**

Karjalainen (2002) who studied the translation of swearwords in two Swedish translations for the English novel ‘Catcher in the Rye’ argues that omission was the most frequent strategy the translators opted for throughout the Swedish versions. He concludes that swearwords are often omitted because “the Swedish language and culture are less prone to swearing than the English language and culture” (ibid: 5). Karjalainen also demonstrates that:

The discrepancies in the number of swearwords between the original novel and the translations do indeed seem to be a result of cultural differences [...] and attitudes towards swearing, rather than purely linguistic constraints (ibid: 44).

In his study, Karjalainen qualitatively analysed the occurrence of the swearwords in the Swedish translations in comparison with the English version. The study shows that nearly 400 swearwords out of 778 English vulgar terms were rendered into Swedish. Accordingly, the following comments can be made:

1. ‘Goddam’ or ‘Damn’

The former occurs 249 times whereas the latter occurs for 116 only. The two translators tended to leave swearwords out especially when they have neutral function. Karjalainen (2002: 47) says “Goddam and damn were the two swearwords most commonly left out of the translations” (ibid: 47).

2. ‘Hell’

The word ‘hell’, which seems unproblematic, appears 240 times in English but often omitted in the translations (ibid: 48).

3. ‘Bastard’ and ‘son of a bitch’

While the word ‘bastard’ appears 56 times, ‘son of a bitch’ happens only for 17. The Swedish translators used to delete these two offensive words very frequently (ibid: 49).

4. ‘Fuck’

It appears 6 times in the original novel. This word is problematic when rendered into Swedish as it does not have the same connotations it has in English (ibid: 51).

Karjalainen’s study shows that translators have left out nearly half of the swearwords or opted for less offensive items. And that translation loss becomes unavoidable mostly because Swearing differs in the two cultures and so they are rendered differently.

**Comment:**

It is obvious that Karjalainen (2002) has explored the translation of English swearwords into Swedish within written translation whereas the present study examines the translatability of profanities in Arabic subtitles. Nevertheless, Karjalainen’s (ibid) research seems to correlate with our study’s hypotheses in that the English swearwords are thought to be mostly omitted in Arabic subtitles just like what happens into Swedish. Yet, English swearwords are seen to be clichéd or toned down in Arabic subtitles due to cultural and linguistic considerations. It seems true that the deletion of English swearwords refers to cultural attitudes but also because of linguistic limitation since **MSA** usually manipulates the occurrences of swearwords. Regarding analysis and discussion, Karjalainen provides

contrastive statistics about the rendition of English swearwords into Swedish; however we attempt to discuss the data from a sociopragmatic perspective.

### **2.2.2. English Profanity in Brazilian Subtitling and Dubbing**

Araújo (2004) investigates the rendition of American English clichéd emotions into Portuguese Brazilian subtitles and dubs. Araújo concludes that English swearwords are usually reduced in the **TT** versions in accordance with censorship policy and producers' together with distributors' instructions for the sake of audience who dislikes reading (in case of subtitling) or hearing (in case of dubbing) such vulgar items (ibid: 168). Apparently, Araújo has proposed a target audience approach to screen translation. She as well argues that English swearwords and clichés in general are translated literally and unnaturally into Brazilian subtitles and dubs (ibid: 162).

Araújo therefore considers the Brazilian versions as 'unnatural translation', for the translation is done to meet consumers, users and viewers requirements. Araújo provides examples of swearwords along with their Brazilian rendition to verify the reduction of swearwords. The following samples show differences in word choice between subtitles and dubs:

1. 'Screw the world' is subtitled and dubbed into Brazilian to mean 'damn the world'
2. 'Stinking bitch' is subtitled as 'stinking cow' whereas dubbed to be 'you idiot'
3. 'Fuck face' into 'damn you' in subtitling or 'clown' in dubbing

However, Araújo elaborates the whole debate to state that translators of the two **AVT** modes in Brazil have been permitted later on to render English swearwords into some Brazilian natural but native clichés (ibid: 168). Araújo recommends the use of real Brazilian swearwords or some manipulated choices as native Brazilian films usually reveal a lot of them.

#### **Comment:**

Araújo (2004) discusses an important proposition that appears of concern to the present study. It actually relates to the formal language variety used in subtitles (ibid: 168). Araújo believes that "subtitling [...] makes the professionals involved believe that it must follow the same rules of written language" (168-169). Accordingly, Arabic subtitles for English swearwords should be produced in a refined Arabic (Gamal, 2008: 3) following its semantic and pragmatic conventions in addition to the values of Arab religion and culture (Gadasha (1998: 19 in 1.4.1. above) and also (see ath-Tha'ālibi in 1.1.3. above). Araújo's

notion of deducing the vulgarity of English swearwords in Brazilian subtitles (ibid) seems to coincide with what we have hypothesised about euphemising English swearwords in Arabic subtitles. However; censorship sill affects Arabic translation as Arab translators are expected to avoid sex, religion and obscene related topics in translation (Gamal, 2008: 3). So, unlike Brazilian translators, Arab translators are not allowed to use natural equivalents of Arabic to render English profanities though they use some common clichés like تبا and اللعنة (see more examples in **Chapters III** and **IV** ahead).

As for subtitling, (ibid) ignores the topic of code switching between English and Swedish. In contrast with Arabic subtitles, the shift in language variety is expected to be one of the major problems that face the translators of English profanities in Arabic subtitles. As the data shows in **Chapter IV** ahead, there are real interlingual diglossic situations where informal English discourses are translated into **MSA** subtitles.

### **2.2.3. English Profanity in Chinese Subtitles**

Chen, Ch. (2004) tackles the problem of rendering English swearwords into Hong Kong Chinese subtitles. Chen, Ch. approaches various strategies opted for by translators of American movies. He argues that swearwords are translation troublesome as they are left untranslated, rendered in an informal dialect or to be reflected through other pragmatic channels like euphuism (ibid). Moreover, Chen, Ch. believes that audience's cultural, linguistic and religious attitudes should be considered while doing subtitles (ibid).

Hong Kong authorities consequently impose strict censorship on broadcasting foreign movies with the land native subtitles. However, the censorship only concerns the subtitles but not the original movie, neither on the linguistic level nor on its artistic perspectives. Such restrictions are classified according to viewers' related variables of age and maturity. Chen, Ch. categorises film censorship as:

1. "Approved for exhibition to persons of any age."
- 2a. "Approved for exhibition to persons of any age" but subject to displaying the symbol "Not suitable for Children";
- 2b. "Approved for exhibition to persons of any age" but subject to displaying the symbol "Not suitable for young persons and children";
3. "Approved for exhibition only to persons who have attained the age of 18 years."

(ibid: 137)

According to Chen, Ch (ibid), censorship plays a decisive role in directing the work of subtitlers and probably their preference of translation strategies as much as the efforts of

movie distributors and their commercial policy. It also refers to financial reasons. So, Fong 2001 as cited in Chen, Ch. (ibid: 137) claims that:

If only one hard-core Cantonese is discovered by the authorities in the dialogue or subtitles, the movie will automatically be rated Category III, which is restricted to persons of 18 years or above, and teenagers, who account for a major proportion of the movie-going public, will not be able to enter the cinema to watch the movie. [So], subtitlers and their employers, the distributors, have to be particularly careful with subtitles in order not to suffer any loss in profit.

Chen, Ch. states four major strategies the translators opted for while undertaking their work. These are un-translation, over-formality, rendition into Putonghua and euphemism.

First, Chen, Ch. finds out that some offensive American English swearwords are un-translated or deleted in the **TT** because of the rules of censorship just mentioned above, and because of the potential financial impacts if any of film dealers dares to violate laws (2004: 136). Omission is also opted for due to linguistic conventions and cultural norms. Chen Ch. provides examples of English of swearwords like ‘mother fucking’; like ‘mother-fucker’, ‘pricks’ and ‘fuckin’ which are left out un-translated in the **TT**.

Second, over-formal translation is another translation strategy that Chen, Ch. has already listed within his findings. He finds out that the translators render the **ST** oral vulgar swearwords into **TT** formal choices the idea that spoils the sense of vulgarity markedly used in the original sound track. He (ibid: 136) provides some examples among them is the English term ‘dick’ which is rendered into a formal Chinese term *joeng-geoi* to mean ‘penis’.

Third, having ignored the fact that Cantonese is the dominant language in Hong Kong, many translators opt for Putonghua swearwords to render the English items (Chen, Ch. ibid: 138). This performance seems to reflect the higher status of Putonghua over other varieties of Chinese. Accordingly, Bauer (1988) as cited in (Chen, Ch.: 139) claims that “many Hong Kong Cantonese-speakers openly acknowledge that Putonghua has higher prestige than Cantonese whose regional status they readily recognise.” For example; the swearword ‘asshole’ is subtitled in the VCD version as *wan-daan* ‘wretch’ which is a Putonghua expression, rather than the conventional Cantonese rendition *si-fat-gwai* which means ‘anal ghost’. Nevertheless, Chen, Ch. himself has called for using Cantonese equivalents to render English profanity:

The use of Cantonese equivalents is better for subtitling English swearwords in movies because they convey the original spirit most effectively and arouse the greatest empathy on the part of the Hong Kong audience, who are mostly native speakers of Cantonese (ibid: 139).

Nornes as cited in Chen, Ch. (ibid: 138) has also supported Chen's attitude towards Cantonese and said that "one of the most subtitling functions is to intensify the interaction between the reader (audience) and the foreign." Moreover, Lo Wai Yan (2001) as cited in Chen, Ch. (2004: 139) says that:

50% of Hon Kong audience, responding to a poll concerning their preference of using Cantonese compared to standard Chinese, believe that Cantonese is better to render the spirit of the original vulgar expressions.

Fourth, translators choose euphemism as a strategy to avoid the use of harmful vulgar swearwords. It is their means to play around and to escape the red light of censorship. This is after all the power of harsh censorship. Take the 'fuck', which dynamically equivalents 'lan' [dick], is subtitled into 'jiu' [freak] (ibid: 137).

#### **Comment:**

As the present study's hypotheses correlate to Chen Ch's study in topic and objectives, we can list some common points. It is for example acceptable to argue that swearwords are translation troublesome comparatively due to cultural and linguistic considerations in both cultures. Whereas the official rules and censorship in Hong Kong govern the translation of English swearwords (Chen Ch, ibid: 137), the Arab culture being religion-oriented primarily rejects the use of profanities. Moreover, MSA, the treasure of Arab culture and religion gains a sacred status which also inspires its spoken and written forms (see 1.1.3 and also 1.1.4 above). In that vulgar words should be euphemised in written Arabic in accordance.

As for the categorisation of censorship suggested by Chen Ch., it does not apply to the contexts given through the data within the limits of this study. While the Chinese authorities impose censorship on the subtitles provided in Cinema Halls the Arab satellite channels like MBCs for example is different because the audience has variable ages. After all, censorship in the Arab world seems to be the translator's decision. This notion is clarified through more examples in the coming forth chapters III and IV. The examples show various Arabic rendition for one English swearword; e.g., the swearword 'sons of bitches' in 4.2.1.1. is translated into السافلين whereas the same swearword as in 4.2.1.3. becomes الحقير. Other examples are translated the same thought they are different

swearwords; e.g., ‘fuck’ and ‘shit’ in 3.6.3., ‘damn’ in 4.2.6.1. and ‘hell’ in 4.2.6.2 are all translated into تبا.

#### 2.2.4. English Profanity in Swedish Subtitling

Mattsson (2006) made a research partially related to the subtitling of English swearwords into Swedish. The research data is extracted from the American Movie ‘Nurse Betty’ as a **SL** text whereas the **TT** subtitles are taken from three versions of the movie on the public TV, commercial TV in addition to a **DVD** release. Indeed, the data of all versions is introduced in a contrastive quantitative and qualitative analysis. Mattsson’s aims at finding out how swearwords are similarly or differently translated by the subtitlers and what translation strategies they choose. Mattsson concludes that swearwords are almost similarly treated by the three subtitlers and that omission is their main translation strategy.

Mattsson analyses the data into quantitative and qualitative perspectives. For the quantitative part, He says that the **ST** has 132 swearwords whereas each version of the **TT** renders about 50 profanes (ibid: 3). It is obvious, omission is the major strategy in English-Swedish translation. As for the qualitative part of analysis, Mattsson classifies the extracted swearwords, sociolinguistically, into five categories; religion, sex, excrements, sexist terms of abuse and handicaps (ibid: 3-4).

Mattsson concludes that omission is a recommended strategy when rendering English swearwords into Swedish. He argues that the occurrence of swearwords is rare in Swedish written literature and that should consequently be the case in literary translation and respectively in subtitling, for subtitling is not taken as an isolated cultural or lingual phenomenon. Mattsson (2006: 7) clarifies:

Subtitling norms do not exist in a void, but that they derive directly from norms of literary translation [whose] norms derive from originals written in target culture, which in turn derive from norms of written and spoken language.

Since subtitles facilitate the accessibility of viewers to a foreign filmic material (Kapsaskis, 2008: 42), We can argue that Mattsson’s point just quoted above should take subtitles as a device inspired by the conventions of the written language but not as genre of writing.

### **Comment:**

Mattsson (2006) just like Karjalainen (2002) has statistically analysed the occurrence of swearwords in the **ST** and in the **TT** as well in a way to examine the acceptability to render them cross culturally. Since the two researchers examine English-Swedish translation of swearwords, our comment on Karjalainen gives a general view regarding the translation of swearwords in Swedish and Arabic. (see 2.2.1. above)

Mattsson has suggested an interesting hierarchy of norms that directs the translatability of swearwords within the whole structure of Swedish culture and language. In view of that, it is necessary to examine Mattsson's model in relation with the present study on translating English profanities and swearwords into Arabic subtitles within the norms of Arabic language and Arab culture.

### **2.2.5. English Profanity in Spanish Dubbing**

Fernandez (2006) underlies how taboo language, offensive expressions and swearwords are tackled while rendering the movie 'South Park' English sound tracks into Spanish dubs. Fernandez provides contrastive English-Spanish forms of swearing in terms of linguistic and semantic features. Fernandez (ibid) concludes that swearwords should not be literally rendered, for they have different linguistic, semantic and pragmatic loads. She also believes that the target culture values need to be sensitively treated while dubbing swearwords.

As for translation strategies, Fernandez claims that English swearwords, mainly American, are either to be literally translated, borrowed or rendered into Spanish formal equivalent. The following example shows the application of literal strategy, which produces silly translations:

ST: Saddam: I know I've been a dirty little bastard.  
TT: Sadam: Ya sé que he sido un cabronazo! (ibid)

This example makes the translated swearword sound less Spanish. She also finds that Spanish borrows many American swearwords, Spaniards, particularly the young intensively use. Fernandez (2006) verifies that:

In Spain, American films are usually dubbed. The process of translation results inevitably in language contact and interference. It is probably in the translation of spontaneous spoken language and colloquial expressions that most borrowings occur.

Accordingly, Fernandez provides the following example to verify the borrowing of English terms into Spanish dubs like the Spanish word *bastardo* for the English expletive ‘bastard’.

**ST:** (You killed him, you bastard!)

**TT:** (Le has matado, bastardo!) (ibid)

As for the third strategy, formal equivalence has also become one of the strategies Spanish translators opt for when dubbing English swearwords into Spanish as the exchange below indicates:

**ST:** Cartman: Don't call me fat, you fucking son of a bitch!

**TT:** Cartman: A mí tampoco me llamas tú gordo, hijo de puta. (ibid)

Fernandez recognises a range of strange translations which relate to the contribution of several factors yet to follow. First of all, American culture has a super power of influence over Spanish the mater that allows the application of foreignisation and consequently facilitates the borrowing of English swearwords into Spanish. Using neutral dialect and accent of Spanish is the second factor that helps Spanish – speaking communities in Spain and beyond to perceive the language of the dubbed versions and financially aiding film distributors. Third, the nature of movie ready-made language in which swearwords are toned down.

Moreover, technical constraints of dubbing, which requires a harmonic reflection of actors’ lip movement with the new **TT** sound tracks, force translators to choose words or to adopt strategies over others. The least factor to the authoritative role media has on people as it make majority of people, if not all, to imitate and chew whatever is said or sounded.

Finally, Fernandez states a number of findings and recommendations.

- The translation of swearwords, within the **AVT** research requires much more solid efforts.
- Spanish equivalence of swearing, once available, should be chosen over borrowed terms.
- Lazy translation reproduces artificial translations.
- Swearwords should not be literally translated because every language or culture has its linguistic and sociopragmatic loads.
- Translations of taboos need to be taken within the inter-lingual and inter-cultural sense.

#### **Comment:**

Despite the fact that Fernandez’s paper tackles the translation of swearwords in a different mode of **AVT** – dubbing, it has some ideas to consider in contrast with the present study. First, there are two different modes of **AVT** – Dubbing vs. subtitling of each there are certain constrains and conventions. Whereas dubbing replaces informal spoken English

with informal spoken Spanish, Arabic subtitles use **MSA** to render the English informal dialogues. Accordingly, code switching from English into Arabic will be of considerable effect. However, code switching in English Spanish context is not of significance. So, Borrowing is not expected in English-Arabic subtitles since English and Arabic are genetically apart languages whereas Spanish and English belong to the same family. We can claim that examples within the data of the present study show no indications on Arabic borrowing from English. Further more, Arab translators opt for classical Arabic words of probably archaic origin; e.g., **وغد** (lit. someone who is considered immoral), **الماخور** (lit. a place where people practise immoral activities) and **اللجنة** (lit. deprive from Allah's mercy).

### 2.2.6. Subtitling on Arab Satellite TVs

Darwish (2007) criticises Arabic subtitles made for English movies that some Arab satellite channels show. He talks about lazy censorship which consequently produces vulgar Arabic subtitles even equal to the English offensive swearwords. Darwish talks about bad translations that sometimes occur due to misunderstanding of the English foul word. The article, which is in Arabic, provides many examples like:

- the word **وغد** for (bastard)
- the word **ساقلة** for (bitch)
- the word **عاهرة** for (slut)

Darwish asks if such Arabic translations or options seem less offensive than the original **ST** utterances. He wonders:

وهل كلمة **وغد** أو **عاهرة** أو **ساقلة** أقل بذاءة وفحشاً في دماغ متلقيها  
من (slut) أو (bitch) أو (bastard) وترسم صورة مختلفة في ذهنه؟ (ibid)

[Are the Arabic words **وغد**, **عاهرة** or **ساقلة** less vulgar or profane than their probable renditions into English profanities like 'bastard', 'bitch' or 'slut'? And consequently, do they arouse a different image onto the receptors' interpretation and mind?] (Researcher's translation)

Darwish also mentions other words that seem less vulgar. He wonders why words like 'condemn', 'denounce', 'castigate' are not rendered into Arabic. Claims that people misunderstand some English swearwords, he says:

ومثلها أخواتها الإنجليزية (condemn) و (denounce) و (castigate) وغيرها من ألفاظ كثيرة تدور في الفلك  
نفسه وتضع حاجزاً واقياً بين الشتيمة وصورتها. ولنا فيها بحث آخر. فـ (condemn) أصلها (con +  
damn بمعنى (يحيق اللعن)، أي أنها لعنة شاملة تحيق بمن تنزل عليه وتحيط به. أما (denounce) فأصلها الجهر  
باللعن. وأما (castigate) فأصلها التطهير بالتوبيخ. والتوبيخ في اللغة هو اللوم والعذل والتأنيب والتهديد.

[condemn', (lit. 'يحيق اللعن'), 'denounce' (lit. 'باللعن') and 'castigate' (lit. 'التوبيخ') are to be rendered as probable near synonyms diverging the curses from their intertextual image into Arabic subtitles. These words might be uttered to express cursing, blaming or threatening.] (Researcher's translation)

### **Comment:**

We agree with Darwish's proposition in that swearwords should be taken within their connotations. We also adopt Darwish's preview regarding the translator's lazy censorship in subtitling. We do not only have the same point about the use of very offensive Arabic swearwords in subtitles but we can also claim that some Arabic swearwords are even vulgarer than the English words. For example, the term اللعنة [lit. damn] which people use to swear at others to be deprived from Allah's mercy (see LA) is the most vulgar Arabic swearword.

### **2.2.7. Audio-visual Translation in Egypt**

Gamal (2008) explores **AVT** as a mode of translation and sheds light on the history of this new industry in the Arab world, mainly in Egypt. Gamal also but marginally tackles the rendition of English offensive and foul language into Arabic subtitles. He recommends translators to tone down, even to omit English swearwords in Arabic subtitles due to traditions mainly related to censorship attitudes and cultural conventions. In this regard, Gamal argues that translators should necessarily consider "language, sex and violence" (ibid: 3) when translating English speaking movies into Arabic subtitles and "thus swearwords had to be sanitised, sexual references deleted and blasphemous references expunged." (Gamal, 2008 : 4)

Language shift or diglossia is a further issue that Gamal considers when he looks into the nature of language used in Arabic subtitles. According to Gamal, the rendition of everyday spoken English dialogues into Arabic subtitles usually refined and formal "led to the dilution of cultural concepts" (ibid). It is after all the gap between the **ST** colloquial utterances and the **TT** formal items in the form of written subtitles. Gamal quotes some examples of English expressions and their formal **TT** subtitles which he finds 'odd and stilted'. These examples include 'حانة' for 'bar', 'عاهرة' for 'slut' or 'bastard', 'عليك اللعنة' for 'damn' or 'got damned', etc (ibid).

In 2005, Gamal also made a paper entitled 'Issues in Arabic Subtitling' that rests on journalistic critical essays and viewers' comments on subtitles (2008: 5). Gamal (2005) as cited in Gamal (2008: 5-6) indicates the following results to which our results correlate:

- Deletion appears to be a prominent translation strategy
- Swearwords are too clichéd
- Cultural images are mistranslated
- Language of subtitling is becoming a genre

**Comment:**

We can claim that Gamal's findings intensively correlate to the present study's aims and hypotheses. He tackles English swearwords as a translation dilemma with due regard to cultural attitudes and conventions of Arabic. The researcher agrees with Gamal that English swearwords should be toned down as much as possible or deleted when translated into Arabic, particularly in the form of subtitles.

**2.2.8. Other Arab Researches in Subtitling**

Other researches in AVT, though irrelevant to our study's topic, are only mentioned here as an indication of the status that AVT studies gain within the English-Arabic-English context. Although AVT and subtitling in particular is claimed throughout this study to be of need to research (see **Chapter I**), we mention some academic theses Arab researchers conducted in English-Arabic-English subtitling. Yet, neither of these studies tackles the translation of swearwords from English into Arabic or vice a versa.

1. Al Droubi (2004) explores register, semiotic and technical constraints of Arabic subtitling in her MA thesis at the American University of Sharjah. She extracted the data from the Egyptian film, 'A Hero under our roof' with English subtitles. The research finally concludes that misperception of pragmatic context leads to the failure of communicating the essence of the original message.

2. Al-Bin-Ali (2007) puts her MA thesis concerning the translation of pragmatic effect into Arabic subtitles. The data is taken from the English movie 'My Fair Lady' and its Arabic subtitles. Depending on the analysis of the extracted data, some conclusions indicate that viewers in addition to the spatio-temporal rules have a considerable impact on the subtitler's work.

3. Al-Edwan (2009), in a PhD dissertation at Manchester University, explores the translatability of English euphemism into Arabic subtitles depending on Brown and Livenson's approach to politeness principle. The dissertation concludes that Arab subtitlers intend to euphemise their options when subtitling into Arabic sexual references, death and disease-related topics, etc.

4. Abd-el-Kareem (2010) has recently conducted an MA thesis at Al-Quds University on the rendition of Arabic idioms into English. Samples of the study come from Arabic Egyptian movies with English subtitles; i.e. 'Fool Al-Seen Al-Azeem', Kaset Elhai Elsha'bi', 'State Security' and 'The Belly Dancer and the Politician'. She concludes that

Arabic idioms are either functionally translated or paraphrased but neither condensed nor deleted.

### **2.3. Summary**

It has been clarified throughout **Chapter II** that vulgar expressions, mainly swearwords are among translation challenging issues in Arabic-English-Arabic context. The challenge refers to cultural diversity which subtitling aims to bridge. Most studies have shown that the **TT** cultural and linguistic conventions have a considerable impact on the audio-visual product – subtitles or dubs. Most of the researches mentioned above have shown that censorship, mainly in 2.3, 2.4 and 2.7 above, has a crucial role on the language used in **AVT**. Finally, it has been also suggested that translators have often omitted swearwords or reduced their offensivity.

# Chapter III

## **Chapter III**

### **Methodology**

#### **3.1. Overview**

This chapter aims to provide a general overview of the methodology the researcher adopts in collecting, analysing and discussing the data of the study with a view to drawing some conclusions, findings and recommendations.

#### **3.2. Objectives of the Study**

The present study aims at achieving the following objectives:

1. Finding about the translatability into Arabic of the pragmatic load that English profane words compromise.
2. Assessing the strategies the translators opted for while subtitling English swearwords into Arabic.
3. Finding about the amount of translation loss and its justifications when coming to subtitle English profanities into Arabic.
4. Finding about the interlingual and cross-cultural shifts translators consider when making the English sound tracks into Arabic subtitles.

#### **3.3. Design of the Study**

The researcher adopts Translation Quality Assessment as a methodology to analyse and to evaluate the data. House (1974) and (as cited in Baker 1998) revises several models of translation assessment such as the behavioural and the text oriented models. House also proposes a functional-pragmatic model in which pragmatic features and loads are taken into account when the **TT** (i.e. Arabic subtitles) is assessed in comparison with the **ST** (i.e. English sound tracks). This model works at the pragmatic matches of the **TT** compared to the **ST** in terms of the latter's situationality in which pragmatic level is expected to be

rendered in the translation. Finally, the semantic and pragmatic shift from oral discourse into a written mode will be taken into account.

### **3.4. Data**

For the sake of the present study, the researcher has watched several American, English speaking movies with Arabic subtitles shown on MBC Action, MBC2 and MBC 4 between February and April, 2010. He chose and videotaped three, namely 'The Marine' (2006), 'Crash' (2004) and 'Negotiator' (1998). The translation was by the MBC.

Why MBC? Choosing MBC briefly refers to the special status it has attained as a popular channel. Since MBC channels show a wide range of subtitled English films, it can be considered as a distinguished source for research. The extracted data will include parallel samples of **TT** (i.e. Arabic subtitles) compared to **ST** (i.e. English sound tracks). Each example will be discussed within its context of situation so that the pragmatic load can be approached.

### **3.5. Significance of the Study**

The study gains its significance from the fact that academic research in English-Arabic **AVT**, specifically subtitling is thin; hence it contributes to the limited efforts that have been exerted in such vital discipline of translation. Assessing or evaluating the translation of English swearwords into Arabic subtitles will hopefully lead to establish an approach towards the translatability of verbal obscenity as a translation dilemma, herein, within the English-Arabic context.

Obviously, English speaking movies with Arabic subtitles have become a phenomenon as they are shown on TVs and satellite channels, released in **CD/DVD** versions or watched on websites. So, examining translation strategies will be of great importance for subtitling as a growing mode of **AVT**.

In terms of research, there is a lack of academic research which examines English-Arabic-English subtitling of profane language. Nevertheless, Darwish (2007) generally comments on the way translators deal with English swearwords in Arabic subtitles. Gamal (2008) also tackles the problem of translating English swearwords into Arabic, yet from a cultural point of view and censorship. The researcher therefore claims the present study to be the

first that empirically explores the translation of English probabilities into Arabic mainly in AVT, subtitling in particular.

### **3.6. Statement of the Problem**

It is assumed that English swearwords have become a widespread phenomenon that typically distinguishes English speaking movies widely translated into Arabic. Therefore, studying the translation of English swearwords being a linguistic feature of American movies becomes crucial in that Arabic translations show certain problematic issues at semantic and pragmatic levels.

AVT, mainly subtitling has initiated a universal interlingual and cross-cultural communication involving people of different cultures, tongues, customs, beliefs, traditions, etc. Thus, translating English speaking movies before televising them would establish interlingual and cross-cultural communication between foreigners. Considering profane language as troublesome for translators to deal with (see Schwarz's: 2002; Nedergaard-Lerson: 1993 and Thawabteh: 2010) refer to cultural, pragmatic and semantic variation between English and Arabic. Although profane expressions can be observed in the two cultures, each of which still has its own conventions towards the usage of swearwords in public (see 1.3. above). Nedergaard-Lerson (1993: 207) says "one of the most fascinating aspects of films [...] is that they offer unique scope of getting acquainted with other cultures." This is true with subtitled films as Thawabteh (2010: 500) claims, that they "attract people due to their potential for narrowing the cultural gap in a linguistically diverse audience share, and the film cognoscenti are more or less assumed to be a culture-phile of other traditions."

All in all, since entertainment plays a central role in today life and as foreign film watching becomes a common practice (Espindola 2005: 14), subtitlers, who are necessarily expected to perform a bicultural rather than a bilingual role (Schwartz: 2003), will have a critical responsibility yet to play in bridging bilingual as well as bicultural diversity between foreigners. Espindola (ibid: 18) further states:

Subtitlers are seen as cultural mediators insofar as they are able to interfere in the foreign culture representation by means of abusing, foreignising and or domesticating the source cultural element. And it is also relevant to analyse the extent to which technical constraints; distributor's policies and cultural bound terms affect the representation of foreign cultures.

Then, profane words, which are conveyed through the verbal audio-visual channel, are usually common in use or accessible by different age groups. The overuse of vulgar utterances makes subtitlers to think twice; as such linguistic utterances often violate social conventions of shyness and spoil the fragile edgings of social politeness. And so, subtitlers find themselves forced to consider **TL** audience and culture as core elements in the **TL** context. Subtitlers also opt for unusual translations for English swearwords to avoid any offensive translation in the **TT**.

On the assumption that translating taboos is not an easy task (see Roberto and Veiga (2003) as cited in Neves 2005: 219 in 1.3. above) and that profanities are rather of much more offensive when written (see Neves 2005: 219 in 1.3. above), it is claimed that **MSA** could not traditionally bear the occurrence of vulgar expressions. Arabic literature recommends the use of mild language when using offensive situations (see ath-Tha‘ālibi in 1.1.4 above). And so the translators often find themselves in a troublesome situation since translating swearwords and bridging cultural gaps require hard work.

The shift in language variety from spoken English into written Arabic will be the present study’s real problem regarding the translatability of English profanities into Arabic subtitles. The gap will thus happen due to the shift from a **SL** low variety of speech to a higher variety of the **TL**. Higgins, et al (2002: 167) verify the difference between Arabic and English as varieties:

Arabic differs from English in that the standard language – i.e. [**MSA**] – is not the native language of any speaker; that is to say, nobody is brought up speaking [**MSA**]. Rather, every one starts learning the dialect (العامية) of the area in which they live, and if they go on to achieve literacy, they subsequently learn [**MSA**] (فصحى) in an educational environment.

Translating **ST** informal conversation into a **TT** formal discourse leads to disloyalty on the translator’s part as translation loss becomes a consequence. However, Arabic subtitles should follow the linguistic and pragmatic conventions of Standard variety being the only written form of Arabic (see Gadacha 1998: 19 and Gamal 2008: 4).

The following examples will introduce some translation problems and strategies that the subtitlers unavoidably come across. Each example will have a bit amount of discussion in accordance with the way the English offensive expressions are translated.

### 3.6.1. Deletion of Profane Words

Example (a) below shows verbal offensive interaction between a black couple and two traffic policemen who stopped the driver and his wife, unusually inspected and harshly insulted them. At the end, the police officer warned the two either to travel quietly or else they will be charged for the violation of public kindness and morality.

Example (a):

ST:

You thought you saw a white woman **blowin** (sic) a black man. That drove your **cracker ass** crazy.

-Will you just **shut your fucking mouth**?

-I'd listen to your husband, ma'am?

My partner and I witnessed your wife performing **fellatio** on you while you were operating a motor vehicle.

TT:

ظننت نفسك رأيت امرأة بيضاء  
مع رجل اسود فأفقدك هذا صوابك.

- لماذا لا تُغلقين فمك اللعين؟  
- أنصحك بطاعة زوجك يا سيدتي

أنا وزميلي شهدنا زوجتك للتو  
وهي تقبلك أثناء قيادتك للسيارة  
(Crash: 2004)

Example (a) above shows how the translator completely omits three English vulgar profanities; 'blowin' (blowing), 'cracker ass' and the term 'fellatio' in the Arabic subtitles. As a result, translation loss occurs as the Arabic phrases show no shameful or obscene expressions. For example; فأفقدك هذا صوابك (lit. 'made you furious') cannot convey the semantic and pragmatic load of 'your cracker ass'. Semantically, the term تُقبِّلك (lit. 'kiss you') cannot be equivalent to 'fellatio' which refers to unusual intercourse. By veiling the vulgarity of 'fellatio' with تُقبِّل (lit. 'to kiss'), the Arabic version directs the Arab audience badly wrong to think that one kissing spouse in public is shameful in US. It seems that the translator has censored the **ST** to protect the **TT** audience from being exposed to juicy expressions like 'fellatio'.

Pragmatically, the **TT** seems to flout Grice's maxim of quantity in the sense that only one Arabic vulgar item اللعين (lit. 'damned') is subtitled whereas the **ST** sound tracks show four English terms. The same is applicable to the second dialogue of Example (a) because the Arabic word اللعين stands for the expression 'shut your fucking mouth'. By choosing فأفقدك for 'your cracker ass', and يُقبِّلك for 'performing 'fellatio' the translator violates the maxim of quality as the Arabic subtitle lacks the amount of anger the original speaker releases. It is obvious that the **TL** audience loses such sense.

Besides, Example (a) provides occurrences of ‘interlingual-diglossia’ where some English informal and slang utterances are translated into Arabic formal items like *فمك اللعين* (lit. ‘your damned mouth’) instead of ‘shut your fucking mouth’. Pragmatically speaking, the **TT** subtitles represents the **ST** speaker with a higher linguistic proficiency and politer tongue.

### 3.6.2. Reduction of Offensive Language

The scene below shows how the policemen command the black couple to hold still silently with their hands over head, the order that gets the wife annoyed. Finally, the wife reacts in dirty vulgar words, even on her husband as Example (b) below indicates.

Example (b)

ST:

Put your hands on top of your head, ma’am

- Do what he says.

- **Fuck you.**

Put your hands

And you keep your **filthy fucking hands off me**

- You, **mother fucking pig**

- Just stop talking

TT:

ضعي يديك فوق راسك، سيدتي

- هلا تنفذين ما يقوله فحسب

- تبا لك يا (كامرون)

ضعي يديك فوق راسك، سيدتي

ابعد يديك القذرتين عني

- يا لك من ضابط لعين

- (كريستين) كفي عن الكلام فحسب

(Crash: 2004)

Generally speaking, Example (b) shows that the subtitler has manipulated the **ST** dirty words and made them milder in the **TT**. Although the **TT** phrase *يديك القذرتين* still sounds vulgar, it seems less offensive than the **ST**’s phrase ‘your fucking hands’. This is relatively similar to *يا لك من ضابط لعين* (lit. ‘Oh, you damn officer’) as a translation for ‘your mother fucking pig’. Here, the translator has effectively communicated the **ST** with milder expressions. Nevertheless, the subtitler flouts Grice’s maxims of quality and relevance as *(يديك القذرتين)* has a physical reference and so the translator should have opted for a word like *اللعينتين* instead. This translation is made to avoid the shadow sense of *القذرتين*. As for swearword ‘fuck you’ which is translated into *تبا لك*, the translator flouts the maxim of relevance just like what the original speaker does. However, despite the use of milder Arabic items, the translator should have opted for *لن افعل* (lit. ‘I won’t do’) or simply *لا* (lit. ‘no’) instead since the implicature of *تبا لك* indicates the speaker’s refusal to the other’s order.

Technically, the verbal auditory channel in Example (b) above does not synchronise with what Gottlieb’s (1998) visual channel. Although Kristine is responding to her husband’s

command, the husband is not zoomed in on screen but a policeman. The translator has tried to solve this problem by adding the name of Kristine’s husband – ‘كامرون’ to her verbal reaction.

Having in mind that subtitles should be condensed on spatiotemporal restrictions in addition to viewers’ speed of reading, the translator shows awareness of these techniques and consequently produces a **TT** less in quantity.

### 3.6.3. Clichéing Profanities in Arabic Subtitles

According to Araújo (2004: 161) “clichés are those expressions used by speakers of a certain language which have become stereotyped and common-place due to repetitive use.” In view of that, we use the term clichés to indicate the heavy use of archaic Arabic stereotypes in subtitles. Arabic clichés are like *وغد* and *اللعة، تبا*.

Example (c) below has a number of English swearwords, rendered almost the same (clichéd) into Arabic subtitles. The example shows one of the policemen seems to friendly greeting his officer whereas the other partner seems annoyed enough and thus replied unfriendly.

Example (c)

ST:

- Hey, you detective! Nice entrance
- **Fuck** you
- Hey, you okay
- I am freezin (sic)
- **Shit**... I heard it might snow.
- Get outta here.

TT:

- أيها المحقق يا له من ظهور مبهر.
- تبا لك
- مرحباً، هل أنت بخير.
- أكاد أتجمد من البرد
- تبا..، سمعت أنها قد تتلج
- كف عن المزاح
- (Crash: 2004)

Example (c) above indicates the use of an Arabic item *تبا* to translate two different English swearwords. First, *تبا*, which ‘used in Arabic to call to call Allah on harming others<sup>1</sup>’, stands for both ‘fuck you’ and ‘shit’ which the speaker indeed utters to reveal harsh anger or use to exclaim annoyance. In reality, the whole context of Example (c) exemplifies pragmatic and semantic failure as the translator has not perceived the **ST** well properly and consequently miscommunicated the pragmatic sense into the **TT**. By opting for *تبا* to translate ‘fuck you’, the translator has flouts the maxims of quality and relevance as the speaker steps on appealing to greet his colleague or officer whereas the addressee

<sup>1</sup> See LA, unabridged monolingual Arabic dictionary

expresses his annoyance of the cold weather saying ‘I am freezin (sic) and shit’, I heard it might snow’. So, the clichéing of certain **TT** locutions for the translation of different **ST** profanities represents a sign of mistranslation. The translator opts for substitution as translation strategy seeing that providing an Arabic vulgar interjection like تبا to replace ‘fuck you’ and ‘shit’ retains the **ST** speaker’s intention as the implicature indicates emphasis of self annoyance.

This translation in example (c) above urges the researcher to raise question about the way subtitles are done. That is to know whether translators consider a film as unity with its semiotic features or they just give written subtitles for a prewritten **SL** script.

### 3.6.4. Variety Shift in Subtitling

The following exchange represents a scene taking place in a gun-shop where the salesman deals with one of his consumers about a personal gun. Surprisingly, and once he realises that the client is a non-western, mostly a middle-eastern Muslim – Persian, the seller refuses to complete the deal. The salesman finally orders the security person to drive him out as the dealers exchange vulgar and insulting locutions.

Example (d):

ST:

- I am American citizen
- Oh, God, here we go.

I have right like you.

I have right to buy gun.

Not from my store, you don’t!

(Andy), **get him outta here now.**

Now. get out.

You are an **ignorant** man

-Get the **fuck out.**

-No, you get the **fuck out.**

TT:

-أنا مواطن أمريكي  
- بدأنا

لي حقوق متلك، يحق لي  
شراء مسدس

ليس من متجري  
(أندي). أخرجه من هنا فوراً

أخرج في الحال  
- أنت رجل جاهل

- أخرج من متجري  
- أخرج أنت

(Crash: 2004)

Example (d) above contains examples of informal or slang English terms with the essence of San Francisco spoken local dialect and accent. The occurrence of shift from the **ST** to the **TT** in terms of language variety – from informal spoken English into **MSA** becomes unavoidable despite all its prospective consequences. In Example (d), the customer utters ‘ignorant’ to harm or insult the salesman whereas the translator opts for the Arabic statement أنت رجل جاهل to render ‘you are an ignorant man’. The term ‘ignorant’ indicates lack of knowledge, lower of educational achievement. This option seems far away from the

**ST**'s illocutionary force but it rather indicates insult on part of the addressee being impolite or rude. By contrast, the word جاهل, a **MSA** term, the translator chooses to render a **ST** insult, actually has a negative meaning, and so one can intend to harm or insult others by calling them جاهلين seeing that Arabic has this use in the Quran <sup>1</sup>”وأعرض عن الجاهلين“ (Show forgiveness, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the foolish.<sup>2</sup>). The Arabic term الجاهلين does not necessarily refer to less educated people but to some educated people who lack knowledge about thoughts or beliefs they might astray<sup>3</sup>. The translator has communicatively transferred the sense of discrimination using a word of high Arabic variety جاهل but he could have possibly opted for other Arabic terms with less formality; example; أنت رجل تافه, or أنت رجل أبله [lit. you are a silly or stupid man].

Example (d) reveals the occurrence of interlingual diglossia where **ST** informal expression like ‘get him outta here now (sic)’ is translated into the **TT** like أخرجهُ من هنا فوراً. This translation gives the original speaker a higher linguistic status. The translator, once opted for deletion in the last dialogue of Example (d), will flout the maxim of quantity as the subtitle renders zero profanities out of the original in that the **TT** subtitles أخرج من متجري and أنت أخرج are less informative than what the **ST** verbal auditory and nonverbal visual channels suggest in ‘get the fuck out’ and ‘no, you get the fuck out’. This exact dialogue violates Grice’s maxim of manner since the **TT** lacks that vulgarity the **ST** comprises and so the Arabic subtitles provide untrue information about the film characters being politer than what they in reality are.

### 3.7. Hypotheses of the Study

Having argued that translating English swearwords into Arabic subtitles as a linguistic phenomenon seems to produce troublesome **TT**; the following study hypotheses will guide the present study to its final course.

1. Translation loss is inevitable once English swearwords are subtitled into Arabic.
2. Translators opt for omission as a strategy when translating English profanities into Arabic.
3. English swearwords are toned down in the **TT** to avoid offensive, vulgar and abusive uses of Arabic.

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1 Surah Al A’raf (7), verse: 199.

<sup>2</sup> Khan and Al-Hilali’s (1419 H.- 1998) Translation.

<sup>3</sup> See LA

4. English profanes are clichéd in the Arabic subtitles.
5. Diglossic or variety shift from English everyday speech into **MSA** subtitles is expected to make a socio-pragmatic difference added to the bicultural gap.

### **3.8. Questions of the Study**

The following questions are thought helpfully contribute to discussion towards conclusions and recommendations in consequence.

1. How much effect can translation loss cause to the plot of the filming material?
2. To what extent have the translators communicated the **ST**'s original sense into the **TT**?
3. Have the translators been domesticators or foreignisers?
4. Have the constraints of subtitling beside technical norms affected subtitlers' options and finally their translation decisions?
5. What type of censorship has taken control over the process of translation?
6. Have the subtitlers pragmatically succeeded in translating English swearwords into Arabic?

### **3.9. Data Analysis**

Analysis of the present study data will take two interrelated phases. Examples extracted from the movies (see 3.1 above) will be categorised according to their semantic reference like sex, religion or social discrimination. Then, some of the samples will be discussed in the form of parallel analysis of **ST** examples against their **TT** equivalent subtitles. The categorisation will be done so that the researcher can observe and explore the translatability of English profanity, becoming common linguistic and socio-cultural features of American movies, into Arabic subtitles, mainly from a pragmatic standpoint.

### **3.10. Summary**

**Chapter III** has shed light on the methodology that guides this study in terms of its objectives, hypotheses, research method, significance, problem, data collection in addition to a brief thought regarding analysis. The chapter argues that translating English profanities into Arabic subtitles is expected to range from omission to toning them down or to be clichéd. Much more will be best verified through discussion and analysis in **Chapter IV**.

# Chapter IV

## Chapter IV

### Analysis and Discussion

#### 4.1. Overview

**Chapter IV** includes twenty eight dialogues extracted from the data of the study, each of which provides at least one swearword. The samples will be parallel dialogues of both the **ST** scripts for film sound tracks depending on the verbal auditory content and the **TT** subtitles as they are displayed at the bottom of the screen. The profane words will be highlighted in bold whereas the up down space between lines is meant to separate each subtitle from the others.

Analysis will consider the original occurrence of the profane expressions in English compared to their potential situation when translated into Arabic subtitles. The following exchanges chosen from the corpus data are semantically categorised into various types; e.g., sex, kinship, ethnicity, etc. Each of the categories is consisted of other subcategories, too. Discussion, in addition, will be contrastively conducted on pragmatic and also semantic basis with regard to Arabic subtitles and the English-movie sound tracks.

#### 4.2. Categories and Samples of Profanity

##### 4.2.1. Sex-related Profane Expressions

This category includes some swearwords of sex denotation. Sex here will include obscene body organs, functions or description but not in any technical sense.

##### 4.2.1.1. *ass and crotch*

The following scene takes place at the black couple's home whereby they start blaming each other on the way they both reacted to the police toughness. The wife scolds her husband for being shockingly silent in spite of the harsh treatment by the policemen. Their heated argument got even worse when the wife tried to dial the police number to report the

two unfair abusing policemen. However, the occurrence of some swearwords in Example (1) below like ‘sons of bitches’ and ‘pig’ though tackled, will be also analysed in some further examples for probably a different category and context.

Example (1)

ST:

-Who are you calling?  
-I’m gonna report **their asses sons of bitches**.

Do you have any idea how that I felt to have that **pig’s hands** all over me.

And you just stood there  
And then you apologised to him.

Oh, I get it. Much better to let him **Shove his hands up my crotch** than having your name on papers.

TT:

- بمن تتصلين؟  
- سأبلغُ عن هذين السافلين

الديك فكرة عما شعرت به حين أخذ ذلك الشرطي الحقير يتحسس جسدي كله.

وقد بقيت مكتوف الأيدي  
وبعد ذلك إذا بك تعتذر

أنت تفضل أن تسمح له بالتحرش بي  
على أن يظهر اسمك في الصحف.

(Crash: 2004)

Example (1) above shows that the translator has manipulated the **ST** to produce less offensive profanity in the **TT**. First, the translator opts for the term هذين السافلين (lit. ‘these two low people’) to translate ‘their asses sons of bitches’. Semantically speaking, the Arabic expletive السافلين can neither be an equivalent for ‘asses’ nor for ‘sons of bitches’. According to **LA** and al-Kāmoos al-Muheet سافل أو سافل means وسفلة الناس وسفلةهم: أسافلهم (lit. stupid or rabble people). Although Arabic observes a semantically different swearword from that of English, the **TT** almost reflects the pragmatic level the **SL** does.

From a pragmatic perspective, Example (1) above indicates that the translator has flouted Grice’s maxim of quality by using milder words in the Arabic subtitles than the original English utterances. The Arabic term السافلين though vulgar, is thought to be less offensive than that of the **ST**, i.e. ‘asses sons of bitches’. The subtitler also flouts the maxim of quantity as the subtitle provides less information than required, just one Arabic item السافلين for the two English vulgar expressions in question. The translator has opted for a generic Arabic vulgar term, e.g., السافلين, avoiding any literal translation for ‘asses’ and ‘sons of bitches’. The avoidance of literal equivalence refers to the conventions of Arab culture. Here, the translator reduces the degree of face threatening on the part of the target audience since any Arabic literal equivalent for such English juicy terms seems to sound even much more offensive than the original.

As for the **ST**’s swearword ‘pig’ translated into الحقير (lit. despicable) and rhymed like الخنزير (lit. pig). The translator has reduced the degree of vulgarism encapsulated in the

term ‘pig’ which typically has a negative image in Arab culture, being filthy and sully. By translating the **ST** utterance ‘pig’ into the Arabic general term الحقيير, which means الهَيِّن الذي لا كرامة له (lit. ‘a despicable person lacking dignity’), the subtitler ignores the English pragmatic force suggesting an offensive slang discriminating term against policemen<sup>2</sup>.

Still, the term خنزير refers to a bad person with negative behaviour. The translator could render the sense well properly as ‘pig’ means الإنسان السيئ الخلق<sup>3</sup> (lit. Man of bad morals). Example (1) shows how the subtitler has observed the maxims of quantity by providing one Arabic term الحقيير for one **ST**’s **term** ‘pig’. Accordingly, we can claim that the translator has censored the translation probably on religious and cultural factors.

Technically, the subtitler condenses the **ST** by providing fewer words in **TT**. Condensation seems to be as a primary subtitling strategy due to subtitling spatiotemporal restrictions. Technical constraints are not expected to influence translators options while rendering profanities as the number of lines and characters still adhere to the norms of subtitling (see Gottlieb 1998; Karamitroglou 1998 and 2000; De Linde and Kay 1999; and Schwarz 2002 and 2003).

Another linguistic phenomenon that can be observed in Example (1) above is the interlingual diglossia in which slang **SL** expletives like ‘their asses sons of bitches’ are rendered into **MSA** equivalent i.e. السافلين. The rest of the **ST** statement also has informal English utterances like ‘I’m gonna’ which is short formed reflects informal language used is rendered in formal Arabic سأبلغ عن هذين السافلين. Interlingual diglossic situation has given Kristine a higher linguistic capacity in the **TT** than what she originally has.

#### 4.2.1.2. *finger-fuck*

In the following sequence, the black spouses still angrily argue about the harsh experience they had on the way home.

Example (2):

ST:

Let me hear it again,  
thank you mister policeman

You sure is mighty kind  
to us poor black folk.

TT:

كررها على مسامعي  
”شكراً يا سيدي الشرطي“.

”هذا كرم منك في حقنا  
نحن الأسودين المسكينين.“

<sup>1</sup> See the LA.

<sup>2</sup> See the WordWeb and Cambridge Online and Electronic Dictionaries.

<sup>3</sup> See Kāmoos Al-Mu’et

You sure to let me know next time  
you wanna **finger-fucking** my wife.  
How the **fuck** do you say something  
like that to me.

”أعلمني حين ترغب ثانية  
في التحرش بزوجتي.“  
كيف تقولين لي شيئاً كهذا؟  
(Crash: 2004)

Example (2) above displays three English profane expressions whereas the **TT** renders only two. First, the expression ‘wanna finger-fucking my wife’ is subtitled into Arabic like حين ترغب بالتحرش بزوجتي (lit. ‘whenever you like to molest my wife’). The subtitle indicates that the translator flouts the maxim of quantity as the Arabic utterance التحرش stands for a two-word **ST** item ‘finger-fucking’. Although the term تحرش seems less profane, it can express the bad treatment against women. Taking the movie as one coherent text will help clarifying synchronicity within Gottlieb’s (1998) audio-visual channels that contribute to the meaning properly well.

Considering the third dialogue of Example (2) above, the translator has omitted the word ‘fuck’ in the **TT** and consequently, utterance ‘how the fuck do you say something like that to me’ becomes كيف تقولين لي شيئاً كهذا؟. Here, the translator does not only violate the maxim of quantity but s/he also flouts that of quality as s/he ignores the offensive force that the **ST** swearword suggests.

The translator could have opted for the Arabic term ويحك (lit. ‘shame on you’) which can as well transfer the nonverbal reaction of Kristine’s husband. The husband himself shows a kind of surprise to hear his wife uttering ‘you wanna finger-fucking my wife’. The translator violates the maxim of quality in that the Arabic subtitle does not convey the husband’s reaction, which the verbal auditory and the nonverbal visual channels can tell. Therefore, we claim that the Arabic subtitle of this exact part of Example (2) does not synchronise with the film content.

Concerning the last subtitle of example (2), the subtitler translates the ‘fuck’ into تباً. S/he deletes the previous ‘fuck’ to avoid repetition as long as the two subtitles belong to one speaker indicating surprise. The translator could have made the last two subtitles into one subtitle, to be like ويحك، كيف تقولين لي شيئاً كهذا (lit. ‘shame on you, how can you tell me something like this’), even the term ويحك can stand for the whole subtitle utilising the nonverbal visual content to complete meaning.

By using the Arabic words with less vulgar nature, the subtitler intends to be less vulgar, even politer than what the **ST** suggests. Politeness might have been part of censorship probably of personal attitude as an in-house policy.

#### 4.2.1.3. *asshole*

The scene below shows that (Omar) has taken his daughter a hostage, threatening to kill her unless her mother, whose irreverent behaviour annoys him, shows up. The police surround the area trying to negotiate with the man. Simply, example (3) is consisted of several swearwords, but only the words ‘asshole’ will be considered here.

Example (3):

<p>ST:</p> <p>Give me Raoul, right Omar Give me Raoul.</p> <p>I <b>fucking</b> hate Raoul <b>Shut the fuck up, asshole.</b> <b>Son of the bitch</b> don't know When to <b>shut up</b>.</p> <p>He hates Raoul. Farley <b>fucked up</b> the list.</p>	<p>TT:</p> <p>(راوول)، صحيح يا (عمر) أعطني (راوول) أكره (راوول)، اخرس أيها الحقير هذا الحقير لا يخرس</p> <p>إنه يكره (راوول) تلاعب (فارلي) باللائحة (Negotiator: 1998)</p>
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Example (3) reveals that the **TT** contains only three profane words whereas the **ST** introduces five terms. The first line in subtitle two is translated into (راوول) أكره (lit. ‘I hate Raoul’). Literal translation shows how the **TT** lacks the **ST** vulgar sense expressed in the word ‘fucking’. Obviously, the translator flouts both maxims of quantity and quality. While the latter occurs because the **TT** lacks the original **ST**’s rude sense, the former has been violated in that the **TT** subtitle providing less information than what the **SL** sound track does. The **ST** terms ‘fucking’, ‘shut the fuck up’, ‘asshole’, ‘son of the bitch (sic)’ and ‘fucked up’ are rendered into three **TT** items اخرس , أيها الحقير and الحقير. Moreover, the Arabic word الحقير an Arabic cliché is used to render a lot of English swearwords as Example (3) above suggests.

As for the swearword ‘asshole’, which translates الحقير (lit. ‘despicable’), the translator flouts maxim of quality since this translation still pragmatically less profane than the ‘asshole’. The translator also flouts the maxim of manner in that false information is provided since the Arabic الحقير is used to translates three different English profanities at least as Example (3) above shows. Violating the maxim of manner is clear in ‘shut the fuck

up', 'son of the bitch' in addition to 'asshole'. Translating different swearwords into an Arabic item makes it problematic for bilingual viewers whose eyebrows may go up upon hearing **ST** utterances translated similarly into the **TT**.

Example (3) above indicates that the translator has opted for two translation strategies, namely substitution and deletion. The translator avoids any literal equivalent of potential harsh Arabic swearwords. Instead, the translator opts for generic pragmatic substitutions i.e. الحقيير so as to transfer the **ST**'s sense of swearwords.

In addition, interlingual diglossic shift occurs as the translator has transferred some English informal, colloquial and slang expressions into formal Arabic. Take 'shut the fuck up' which is translated into اخرس. The translator violated the maxim of manner as false information is given to viewer concerning the actors as if they were refined speakers at semantic and pragmatic levels; i.e. 'I fucking hate Raoul' is translated into أكره (راوول).

#### 4.2.2. Kinship

This section shows examples with reference to female family members, namely mother related profane expressions. In the Arab culture, mother enjoys a valuable social status as a nominal entity of purity and virtue. For example, Allah, the Almighty, obliges sons and daughters to show kindness and respect to their parents: ووصينا الإنسان بوالديه حملته أمه كرهاً<sup>1</sup> ووضعتة كرهاً. Which translates (We have enjoined on man to be dutiful and kind to his parents. His mother bears him with hardship and she brings him forth with hardship.<sup>2</sup>)

Prophet Mohammad highly values the mother, giving her a superior position even to father. The Prophet was asked about the best human who deserve someone to take care of and his answer reveals as one need to keep to mother repeating that for three times whereas father gains the forth. The Prophet says:

جاء رجل إلى رسول الله (صلى الله عليه وسلم)، قال: يا رسول الله من أحق الناس بحسن صحابتي قال: أمك، قال: ثم من؟ قال: أمك، قال: ثم من؟ قال: أمك، قال: ثم من؟ قال: أبوك<sup>3</sup>

[A man asked the prophet who deserves my companion most? The prophet says: your mother and mother and mother and then your father] (Researcher's Translation)

The following is another Arab common say also praises the status of mother:

الجنة تحت أقدام الأمهات

[Heavens are just beneath mothers' feet.] (Researcher's Translation)

<sup>1</sup> Surah Al-Ahqaf (46), verse (15)

<sup>2</sup> Khan and Al-Hilali's (1419 H.- 1998) Translation

<sup>3</sup> Muslim and el Bukhari Narration

It ensues therefore that Arab culture appreciates mother as a socially-sacred figure, translating mother-related profanities from English into Arabic subtitles are problematic.

#### 4.2.2.1. *mother fucking pig*

The following scene shows how Kristine vulgarly reacts to the cruel treatment by the policemen who ordered her to put her hands over head. Only the irreverent expression to mother will be subjected to discussion in example (4) below.

Example (4)

<p>ST:</p> <p>Put your hands on top of your head, ma'am.</p> <p>And you keep off your filthy fucking hands of me.</p> <p>-You <b>mother fucking pig</b>. - Just stop talking.</p>	<p>TT:</p> <p>ضعي يديك فوق راسك يا سيدتي. ابعد يديك القذرتين عني. - يا لك من ضابط لعين. - (كريستين)، كفي عن الكلام فحسب. (Crash: 2004)</p>
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The last subtitle of the Example above shows that the translator substitutes the **ST** specific verbal swearing 'fucking pig' with a generic **TT** cursing term لعين (lit. 'damn'). This is clear in the clause يا لك من ضابط لعين (lit. 'oh, you damned police officer'). Back translation indicates that the **TT** lacks the sense of mother-related swearwords. We can claim that the translator censors the translation to avoid irreverent referring to mother as a social entity.

Example (4) above also reveals that the translator flouts Grice's maxim of quantity by substituting a **ST** of two vulgar items 'fucking' and 'pig' into one Arabic vulgar item لعين (lit. 'deprived from merci of Allah'). The translator violates this maxim, possibly for the spatiotemporal restrictions as the subtitle is made of two lines. Here, the translator could make neither of the two lines longer than the other as two speakers share one shot. Having opted for a **TT** generic expletive, the translator also violates the maxim of quality. The term لعين (lit. 'deprived from merci of Allah') refers to receptor's personal behaviour while the **ST** two vulgar locutions 'fucking' and 'pig' refer to both the addressee being illegitimate and to his mother accused of immoral behaviour. In addition, although the Arabic term لعين sounds more harmful in connotation than the **ST** terms, still the **ST** utterance seems vulgarer in denotation. The subtitler then opts for لعين to avoid any other potential harmful Arabic equivalent for the **ST** swearwords. The translator, inspired with the nature of Arabic as a euphemistic language, tries to make the **TT** as less dysphemistic

as possible. It seems that Arabic rather metaphorically expresses obscene vulgar context even in technical situations (see **LA** in 1.3. above).

With regard to technical standards, namely the conventions of two-line subtitle and placing personal names in brackets, the translator shows awareness of subtitling technical regulations, with respect to western standards (see Karamitroglou 1998 and De Linde and Kay 1999). Therefore, the question to be raised here whether subtitlers should modify the rules of subtitling or not to suit some particular features of Arabic like font scripting and extension of characters such as *ى, ك, ش*, etc.

Example (4) indicates that the translator has condensed the **ST**, for viewers cannot read the same speed or amount as they can speak (see Gottlieb, 2004 in 1.4.1 above). It seems then that the subtitler considers the audience as well as spatiotemporal limitations of space at the bottom of the screen.

The last dialogue of Example (4) above desynchronises with Gottlieb's (1998) nonverbal visual channel. While the subtitle shows a conversation between Kristine and Kamron, her husband, the nonverbal visual channel shows Kristine seized by the policeman. In this situation, viewers are got misled unless they can fast read fast so that they can keep up with movie events properly well.

#### 4.2.2.2. *motherfucker*

Omar, the ex-marine takes his daughter as a hostage and threatens the police to kill her unless his wife comes to that apartment. Omar appears to be furiously frustrated because his wife has a boyfriend.

Example (5):

ST:

-Omar was a marine, right?  
-yeah.

- Do we have a shot  
- Bedroom, but he doesn't come near  
that **fucked** window.

He will do.

Get Eagle and Palermo to that window.

Tell them to wait for my signal

Put that **motherfucker** on his back.

TT:

- كان (عمر) جندياً في البحرية؟  
- أجل -

- أيمكننا استهدافه؟  
- بغرفة النوم ولكنه لا يقترب منها.

سيفعل، فليتمركز (إيغل) و(بوليرمو)  
لاستهداف تلك النافذة

قل لهما ليبتظرا إشارتي  
ليردوا هذا السافل قتيلاً

(Negotiator: 1998)

Example (5) shows that the translator flouts Grice's maxim of quantity since the **TT** subtitles render only one swearword السافل (lit. 'mean or vulgar') out of the two in **ST** – 'fucked' and 'motherfucker'. The subtitler omits this **ST** clause 'that fucked window' in the translation due to spatiotemporal rules of subtitling. The subtitle, unless it is condensed, will exceed the maximum length of forty characters a line. Take this dialogue from the Example above; '– Do we have a shot? – Bedroom, but he doesn't come near that fucked window' appears on screen as – بغرفة النوم، لكنه لا يقترب منها، – أيمكننا استهدافه؟. We claim that line (2) of subtitle (2) in the example above will exceed the limits of 40 characters once the whole **ST** speech is rendered. So, this line will be as (بغرفة النوم، لكنه لا يقترب من تلك النافذة – اللعينة) a 49-character line is the result. The translator seems to have realised that deleting the utterance 'fucking' cause no harm to the meaning and so he achieves two points with only one strike in that he reduces the **TT** and eliminates a pejorative rude utterance as well.

Example (5) also reveals that the translator observes the maxim of quantity in that the **ST**'s swearword 'motherfucker' is substituted with one vulgar Arabic locution as السافل. However, the translator flouts Grice's maxim of quality since السافل although pragmatically foul, seems to be less offensive than the 'motherfucker'. The generic Arabic item, السافل, cannot convey the specific meaning that 'motherfucker' intends. The translator flouts the maxim of manner to avoid harming the target Audience. Notwithstanding, the translator has made a code switching (diglossia) from informal and partly slang English into **MSA** as the subtitle shows; ليردوا هذا السافل قتيلاً (lit. 'to kill that mean man').

Regarding the **TL** writing conventions in the subtitles (see Chen, Ch.: 2004 in 1.1.5. above); the translator is expected to apply Arabic diacritical marks if the meaning is ambiguous, for example, the **TT** item ليردوا (lit 'to kill') with no inflectional markers, might have two possible interpretations. It either becomes like لِيَرُدُّوا (lit. 'bring back or defend') or as لِيُرِدُوا (lit. 'to kill'). It is claimed that viewers can perceive the idea through nonverbal channels of meaning (see Gottlieb 1998); however, viewers of various ages and reading proficiency still need to move in between the picture and the subtitles at the bottom of screen. We can claim that Arabic diacritics should be applied where meaning obscuring is possible.

### 4.2.3. Ethnic Slurs

The swearwords under this category include insults against people based on their origin, race, ethnicity, religion or colour. The examples of this part refer to ethnic slurs against Muslims for their religion, Arabs and Asians for ethnicity in addition to black and white Americans for skin colour.

#### 4.2.3.1. slurs against Muslims

Example (6) below contains an indication of swearing against Muslims, perhaps on the basis of the common American Post-September11-IslamPhobia. This dialogue represents a scene in a weapon store where an Iranian born-American man has a deal to buy a handgun. The Iranian man does not use English at the beginning as his daughter – unveiled interpreted his talk with the salesman. Suddenly, the seller comes to realise that the customer is a Muslim originally from the Middle East. The salesperson, who does not know the buyer in person, deliberately calls him ‘Osama’ making a sign of intertextuality referring to ‘Osama bin Laden’<sup>1</sup>. As the film proceeds to verify more about characters, the audience will later identify that the Persian man’s actual name is ‘Fared’ not ‘Osama’ like what Example (6) below says.

Example (6):

ST:

You get one free box of ammunition

-What kind you want?

-[third language is used among two customers]

You, (**Osama**)! Plan a **jihād** on your time. What do you want?

-Are you making insult at me?

-Am I making insult at you

-Is that the closest you can come to English?

-yes, I speak English.

-I am American citizen.

-Oh, God here we go.

TT:

ستحصل على صندوق ذخيرة مجاني.

-أي نوع تريد؟

-ماذا قال؟ ذخيرة؟

What did he say, ammunition?

مهلاً يا (أسامة)، فلنخطط لهذا

في وقتك الخاص، ماذا تريد؟

-هل تقول إهانة في حقي؟

-أقول إهانة في حقك.

-أهذه إجادتك للغة الإنجليزية؟

-أجل أتكلم الإنجليزية.

- أنا مواطن أمريكي

- بدأنا

(Crash: 2004)

Example (6) shows that the translator transliterates the **ST** proper noun (Osama) into (أسامة). The translator falsely introduces one of the movie’s characters and so being the

<sup>1</sup> The Arab-Saudi man who founded the Islamic organisation, al-Qaeda

case, s/he flouts maxims of relevance and manner in the sense that the perlocutionary force intended in this (Osama) does not refer to the man on the screen. It seems that the translator has not recognised the occurrences of discrimination. Actually, the **ST** shows that (Osama) is persistently coupled with an Islamic war term ‘jihad’, which is omitted in the **TT** subtitle. The implicature derived from text indicates the use of discriminating against a man on his beliefs. But the **TT** shows no sign of vulgarity or cursing. The subtitler should have opted for *يا ابن لادن* (lit. ‘Oh, you bin Laden’) instead of ‘Osama’.

An American-Muslim being a citizen coming to buy a gun from a licensed store should not be accused of ‘Jihad’ activities. The Persian man felt surprised to hear the other man’s comment. Moreover, having not associated this shot of Example (6) above with the rest of the scene taking place at the gun store (see Example (d) in **Chapter III** above), the translator mistranslates the **ST** original message.

The word ‘Jihad’ has a pragmatic force, very much related to ‘bin Laden’ whereas its Arabic rendition *فليخطط لهذا* (lit. ‘go and plan for this’) has no reference and therefore it is considered as a flout of both maxims of relevance and manner since the translator leaves audience with a bit vague subtitle.

As a result, it seems in question whether the movie sound tracks should be taken likewise the subtitles as one coherent unity and whether translators apply any kind of editing to retain the film thematic unity in the **TT**. Elsewhere in the movie, the audience surprisingly meet the Iranian man with his wife and daughter naturally speaking in their home and calling each others in name.

Moreover, we claim that the Arabic subtitles of Example (6) do neither synchronise with verbal auditory channel nor with the nonverbal visual channel of the scene.

#### 4.2.3.2. *ethnic discrimination against Asians*

Two black young men, who previously seized the truck of Los Angeles Attorney General, stop at once to find that they have gone over a man, trapped just beneath the vehicle. One of the men warns his friend that a ‘chinaman’ is suffering under the truck. Despite the presence of many forms of swearing in Example (7) below, only ‘chinaman’ will be tackled for the sake of discussing ethnic slurs.

Example (7):

ST:

TT:

What the fuck was that?

ما الذي حدث؟

-Holy shit.

-يا للهول

-What?

-ماذا؟

Man, we done run over a **chinaman**

لقد دهست رجلاً صينياً

-You are saying there is a **chinaman** under the truck?

-أتقصد أن هناك صينياً تحت هذه الشاحنة؟  
- ما الذي لم تفهمه؟

-What part don't you understand?

There is a **chinaman** struck underneath the fucking truck.

هنالك رجل صيني  
عالق تحت الشاحنة اللعينة  
(Crash: 2004)

Semantically, the translator formally translates a person's nationality. Yet, the scene is not about the nationality of a man being hit and struck beneath the truck. It has an indication of sarcasm that the Arabic rendition *صينياً* does not convey.

Pragmatically, on the other hand, the **ST** term 'chinaman'<sup>1</sup> as shown in Example (7) above has an offensive connotation the idea that the **TT** subtitle *رجلاً صينياً* (lit. 'a Chinese man') does not indicate. The **TL** subtitles do not suggest any level of ethnic discrimination. Apparently the translator violates the maxim of quality as an incorrect **TT** perlocution occurs to mislead the audience. The Arabic subtitles recognise the nationality of the man underneath the truck but not the speaker's racial attitudes against strangers of oriental origin. That is to claim that the Arab audience cannot understand the implicature of racism the **ST** sound track expresses.

Another pragmatic point to mention is the interlingual diglossic situation from informal English use of slur 'chinaman' into a formal Arabic substitution *رجلاً صينياً*. Having opted for this translation, the subtitler provides Arab audience with untrue information about the **ST** speakers as if they have a higher social status and politer in the Arabic text than what they are indeed. The translator therefore flouts maxims of manner and relevance.

The subtitles show the importance of using Arabic diacritics e.g., *التنوين* [Tanwīn (ّ)<sup>2</sup>] *صينياً* and *رجلاً* which affects the script in number of characters with special impact on meaning as well. This issue should be necessarily considered to put forward a technical style for Arabic subtitles taking particular Arabic features into account.

<sup>1</sup> An offensive, ethnic slur [against] a person of Chinese descent. (see WordWeb Dictionary)

<sup>2</sup> Tanwīn is the addition of the Arabic letter 'noon' (ن) at the end of a noun.

#### 4.2.3.3. *slurs against Arabs*

The Attorney General felt annoyed and embarrassed that his car has been stolen by two black guys. Meanwhile, election competition started in the state. He was thinking of any means of propaganda that he finds helpful for his party to attain the support of the black community in the soon coming public elections. He asks his assistant (Bruce) about awarding a black person a medal. To his surprise, the man he thought of is not only an Arab but also an Iraqi, named (Saddam). The Attorney General accepts the idea of presenting that Iraqi with a medal before realising the person's name. But, the Attorney General expresses fun comments about the whole thought of pinning a medal on an Iraqi named (Saddam).

The underlined 'Saddam Khahoum' and its subtitle (صدام كاحوم) in the Example (8) below is an emphasis to distinguish this natural mentioning of the name from other discriminating uses.

Example (8):

ST:

What we need is a picture of me penning a medal on a Blackman.

- Bruce?
- The firefighter. The one who saved the camp or something in Northridge.

what's his name?

- He is Iraqi.
- He is Iraqi as well he looks black.

He is dark-skinned, sir but he is Iraqi.  
His name is Saddam Khahoum.

**Saddam?** His name's **Saddam**?

It's really good, Bruce.

I am gonna pin a medal on an Iraqi named **Saddam**. Give yourself a raise, will you?

TT:

ما نحتاجه هو صورة لي وأنا اعلق وساماً على صدر رجل أسود.

(بروس)؟ رجل الإطفاء الذي أنقذ القوم الذين كانوا يخيمون في (نورث روج).

ما اسمه؟

- إنه عراقي.

- عراقي؟ لكنه يبدو أسود.

يبدو أسمر سيدي لكنه عراقي واسمه (صدام كاحوم).

صدام؟ اسمه (صدام)؟

هذا جيد جداً يا (بروس)

سأعلق وساماً على صدر عراقي يدعى (صدام)

هلا تعطي نفسك علاوة.

(Crash: 2004)

Example (8) above shows that the translator transliterates the fire fighter's name 'Saddam' into صدام and that seems quite well done as in the underlined 'Saddam Khahoum' واسمه صدام, however this 'Saddam' cannot be taken as vulgar term. The last two subtitles in Example (8) show that the **ST** sense of vulgar discrimination is not communicated in the **TT**. But, the viewers can perceive the perlocutionary force through Gottlieb's (1998) verbal auditory and nonverbal visual channels throughout the scene.

Before analysing the use of such slur, we claim that the translator and the actor, (Bruce) flout the maxim of relevance as they provide an irrelevant answer إنه عراقي 'He is Iraqi' to the Attorney's question ما اسمه؟ 'what's his name?'.

Example (8) seems similar to Example (6) above in that the slur 'Saddam' intertextualises with an Arab figure, 'Saddam Hussein'<sup>1</sup>. The Attorney General felt surprised at first but latter he got stressed for this unfortunate of having a black-like man named 'Saddam'. The translator renders the name but does not transfer the original speaker's implicature behind the cancellation of pinning a medal on a dark-skinned man due to his name, 'Saddam Khahoum'. 'Saddam Khahoum' is qualified and loyal fire-fighter who has rescued and saved lives of American people inside America.

In the last two subtitles of this dialogue, perhaps the translator should employ functional translation, something like: 'It's really good, Bruce' into تلك فضيحة يا (بروس) as the general atmosphere shows pejorative attitudes even against the black who are needed for electoral propaganda. The translator flouts the maxim of manner in that s/he falsely directed viewers' attention. 'Saddam' صدام in the Arabic subtitle has no sign of vulgarity as 'Saddam' is mentioned here in the **ST** as an anti-American imperialism and also as a world-evil figure.

The subtitler expects viewers to interfere on basis of nonverbal part of the scene about the intertextual sign and the irony behind using 'Saddam' mainly in the last two subtitles of Example (8) above. Nevertheless, the subtitler has observed Grice's maxim of quantity, being as informative as the **ST** entails.

#### 4.2.3.4. *slurs against the black or the white*

The two black guys comment on the overuse of some ethnic slurs even within the same race. They discuss black-related issues like the hip-hop music while they were escaping from the police.

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<sup>1</sup> Late president of Iraq, hanged in Baghdad in 2006.

Example (9)

ST:

Nah, nah, you wanna listen to music  
of the oppressors, you go ahead, man.

How in the lunacy of your mind is hip-  
hop music of the oppressors.

Listen to it, man.

“**nigger** this, **Nigger** that.”

You think white people go around  
Calling each other **honkies** all day,  
man?

Hey, **honky**, how is business?  
Going greater **cracker**. We are  
diversifying.

TT:

إن كنت تريد الاستماع إلى موسيقى  
مضطهدين فلتفضل.

كيف يصور لك عقلك المريض  
أن ال (هيب هوب) موسيقا مضطهدين

أصغ إليها يا رجل

”الزنجي كذا الزنجي ذاك.“

هل تظن أن البيض  
ينعتون بعضهم بالروميين طوال الوقت؟

مرحباً أيها الرومي، كيف حال العمل؟  
إنه عظيم يا صديقي الرومي، نحن نتوسع.

(Crash: 2004)

In this exchange of Example (9), the translator observes the maxim of quantity in the sense that subtitles are informative as required; e.g., the Arabic term الزنجي for the English’s ‘nigger’. By choosing الزنجي for ‘nigger’, the translator has nearly reflects the implicature that a colour-related racial slur is used and that the audience has realised the presence of an offensive word. However, the nonverbal visual part of the scene does not synchronise with the auditory channel ( see Gottlieb 1998 and De Linde and Kay 1999).

Nonetheless, the translator opts for a vague and old fashioned Arabic word i.e. الرومي (used as analogy of colour with black)<sup>1</sup> to render the ST swearwords ‘honky’ and ‘cracker’<sup>2</sup>. Thus, the translator seems to have flouted the maxim of manner. The viewers are expected to misunderstand the old fashioned Arabic word رومي since it has no racial indication of colour for the case in point.

Subtitles of Example (9) show an ‘interlingual diglossia’ where the English informal or slang expressions like ‘nigger and honky’ and ‘you wanna listen’ are translated into old fashioned MSA terms like الزنجي , الرومي and إن كنت تريد الاستماع.

Some Arabic letter scripts are well considered and the translator though has no failure on the spatio-temporal standards. The translator prefers some Arabic letter script in case of having two optional forms like الألف المقصورة (ى) instead الألف الممدودة (أ) because the first

<sup>1</sup> See the LA

<sup>2</sup> A poor White person in the southern United States

captures less space while the other usually extends out to take more space; e.g., the word *موسيقا* instead of *موسيقى*. Although the use of either (ى) or (أ) will have no effect on the number of characters, the extension of (ى) may seize more space. The translator seems to have censored his options of spelling in Arabic so that Arabic subtitles in terms of font can be easily read.

#### 4.2.3.5. *personal humiliation of age*

John escapes from an explosion by throwing himself into the river. Suddenly, a police-boat arrives and the officer orders John to get out onto the ground with an intention to arrest him.

Example (10):

<p>ST:</p> <p>Turn around</p> <p>- I'm John Triton</p> <p>- <b>Shut up</b></p> <p>Down on your knees</p> <p>And put your hands behind your head</p> <p>I'm the guy who called you.</p> <p>They have my wife</p> <p><b>Shut up boy</b></p> <p>You're under arrest</p>	<p>TT:</p> <p>استندر</p> <p>- أنا (جون ترايتون)</p> <p>- اصمت</p> <p>اركع على ركبتيك</p> <p>وضع يديك فوق رأسك</p> <p>أنا الرجل الذي اتصلت بكم</p> <p>هم يحتجزون زوجتي</p> <p>اصمت يا فتى، أنت موقوف</p> <p>(Crash: 2004)</p>
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Semantically, the translator renders 'boy' into ولد ignoring its pragmatic intention. Example (10) above contains an offensive slur 'boy' that the policeman uses while stopping John at the bank of the river. And as the **ST** of Example (10) can indicate, the speaker gets frustrated and becomes tough enough to sound such offensive utterance 'shut up boy' towards a black man, John, who is about 30 years old. However, the translator flouts the maxim of quality in the sense that he provides an Arabic subtitle that neither synchronises with the audio-visual content of the scene nor it renders the speaker's mood of anger. By opted for this Arabic rendition اصمت يا فتى (lit. 'be silent, young man') to translate 'shut up boy', the translator flouts the maxim of quality as he provides viewers with false knowledge. According to the Arabic subtitle, the policeman is politer than what he is in the **ST**. Besides, the **TT** subtitle اصمت يا فتى does not provide the pragmatic equivalent to 'shut up boy'. The **TL** word فتى<sup>1</sup>, which indicates maturity and strength, is not equal to a 'boy' (lit. 'ولد'), which mostly refers to a son at an early age. The subtitler omits the term 'shut

<sup>1</sup> (an adult man with a strong body. See **LA**) الكامل الجِزْل من الرجال، لسان العرب.

up' twice substituting it with an Arabic euphemistic choice اصمت instead of اخرس ('shut up') for example.

Interlingual diglossic situation can be easily noticed the example above as the term 'boy' – a low English is rendered into a MSA term like فتى. The word فتى (see LA) also has a positive implicature in Arabic the issue that the term 'boy' lacks.

#### 4.2.4. Profanity against Religious References

This section deals with some religious entities that some people may offensively refer to. Religious references thought to be highly respected are like prophets, saints in addition to the Almighty, Allah.

##### 4.2.4.1. Profanity against Saints

Two young black men who seized the General Attorney's truck noticed some periapts clipped to the vehicles front windscreen while they were driving away. Seeming disbelieved in such periapts, the driver asks his friend to remove and through those stuffs away.

Example (11)

ST:	TT:
No, no, no!	لا-
Take that <b>voodoo-assed</b> thing off of there right now.	- انزع هذا الشيء الخرافي من هنا فوراً
I know you just didn't call <b>saint Christopher voodoo</b> . <sup>1</sup>	اعلم أنك لم تتعت القديس (كريستوفر) بأنه خرافة.
Man is the patron of travelers, Dawq.	إنه القديس الحامي للمسافرين.
You had a conversation with <b>God</b> , huh?	هل تحدثت في هذا مع أحد.
What did <b>God</b> say?	ماذا قال لك؟
Go forth, my son, and leave big slobbery suction rings on every dashboard you find.	امض يا بني والصق دوائر كبس مطاطية بيلها اللعاب على لوحة قياس كل سيارة تجدها.

(Crash: 2004)

The black man disrespectfully refers to some religious practices or social beliefs in power of magic. The ST shows a sexual-sacred compound locution as Example (11) shows "voodoo-assed thing." However, the subtitler reduces the ST's offensive sense by opting

<sup>1</sup> Christian martyr and patron saint of travellers (3rd century).

for هذا الشيء الخرافي (lit. this mythical thing) as a substitution. The subtitler violates the maxim of quantity since the **ST** utterance ‘assed-vooodoo’ is substituted by a generic Arabic word الخرافي. The subtitler should have probably opted for انزع هذه الشعوذة من هنا فوراً (lit. take this devilry away) because the Arabic term الشعوذة (lit. ‘deviltry’) is thought to communicate the magical inspiration in some ritual practices aiming at bringing good fortune. The violation of Grice’s maxim of manner refers to the use of the ambiguous Arabic term الخرافة as for ‘vooodoo’.

Another religion-related English vulgar reference to ‘God’ is deleted twice in the **TT** whereas the translator provides vague rendition ماذا قال لك؟ and هل تحدثت في هذا مع أحد. It is clear that the translator violates Grice principles in the Arabic subtitles of Example (11). The subtitler flouts the maxim of quantity as the word ‘God’ is deleted producing less-informative **TT**. Likewise, the maxims of quality and manner are violated because the **TT** subtitles lack the essence of profanity and because of the vague reference that the Example above indicates. The translator probably censors the **TT** due to diversity in cultural aspects and religion as the English term ‘God’ probably refers to ‘Jesus’ not to ‘Allah’.

Similarly, while the implicature of ‘You had a conversation with God, huh?, What did God say?’ indicate a sense of sarcasm, the **TT** lacks this sense as shown in هل تحدثت في هذا مع أحد and ماذا قال لك. The translator censors the **TT** on the sake of the **TL** cultural and religious considerations as the Almighty Allah, names of prophets and other sacred entities are not to be irreverently mentioned (see Gamal 2008 in 1.3. above).

Regarding subtitling constraints suggested by Gottlieb (1998), De Linde and Kay (1999), Schwartz (2002) and Karamitroglou (2002 and 2003), the subtitler follows the rules of two lines, mainly the two-line subtitle for a dialogue. However, the translator violates the standard number of characters per subtitle as they have exceeded the typical 35-40 characters per line. For example; the one-line subtitle اعلم أنك لم تنعت القديس (كريستوفر) بأنه خرافة records 46 characters and the first line of this subtitle scores 48 characters على لوحة قياس كل سيارة تجدها / امض يا بني والصق دوائر كبس مطاطية يبيلها اللعاب. However, it should have been segmented into two lines.

In addition, the verbal visual channel namely the Arabic subtitle هل تحدثت في هذا مع أحد/ ماذا قال لك؟ neither synchronises with the verbal auditory channel (see Gottlieb,1998), nor it

does contribute to provide clear interpretation on the audience part. This situation has been negatively doubled as these questions of the driver are not answered by his partner and more the Arabic demonstrative pronoun هذا (lit. ‘this’) and likewise the term أحد (lit. ‘anyone’) has no reference within Example (11).

#### 4.2.4.2. *profanity against Jesus*

An old man suffering from a chronic disease got into the toilet. Meanwhile, his son wonders if his father needs help. The old man’s voice gives an idea about his pain.

Example (12):

ST:	TT:
Pop, you okay	أبي، هل أنت بخير
If I could piss, I would be okay.	إن استطعت التبول، أكون بخير.
I’m ... <b>Jesus</b> I’m done now.	يا للهول... فرغت الآن.
Give me a hand.	ساعدني
	(Crash: 2004)

Example (12) indicates that the translator flouts the maxim of quantity in that s/he translates an English expression ‘Jesus’ into an Arabic term of two words يا للهول (lit. ‘oh, how terrible!’). Notwithstanding, the **ST** term ‘Jesus’, translated as an interjection of a descent reference like يا للهول, cannot be translated into Arabic as يا إلهي (lit. ‘oh, God’). The Arabic expression يا إلهي cannot be uttered in this exact situation where an old man is pissing in the toilet – a defile tarnished area where sacred figures like prophets should not be mentioned. And so, the subtitler deliberately violates Grician maxim of quality to avoid mentioning the term ‘Jesus’ in such situation. Mentioning sacred figures in situations like the one of Example (12) is taboo even prohibited according to the target culture conventions.

The translator can preferably opt for a different Arabic interjection like أف (lit. ‘ugh’) as the **ST**, according to the Example (12), and in accordance with the verbal auditory channel of meaning (Gottlieb: 1998) in the film scene expresses the old man’s suffering.

#### 4.2.4.3. *holy shit*

The two black friends (see example (7) above) driving over the Chinaman disrespectfully use words of holy sense. The word ‘holy’ is added to the term ‘shit’ and so one can notice the amount of contrast the swearword ‘holy-shit’ compromises.

Example (13):

ST:

What the **fuck** was that?

- **Holy shit.**

- What?

There is a chinaman struck underneath  
the **fucking** truck.

TT:

ما الذي حدث؟

- يا للهول.

- ماذا

هنالك رجل صيني عالق  
تحت الشاحنة اللعينة.

(Crash: 2004)

In the first subtitle of Example (13) above, the translator deletes the swearword ‘fuck’ as the **ST** ‘What the fuck was that?’ becomes into Arabic as ما الذي حدث؟ (lit. ‘what happened?’). The translator flouts Grice’s maxim of quantity in that the **TT** subtitle is less informative than the **ST**. He also violates the maxim of quality in that the **TT** has no indication of vulgarity that takes over the scene throughout verbal auditory and the nonverbal visual channels of meaning. Consequently, the Arabic subtitles desynchronise with the film on the screen. Clearly, the translator reduces the tone of profanity into its zero degree, perhaps to achieve politeness and to consider cultural specifics of the target audience attitudes with regard to religious issues, for example.

In the second two-line subtitle in Example (13), the word ‘holy’ is irreverently used to emphasise the word ‘shit’ making a compound . Perhaps, the translator manages to transfer the sense of surprise in a confined expression like يا للهول.

Nevertheless, example (13) above reveals code switching from lower (informal/slang) English as in ‘holy shit’ and ‘fucking’ into higher Arabic standard variety like يا للهول and اللعينة. It is clear that the Arabic subtitle introduces politer speakers with a refined linguistic proficiency. In view of that, the translator seems to have flouted the maxim of quality as the **TT** suggests false information about the characters. This violation is reasonable as MSA, the variety used in subtitling, rather prefers refined expressions and often plays around obscene expressions (see Gamal (2008: 3) and ath-Tha‘ālibi in 1.3. above).

#### 4.2.5. Vilifications against People’s Virtuousness or Honour

This category includes profane words that people use to insult others accusing them of untrue rather immoral manner. Such usage usually have sex connotation as well.

#### 4.2.5.1. *whorehouse, whore and pimp*

In the following sequence, an ex-boyfriend comes to visit his girl at her work admonishing and blaming her for ignoring his calls and accusing her of making a new boyfriend. The furious man extends his offence towards other people, his old girlfriend's master and colleagues.

Example (14):

ST:	TT:
Drake, have you lost your mind?	هل فقدت صوابك؟
This is my job.	هذا عملي.
Oh, really just look like a <b>whorehouse</b> .	حقاً؟ لا يبدو كالماخور.
Where are the other whores?	أين السافلات الأخريات؟
Where is their <b>pimp</b> ?	أين المسؤول عنهن؟
You were with him. That's why you didn't answer your phone all the weekend.	كنت معه، لهذا لم ترددي على هاتفك الخليوي طيلة العطلة الأسبوعية؟
-Could you please come with us?	- سيدي هلا ترافقنا من فضلك؟
-Don't mess with me pork chop.	- لا تعبت معي أيها البدين.
-You are causing a scene.	- أنت تثير فضيحة
- Oh, you think this is a scene?	- أتخالين هذه فضيحة
Wait till I tell daddy about the little <b>whore</b> he raised.	انتظري حتى أخبر والدك عن السافلة التي رباها.
	(The Marine: 2006)

Example (14) above clarifies that the translator opts for some Arabic vulgar functional equivalents to render the **SL** profane words like 'whorehouse' into الماخور. According to **LA** الماخور means:

<sup>1</sup> وهو مجلسُ الرِّبِّيةِ ومَجْمَعُ أهلِ الفِسْقِ والفسادِ ويُؤبِتُ الخَمَّارينَ.

[House of doubt, winery and congregation of people with perversion] (Researcher's Translation)

The subtitler opts for archaic Arabic terms like الماخور for 'whorehouse', سافلات for 'whores' whereas 'whore' is translated into سافلة – a generic Arabic word usually refers to immoral people. Semantically, these options possibly transfer the sense of vulgarity as they can be the right functional equivalents. But, the translator, by translating 'their pimp', into المسؤول عنهن (lit 'their boss'), intends to be euphemistic though the other terms, e.g., الماخور and السافلات maintains the **ST** offensivity. The translator should have opted for أين سيديكن (lit. 'where is your master') instead of أين المسؤول عنكن since سيد (lit. 'master') has an implicature of unequal relation between powerful masters and powerless slaves. Moreover, opting for سيديكن will save more space on screen referring to technical standards of subtitling. The translator

<sup>1</sup> See **LA** Dictionary

censors the **TT** to avoid the use of some Arabic rude terms like قواد (lit. ‘pimp’) which socially sounds harmful on the **TL** audience’s part. The avoidance of mentioning such offensive swearwords either refers to editing or the policy which the MBCs preferably recommend.

Pragmatically, Example (14) above shows that the translator has generally observed Grice’s maxims except that of politeness (see Leech: 1993). In fact, the translator observes the maxim of quantity by providing one Arabic term for the same amount of English i.e. الماخور for ‘whorehouse’ and السافلات for ‘whores’. These two examples indicate the observance of maxims of quality and manner as well. In general, it is clear that Arabic subtitles of Example (14) above do synchronise with both the verbal auditory and the nonverbal visual channels of the thematic scene. However, having opted for المسؤول عنكن to translate ‘your pimp’, the translator flouts the maxim of quality in that the Arabic term المسؤول does not have a pejorative interlocution and consequently lacks the force of swearing encapsulated in the **ST** term ‘pimp’; untrue information is transferred to the Arab audience. This euphemism does not synchronise with the nonverbal visual material and the verbal auditory content of the film. Yet, the translator reduces the verbal offensive of the **ST** term ‘pimp’ into zero degree by choosing المسؤول (master) instead.

Accordingly, the translator opts for two main translation strategies functional translation using generic Arabic terms for specific English uses – ‘whore’ into سافلة and substituting English profaning word with neutral Arabic term; e.g., ‘pimp’ into المسؤول.

#### 4.2.5.2. *filthy fucking hands and shut your mouth*

The following Crash movie scene indicates how the two policemen disrespectfully treat a black man and his wife, Kristine.

Example (15):

<p>ST:</p> <p>-Who the hell you think you’re talking to</p> <p>-Look officer.</p> <p>-My wife had a couple of drink.</p> <p>-Both of you turn around, put your hands on top of your head and interlock your fingers.</p> <p>-Do what he says.</p> <p>-Fuck you.</p>	<p>TT:</p> <p>- من تحسب نفسك تخاطب - اسمع أيها الضابط.</p> <p>- تناولت زوجتي بعض الخمر - استديرا وشابكا أيديكما على رأسيكما</p> <p>- هلا تفعلين ما يطاب منك؟ - تبا لك</p>
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- Put your hands  
 -And you keep your **filthy fucking hands**  
 off me.
- ضعي يديك فوق راسك يا سيدتي.  
 - ابعدي يديك القذرتين عني.
- You mother fucking pig  
 -Shut your mouth, Kristine.
- يا لك من ضابط لعين.  
 - (كريستين) كفي عن الكلام فحسب.  
 (Crash: 2004)

Example (15) shows that Arabic subtitles have fewer swearwords than what the **ST**'s sound tracks indicate. Obviously, the **ST** contains four examples of swearwords whereas the **TT** subtitles renders only two and omitted or reduced the rest.

Pragmatically speaking, the translator has opted for omission as 'who the hell you think you're talking to' becomes من تحسب نفسك تخاطب (lit. who do you think you are talking to) and later 'your filthy fucking hands' becomes يديك القذرتين (lit. your dirty hands). It is to say that the swearwords 'hell' and 'fucking' are deleted in the subtitle and so the maxim of quantity is flouted. The translator seems to have thought that the deletion of the terms 'hell' and 'fucking' will have no impact on meaning in this exact context. The translator, therefore, provides less information than what the **ST** suggests. In terms of quality, by omitting the swearword, the subtitler provides the subtitles with politer words that desynchronise with the verbal auditory channel of meaning throughout the scene. This pragmatic shift indicates the violation of the maxim of quality since the viewer is given false information about the **ST**'s speakers. On the contrary, the **ST** sound tracks indicate a different implicature in that the speakers are foul mouthed.

In the last two-line subtitle of Example (15), the translator corresponds to omission and substitution as translation strategies. This is clear in يا لك من ضابط لعين which translates 'you mother fucking pig'. The translator infringes Grice rules of conversation in terms of quantity and quality – giving false information as لعين does not weight the pragmatic force of 'mother fucking pig'.

Example (15) above also indicates that 'interlingual-diglossia' from a low English dialect into **MSA**. Take 'you mother fucking pig', which grammatically lacks the verb, becomes a well built Arabic sentence يا لك من ضابط لعين as if Kristine were a finer and more proficient speaker. Similarly, the second line of the example (15) above indicates a politer speaker than the original كفي عن الكلام (lit. be quiet) for 'shut your mouth' in which the maxim of quality is flouted because the subtitle provides a polite expression to render a **ST** offensive imperative.

#### 4.2.5.3. *bastard*

The chief of the gang, thinking of the trouble he threw himself in, phones another partner who blames the first about the problem he and the group caused by killing two policemen and that they furiously made a hard argument.

Example (16):

ST:	TT:
You killed two cops today And that's a problem.	لقد قتلتَ شرطيّين اليوم وهذه مشكلة.
-Don't start with me, -You arrogant <b>bastard</b> . You've lost control.	- لا تبدأ معي - أيها الوغد المتعجرف، فقدت السيطرة
That's where you're wrong, my friend. You see?	أنت مخطئ في هذا يا صديقي، أترى؟
-You forgot to whom you're talking? -I exactly know who I'm talking to.	- هل نسيت مع من تتحدث؟ - أعرف تماما مع من أتحدث. (The Marine: 2006)

Example (16) indicates that the translator observes the maxim of quantity in that the translator opts for one **TT** vulgar item, e.g., الوغد (lit. 'blackguard') for a **ST** item 'bastard'. Yet, although the Arabic term الوغد seems not as offensive as 'bastard', the translator does not flout the Grician maxim of quality. The translator opts for such rendition so as to be less rude towards the **TL** viewers. The Arabic profane word الوغد happens to be a cliché used to render many other English terms rather than 'bastard'. The idea of clichéing is also clarified in a number of other examples above. The translator could have opted for another Arabic profane term like نَدْل (lit. rogue) avoid typical clichés in Arabic subtitles and to make use of other new terms that Arabic provides.

The first subtitle of example (16) seems ambiguous a little bit as the subtitles do not go in harmony with the visual part of the scene. Whereas the Arabic subtitles indicate a dialogue, the visual content only shows the gang's chief phoning a person on the mobile phone. The audience can hardly decide about who utters either of the dialogues. The translator can solve this situation by adding the necessary Arabic inflectional markers, that is, لقد قتلتَ شرطيّين (lit. 'you killed two cops') to disambiguate any misinterpretation once the viewer perceives the speech as لقد قتلتُ شرطيّين (lit. 'I killed two cops'). The verbal auditory channel suggests that this part of the exchange mainly the **ST** sound track of Example (16) belongs to the man on the other side of the phone but not to the one viewed on the screen. However, the **TT** subtitle does not reflect that sense and so it is claimed here that the translator flouts the maxim of manner as the two-line subtitle is regarded ambiguous unless Arabic inflection are applied.

On the subject of translation strategies, the subtitler opts for Arabic functional equivalent that pragmatically conveys the essence of profanity yet with an archaic tone using an old fashioned Arabic term like الوغد.

#### 4.2.5.4. *bitch*

Omar, the armed man, still talking to the police negotiator, Danny Roman, seems frustrated from his wife who he irreverently mentions.

Example (17):

<p>ST: I want that <b>bitch</b> or I'll do the girl.</p> <p>Omar, I'm doing the best I can here, man</p> <p>I'm not going to hurt her. I just want her to see me Blowing my brains out.</p> <p>I want her to think; about that When she's <b>sucking</b> that <b>fat</b> <b>prick's cock</b>.</p>	<p>TT:</p> <p>أريد تلك السافلة وإلا قتلت ابنتنا</p> <p>(عمر) أنا أبذل قصارى جهدي</p> <p>لن أؤذيها أريدها أن تراني وأنا أفجر دماغي</p> <p>أريدها أن تفكر في ذلك عندما تخونني مع ذاك البدين (Negotiator: 1998)</p>
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Example (17) shows that the subtitler translates only three out of five English profanes. S/He does not only reduce the **ST** in quantity but also in quality, e.g., the **TT** عندما تخونني مع ذاك البدين does neither equal to the semantic nor to the pragmatic level given in the **ST** words 'when she's sucking that fat prick's cock'.

In Example (17) above, particularly its first subtitle, the translator observes the maxim of quantity as the **TT** item السافلة (lit. 'caddish'), stands for the **ST** swearword 'bitch'. Meanwhile, the translator flouts the maxim of quality in that the **TT** term السافلة is not as offensive as the **ST**'s 'bitch'. The translator transfers the sense of vulgarity with a little bit milder tone. The translator translates an English specific swearword into a generic Arabic utterance. The translator opts for a generic Arabic concept avoiding any other equivalents like عاهرة or بغي that are functional equivalents for 'bitch'.

By comparing the **TT** last subtitle to its **ST** of this exchange, it seems that the translator has made a pragmatic translation loss seeing that the milder **TT** expressions like تخونني (lit. 'being unfaithful') and البدين (lit. 'stout') render three very offensive English terms like 'sucking' and 'cock'. It means that the translator flouts the maxims of quality and quantity.

The speaker – Omar, as the **ST** of Example (17) indicates, seems very foul-mouthed when talking about his wife accusing her of having a boyfriend whereas the **TT** uses words like *البدين* and *تخونني*. The translator sacrifices the original sense observing Levinson’s (1983) maxim of politeness on the sake of the **TL** audience. The Arabic term *تخونني* though rude does not semantically suggest or indicate any apparent sign of having sex outside marriage as an organisation. Despite this, the implicature of the Arabic term *تخونني* from a sociolinguistic and pragmatic view is embedded with illegitimate relation outside of marriage. Having opted for Arabic euphemistic options, the translator is committed to Arabic pragmatic conventions preferring obscene language implicitly expressed (see *ath-Tha‘ālibi* in 1.3 above).

Following the constraints of subtitling, the translator condenses the **ST** in the **TT** and centred the subtitles so that the viewer can easily follow them while watching the film. However, the reduction of profanities in the **TT** subtitles indicate that the translator has ignored verbal auditory channel of meaning with which the **TT** subtitles desynchronise; e.g., *تخونني* for ‘sucking that fat prick’s cock’.

#### 4.2.5.5. *Boyfriend*

Danny Roman, the ex-marine, who has turned into a private firm’s security employee, has gently tried to take the man out but the other was vulgar enough; consequently they get into a violent quarrel.

##### Example (18)

<p>ST:</p> <p>- Whou, whou, whou</p> <p>- The genie just tried to hit me!</p> <p>You shouldn’t have done that</p> <p>We deal with people like this everyday and sometimes you just gotta let things go</p> <p>Yeah? Well, you better tell your <b>boyfriend</b> to back off.</p>	<p>TT:</p> <p>- مهلاً، مهلاً</p> <p>- حاول الساحر ضربي يا رجل</p> <p>ما كان يجدر بك فعل ذلك</p> <p>نتعامل مع أمثالهم كل يوم لتفادي حادثة عليك أحياناً غض النظر</p> <p>قل لصديقك الحميم أن يتراجع</p> <p>(The Marine: 2006)</p>
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As it can be observed in Example (18) above, there is one profane expression usually used to express an out marriage woman-man-woman relation not for man to man. It seems that the **ST** profane word ‘boyfriend’ has different connotations than *صديقك الحميم* (lit. ‘your interment friend’). Nonetheless, the translator literally translates the **ST** item neglecting the actor’s intention to accuse the addressee of probably having gay relation.

Pragmatically, the translator flouts the maxim of quality as untrue information is given to viewers who innocently think that the speaker appears to be gentle advising the addressee to save his close friend. The pragmatic load of the **TL** subtitle صديقك الحميم cannot be the right equivalent for the word 'boyfriend'. The implicature of this utterance suggests a face threatening on the part of the addressee feeling that the perlocution accuses the two friends as if they were 'gay-friends'. The translator likely violates the maxim of relevance in this situation of Example (18) where the people being involved in a clash but not a situation of friendship or people's intimacy. In other words, the Arabic option صديقك الحميم can neither synchronise with the verbal auditory nor with the nonverbal visual channels of the scene. The scene shows how the addressee got very astonished and furious once he heard such an offensive term unusually used in regard to man-man friendship.

Example (18) shows the occurrence of 'interlingual-diglossic' situation, where a low English variety is shifted into a higher Arabic dialect; For Example, the term مهلاً for 'Whou, Whou' and the phrase عليك غض النظر (lit. 'you should keep your sight away') for 'you just gotta let things go'. Besides, diglossic situation occurs on the pragmatic level when the translator renders the **ST** statement 'tell your boyfriend to back off' into the **TT** as قل لصديقك الحميم أن يتراجع. This exact subtitle reveals that the translator has given the speaker a politer tongue.

#### **4.2.6. Interjections**

Since swearing can be also interjectional, this part contains samples of swearwords speakers may use to release self emotions in such feelings; annoyance, frustration, irritation or anxiety (see Montagu, 1967: 105-106). Interjections, loaded with a communicative flow, are not to be translated literally but in away to communicatively conveying the emotional and pragmatic sense of the original (Thawabteh: 2010).

##### *4.2.6.1. damn and fuck*

The marine, John planned to picnic with his wife, Karin. They stopped at the petrol station to fill in with oil, and then John went into the supermarket to buy some soft drink and any chip food. Meanwhile, the gang, who had robbed a jeweller, exchanged fire with the police and consequently took John's truck and hijacked Karin to be their hostage. Karin went on calling for her husband to help her and so far as to show her worry about him, Meanwhile, the husband was hit and fel down unconscious in the supermarket.

Example (19)

ST:	TT:
- Come here! Bring her.	- أحضرها
- Come here.	- تعالي إلى هنا.
- <b>Damn</b>	- تَباً
- (Kate) John	- (جون)
- <b>Fuck</b>	- تَباً
-John	- (جون)
-Get off of me (John)	- إيلك عني (جون)
-Where the <b>hell</b> did she come from?	- من أين أنت هي.
Do we kill her?	هل نقتلها؟
- No, we might need a hostage.	- لا قد نحتاج إلى رهينة
- John!	- (جون)

(The Marine: 2006)

Example (19) shows that the translator opts for an Arabic swearword تَباً (lit. 'be perished') of archaic use to translate two different English foul interjections 'damn' and 'fuck' considered as informal. The Arabic term تَباً also indicates a call on the others to be ruined down as **LA** puts it على المُبالغة، على المُبالغة، على المُبالغة، على المُبالغة [lit. 'damn indicates loss and eradication or death']. It suggests an over amount of exaggerated profanity. Semantically, تَباً does not have the same shadow of meaning that either of the English terms have, taking into account that تَباً has become a cliché translators opt for to avoid any Arabic offensive use. Accordingly, 'interlingual diglossic' situation is expected to occur. As for translation strategies, the translator has substituted two English terms 'damn' and 'fuck' with an old fashioned Arabic vulgar term تَباً. On the contrary, the translator completely omits the word 'hell' in the **TT** subtitles.

Pragmatically thinking, the translator abided by Grice's maxims of quantity as one Arabic equivalent stands for each English term. Similarly, maxim of quality is observed by subtitling 'damn' and 'fuck' into an Arabic profane word like تَباً. Nevertheless, having omitted the term 'hell' in the **TL** subtitle as 'where the hell did she come from?' translates من أين أنت هي؟ (lit. 'where did she come from?'), the translator has flouted both maxims of quantity and quality seeing that deletion took the whole word 'hell' out the subtitle and cleaning out its vulgar sense as well.

Technically, Example (19) above reveals that parts of **TT** subtitles desynchronise with the **ST** verbal auditory and nonverbal visual channels although the subtitles appear quite right in

terms of spatiotemporal rules, dialogue dashes, brackets for proper nouns, etc. Example (19) also clarifies that the **TL** subtitle (إليك عني (جون) synchronises with ‘get off of me (John)’ at word level. Even so, this Arabic subtitle desynchronises with the nonverbal visual content of the scene in that the Arabic subtitle tells the viewer that the ‘John’ herein is the name of the man who firmly seized the woman’s arm whereas (Karin) was calling for her husband (John) to help her. The translator, who flouts the maxim of manner in that sense the translation provides the audience with false information about characters, should have manipulated the subtitle إليك عني ، ساعدني يا (جون) in away to render the intention of Karin, example; إليك عني (جون). Actually, the translator has ignored the right reference or the right person to whom the **ST** originally refers to.

#### 4.2.6.2. *dirty-assed*

The following exchange shows emotional releases of anger by using bad expressions. Morgan, the black heavy man almost talking to himself, steps forward along in accompany of his gang through the swampy valley pejoratively expressing his annoyance.

Example (20):

<p>ST:</p> <p>-Man, <b>the hell</b> with this.</p> <p>-Have you got any problem, brother?</p> <p>My problem is walking to this <b>dirty-assed</b> swampy with the entire county looking for us.</p> <p>Because someone decided that killing cops is a good idea.</p> <p>Yeah, both of them</p>	<p>TT:</p> <p>- تبا لهذا</p> <p>- هل لديك مشكلة يا أخي؟</p> <p>مشكلتي هي السير عبر هذا المستنقع القذر والبلاد كلها تبحث عنا.</p> <p>لأن أحدهم قرر أن قتل الشرطيين فكرة جيدة</p> <p>أجل، كلاهما</p> <p>(The Marine: 2006)</p>
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Example (20) shows that the translator has managed to render the **ST** profanities, supplying Arabic archaic substitution that partly lacks the original essence of profanity. First, the term ‘hell’ is translated into تبا (lit. ‘be perished’) which actually expresses the load of anger Morgan does experience.

The other swearword ‘dirty-assed swampy’ is rendered into المستنقع القذر (lit. ‘dirty swampy’). The translator also flouts the maxim of quantity as one Arabic item stands for two English profanities. The **SL** item ‘assed’ is deleted to avoid impoliteness and probably because such sex related swearword has nothing to do with the contextual meaning as Example (20) above shows. The **ST** implicature does not refer to the dirtiness of the swamp but rather to the

annoyance the speaker got while marching through such dull lane. However, the implicature of the **TL** subtitle being descriptive of the swampy desynchronises with the nonverbal visual channel of meaning (see Gottlieb, 1998 and De Linde and Kay, 1999).

#### 4.2.6.3. *goddamn and fucking*

Omar, as it is in example (3) in 4.2.1.3 above, refuses to release his daughter unless her mother arrives to the apartment where he is being now. He gets annoyed from the negotiation with the police and continues to use very rude words.

Example (21):

<p>ST: No more <b>goddamn</b> talk. I can't wait anymore, you hear me? I want my wife I want her up here. Or I'll do our daughter. -Omar, listen to me. -No more <b>fucking</b> talk.</p>	<p>TT: لا مزيد من الكلام لم يعد بإمكانني الانتظار أريد زوجتي أريدها هنا وإلا قتلت ابنتي - (عمر) أصغ إليّ - لا مزيد من الكلام (Negotiator: 1998)</p>
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Example (21) above reveals that the translator renders neither of the **ST** swearwords 'goddamn' and 'fucking' into the **TL** subtitles. Deletion strategy therefore inspires the translation in this exchange. Thus, the subtitles are filtered and less vulgar than the **ST** terms; e.g., 'fucking' is translated into Arabic as لا مزيد من الكلام. The example shows that the translator replaces the **ST** terms 'goddamn' and 'fucking' with the same phrase into Arabic. This means that the translator makes no synchronisation between the **ST** terms and the Arabic subtitle which does not also go in harmony with the verbal auditory and nonverbal visual elements of the film scene.

From a pragmatic point of view, the translator in Example (21) violates maxims of quantity and quality. Concerning Grice's maxim of quantity the translator renders zero profane expressions into the Arabic subtitles, and therefore the subtitle becomes less informative than the **ST** exchange. As for the maxim of quality, the **TT** لا مزيد من الكلام provides untrue information about the **ST** speaker's utterances as in 'no more fucking talk'. This translation represents a well polite-tongued person and rather relaxed-tempered though the original speaker is vulgar-tongued. Nevertheless, it seems that the translator deletes the **ST** offensive words so as to reduce the amount of face threatening on the part of viewer.

Example (21) shows that the first and last subtitles do not synchronise with the verbal auditory and the nonverbal visual channels in that the **ST** angeriness is not rendered in the **TT**. So, viewers wonder how it comes that a man threatening to kill the daughter of his own appears so polite and calm to that extent the Arabic subtitles suggest.

According to the example above, interlingual diglossic situation is also clearly revealed in the sense that the translator has freed Omar's utterances from all indecent words and makes him even politer in the subtitles as these two speeches 'no more fucking talk' and 'no more goddamn talk' have been subtitled into لا مزيد من الكلام. The translator opts for a higher Arabic dialect than that of English.

#### 4.2.6.4. *bullshit*

John, the marine who had been discharged from service, also loses his new job being a security employee for a big firm. He discusses the problem with his colleague 'Joe' who tries to cheer John up. But, John feels annoyed for his misfortune as a professional marine being fired even from a mean job as a security person.

Example (22):

ST:

You don't understand,  
it is not about work, it is not about a job  
Being a marine means everything to me

Now I go and get fired  
from some a **bullshit** security job

TT:

أنت لا تفهم  
ليست مسألة عمل أو وظيفة

كوني رامياً بحرياً  
يعني كل شيء بالنسبة لي

الآن طردت من عمل تافه  
في جهاز أمن

(The Marine: 2006)

First of all, the first **TL** subtitle of Example (22) above is considered as rude since the **TT** words أنت لا تفهم (lit. 'you don't understand') consider the addressee stupid. The subtitler should have opted for لم تدرك قصدي (lit. 'you didn't get the idea'). By opting for such translation, the translator can transfer the **ST** implicature properly well.

According to Example (22), the **ST** contains one swearword 'bullshit' that the translator renders into a milder Arabic vulgar term تافه (lit. 'silly'). It means that the translator maintains the pragmatic sense of the original. Generally speaking, the translator synchronises the **TT** with the verbal auditory channel and so with the nonverbal visual content of the conversation above.

Meanwhile, the translator observes Grice's maxims of quantity to show commitment to the **ST** making the **TT** as informative as required. The translator also observes the maxim of quality as the Arabic term *تافه* makes a suitable substitution for **ST** interjection, 'bullshit' in accordance with the context in Example (22).

#### 4.2.6.5. *shut up, fuck up*

The hostages of Danny Roman, the previous negotiator, are blaming each others for the troublesome adversity they all suffer from. They all felt frustrated for the trouble they have. Although, Example (23) contains a lot of examples, only those swearwords in bold will be analysed because the rest have been handled in other examples of the study.

Example (23):

ST:

So, you've got to get me  
the fuck out now.

Keep quite, Rudy.  
We'll handle this

- **shut up, fuck up.**  
- fuck you, **prick**

That's enough, he'll hear you. He's got the  
gun. So he is the one in charge.

Both of you, **pipe down**

TT:

لذا عليك إخراجي  
من هنا حالياً

أسد خدمة إلى نفسك  
والتزم الصمت سنعالج الأمر

- **اخرس**  
- تباً لك، **سافل**

حسناً هذا يكفي سيسمعكما وهو  
الذي يحمل السلاح فهو من يتحكم بالأمر

**اخرسا** كلاكما  
(Negotiator: 1998)

The **ST** of example (23) above provides six swearwords of which only four are translated into Arabic. The translator deletes the swearwords 'fuck and 'fuck up'. While 'fuck out' is reduced to the zero degree of profanity as 'get me the fuck out now' becomes *عليك إخراجي من هنا حالياً*, the swearwords 'fuck up' is completely deleted. Regarding the other profanities, the subtitler translates them literally like 'shut up' and 'pipe down' as *اخرس* and *اخرسا*.

Accordingly, as subtitle III of example (23) shows, the translator violates the maxim of quantity as the **TT** renders only one out of two in the **ST**. Obviously, 'shut up' is translated into *اخرس* whereas 'fuck up' is deleted. The translator opts for this deletion to avoid repetition and because *اخرس* transfers the illocutionary force of the **SL** speaker. Despite this, the subtitle provides less information than what the **ST** does. However, Grice's maxim of quality is observed since the Arabic term *اخرس* raises the amount of offensivity the **ST** speaker intends to express – to make the addressee silent. The term 'fuck up' is be uttered as an intensifier for 'shut up' adding a little emotional effect to such imperative word. This

exact subtitle of the example above synchronises with the **ST**'s verbal auditory channel and that of nonverbal visual content.

Example (23) provides another term 'pipe down', which is translated into اخرسا. Hence, the maxim of quality is flouted in that اخرسا is more offensive than 'pipe down'. The translator should have opted for اهدءا instead since the implicature indicates that Maggie, the speaker asked the two men to stop arguing foolishly but not to express her emotional reaction to insult others.

#### 4.2.6.6. damn

The Attorney General and wife returned home after the two guys had stolen their truck. He discusses the issue with his assistant probably the secretary. He is afraid of having a scandal and so he got stressed and frustrated.

Example (24):

ST:

All right Karin, tell me.

Flamingo doesn't think anybody has the story yet.

I'm the **damn** district attorney of Los Anglos.

If my car gets jacked, it's gonna make news

Fuck.

TT:

ماذا لدينا؟ حدثيني يا (كارين).

(فلامينجو) لا يظن بأن الخبر قد وصل لأحد.

أنا نائب (لوس أنجلوس) العام بحق السماء.

إذا تعرضت سيارتي للسرقة فسيذيع الخبر.

تباً

(Crash: 2004)

Example (24) shows that the **ST** has two offensive interjections. These are 'damn' translated into بحق السماء (lit. 'my God') and 'fuck' translated into تباً. The implicature in uttering 'damn' indicates the Attorney General's misfortune but not to offend himself. The translator substitutes the **ST** swearword with a milder Arabic expression بحق السماء, which cannot be the right option for a person with bad luck. However, the SL swearword 'fuck' is translated into an offensive Arabic equivalent تباً.

The translator, as example (24) clarifies, observes the maxim of quantity in that 'fuck' is rendered into one Arabic term تباً. On the contrary, the **SL** term 'damn' is translated into a two-item expression بحق السماء. This rendition is considered as a flout of the maxim of quantity as the subtitle is more informative than the **ST**. The translator opts for بحق السماء so

as to convey the sense of surprise. It should be preferably rendered differently into سيء الحظ (lit. ‘unlucky’) or التيس (lit. ‘misfortunate’).

Interlingual diglossia situation occurs since the Arabic terms the translator opts for بحق السماء and نبأ are of higher Arabic variety than that of English. Another examples of interlingual diglossia is; ‘it’s gonna make news’ translates like فسيذيع الخبر. The **TT** consequently gives the speaker a higher social and linguistic status.

#### 4.2.7. Obscene Body Organs, Functions and Extractions

This category contains swearwords which refer to dirty body extractions. Such extractions as the example below indicates seem too obscene to mention in public.

##### 4.2.7.1. *crap*

Danny Roman the one who negotiated with Omar (see Example (3) above) comes to be hostage taker taking some of his colleagues this time. One kidnapped man asked him to free a woman named ‘Maggie’ being the only female among the hostages. Maggie pejoratively reacted as if she were insulted or discriminated on gender.

Example (25):

ST:

Roman, let Maggie go.  
She is not involved and she is a woman.

I didn’t ask to be let go because I am a woman. I hate this **crap**.

Me and him should be let go  
because we had nothing to do with this.

TT:

عليك أن تطلق سراح (ماغي)  
فهي ليست متورطة وهي امرأة  
لم أطلب إطلاق سراحي لكوني امرأة  
أكره هذه السخافات

يجب أن يطلق سراحنا أنا وهو  
لأنّ لا علاقة لنا بالأمر  
(Negotiator: 1998)

As it is clarified in example (25) above, the translator reduces the illocutionary force in the **TT** since السخافات (lit. ‘nonsense’), though vulgar, does not semantically transfer the **ST** swearword ‘crap’. The translator opts for reduction and so السخافات substitutes ‘crap’. The translator observes the maxim of quantity as an English swearword like ‘crap’ is translated into one obscene Arabic term السخافات. Despite this, and since the **TL** term السخافات lacks the pragmatic force of vulgarity that Maggie expresses, the translator flouts Grice’s maxim of quality provides viewers with false information in turn. The subtitle of the example above does not synchronise with the nonverbal audio-visual channel that Gottlieb (1998) clarifies

before. The translator opts for a milder Arabic term than that of English on the sake of the **TL** and cultural which prefers indirect mentioning obscene stuffs (see ath-Tha‘ālibi).

Technically, the **TT** indicates condensation as to follow the spatio-temporal constraints of subtitling taking into account the difference between two diverse means of expression – speaking capacity and writing proficiency in addition to viewer's reading capacity.

#### 4.2.8. Animal-Related Swearwords

This category of offensive words will touch on animal related profanities. It introduces examples of animal names mentioned in the examples below to insult people. The examples compare people to animals.

##### 4.2.8.1. Jackasses

The man who insulted his ex-girlfriend (see Example (14) above) is forced to leave the area and taken out by two security people. Meanwhile he receives a call while they were getting down by the lift and then excuses the caller that he will redial him later on.

Example (26):

ST:

You got the Dreke.

Dude, let me call you back later

Because I'm trapped in an elevator  
with a couple of **jackasses**; that's why

TT:

أنا (درايك)، يا رجل  
دعني أعاود الاتصال بك لاحقاً

لأنني عالق في مصعد  
مع وغدين، هذا هو السبب  
(The Marine: 2006)

Example (26) contains one English animal related profane word ‘couple of jackasses’ though translated into a none-animal related term but into a vulgar Arabic swearword **وغدين** (lit. ‘two mean persons’). To avoid literal translation, the subtitler opts for a generic Arabic substitution usually aims at insulting male people.

Example (26) indicates That the translator observes Grice’s maxim of quantity as the ‘jackasses’ is translated into one Arabic term **وغدين**. Nevertheless, the maxim of quality is not observed in that the **TL** word **وغدين** cannot be the proper equivalence for ‘jackasses’. Although the **ST** term, originally refers to animals, is metaphorically used to humiliate people, the **TT** option has no reference to animals. The load of angriness is well transferred as the **TT** synchronises with the verbal auditory and nonverbal visual content of the scene.

#### 4.2.8.2. *pig*

One of the hostages tries to convince the abductor (Omar) that he is not involved by any means in the crises. So the hostage tries to evade the consequences that end with murdering any of the hostages.

Example (27):

ST:

But not me.

I don't work for this **pig**. I am not a cop.

I know you are Rudy Timmons.

You're a rat for the rat squad.

You don't remember me?

I arrested you in 1992 for a credit card fraud.

TT:

ولكن أنا لا، فانا لا اعمل  
لحساب هذا الحقيق، لست شرطياً

أعرف أنت (رودي تيمونز)  
أنت أسوأ المحتالين، ألا تذكرني.

اعتقلتك عام 1992  
لتزوير بطاقة ائتمان.

(Negotiator: 1998)

Example (27) above provides one English swearword 'pig' which is translated into Arabic as الحقيق (lit. 'tiny or small'). Actually, the TL rendition is a generic humiliating term as it cannot reflect the entire shadow of meaning the SL word 'pig' implies. Nevertheless, the translator opts for الحقيق because the term pragmatically renders the speakers illocutionary force as to humiliate a man appealing to a disgusting despicable animal. Still, the translator has shifted the SL profane word being slang into a formal Arabic rendition. From a Grician view, the translator observes the maxim of quantity as the obscene ST word 'pig' is translated into an Arabic offensive item حقيق no more. On the contrary the translator flouts the maxim of quality that although the Arabic term is offensive in nature, it has no indication of animal mentioning.

#### 4.2.9. Personal Emotion-Related Profanity

This section provides some swearwords that express people emotions of tough nature but not in that sense of the interjections discussed in 4.2.6. above.

##### 4.2.9.1 *piss off*

Two black guys, whose car suddenly broke down, stepping down the street and talking about hockey sport. One of them seems not interesting in the sport and so got angry.

Example (28):

ST:

You know the Kings  
are playin' tonight.

You don't like hockey! The only  
reason you say you do is to **piss**  
me **off!**

TT:

سيلعب فريق (كينغز) الليلة

أنت لا تحب الهوكي  
تقول إنك تحبه فقط لإغصابي  
(Crash: 2004)

Example (28) shows an obscene vulgar item, ‘piss off’ whereas the **TT** subtitles render no profane but only the sense of anger. The translator substitutes the **ST** swearword ‘piss off’ with a **TT** neutral item لإغضابي (lit. ‘to irritate me’). Obviously, the **TL** term لإغضابي does not synchronise with the verbal auditory and nonverbal visual channels of the scene where somebody is screaming for annoyance while marching away from his friend. Nonverbal visual channel of meaning in example (28) shows much more irritation on the part of the film character than what the **TT** subtitle initiates at the bottom of the screen.

Despite that all, and from a pragmatic perspective, the translator observes the maxim of quality since the **TT** choice لإغضابي can in general transfer the pragmatic load of vulgarity that the **ST** term ‘piss off’ indicates.

### 4.3. Summary

**Chapter IV** is an analysis survey of English swearwords occurrence in various situations within the boundaries of the present study and data in addition to the **TL** subtitles. Analysis shows milder options of swearing than what the **ST** original utterances have. It is to claim that Arabic favours expressing obscene language implicitly. However, this is not an exception since some Arabic choices seem even profaner than those of the **ST** sound tracks. In addition, Arabic subtitles reflect some clichés and some old fashioned Arabic terms that the translators opt for to render lots of English swearwords. The **TT** also shows less verbal use than what the **ST** contains. More conclusions will be listed next in **Chapter V**.

# Chapter V

## Chapter V

### Conclusions and Recommendations

#### 5.1. Overview:

Depending on the analysis and discussion the researcher has done in **Chapter IV** above, **Chapter V** will introduce the main conclusions that the study has arrived at. Conclusions will generally represent the strategies and the procedures that the translators have mainly opted for, with due to the study's data. In addition, the researcher will list some recommendations he claims as suggestions for further research in the field of screen translation, mainly in subtitling. Recommendations will as well consider subtitling as a discipline of translation practice.

#### 5.2. Conclusions

Having analysed and discussed the samples extracted only for the purpose of the present study, the researcher claims the following conclusions, may be drawn as:

1. Generally, offensive English terms are implicitly translated in Arabic subtitles
2. MBC translators attempt to establish their own Arabic screen dictionary options that restrict the translation of English profane expressions into a number of generally old fashioned **MSA** vulgar terms. **Chapter V** clarifies the phenomenon of using certain Arabic vulgar terms in the subtitles; e.g., *تبا*, *وغد*, *سافل*, etc. Conclusion number 2 is thought to correlate to the debate of Darwish (2007) as it is mentioned in 2.6. above.
3. Translators show laziness in some cases as they do not or hardly recognise the occurrence of some unusual profane English terms (see example (6) of 4.2.3.1. above) and so translations become pragmatically grotesque though semantically seem well.
4. Generally, translators within the limits of the present study show awareness of the pragmatic shadow of meaning when translating English profane words into Arabic subtitles.

5. In many cases, the translators do not synchronise the **TT** subtitles to the semiotic features of the **ST** namely the verbal auditory and the nonverbal visual channels of meaning. Therefore, translation loss becomes inevitable.
6. Analysis, like discussion, shows that the **TT** subtitles usually flout Grice's maxims of quantity and quality and rarely of manner and relevance.
7. In most of the dialogues, Arabic Subtitles follow the spatiotemporal constraints of subtitling, namely in number of characters per line. Accordingly, the translators have restricted their works, with a few marginal exceptions, to the base of providing subtitles with forty characters or less each line.
8. Deletion has become a primary translation strategy the subtitlers of the movies pre-mentioned in 3.1. above opted for when translating English swearwords into Arabic subtitles. Referring to **Chapter II** of this study, this conclusion coincides with Karjalainen (in 2.1.) and Mattsson (in 2.4.) who concluded that deletion or omission is applied when translating verbal profanity from English into Swedish due to cultural but not to linguistic consideration.
9. Translators of the movies intend to substitute certain English profanes with even more vulgar Arabic terms usually generic and archaic in nature to avoid the literal translation of specific English terms from one hand and to retain the conventions of **MSA** from the other.
10. It is obvious that translators of English profanity into Arabic opt for deletion and substitution strategies simply for 'socio-religious' and cultural considerations but not linguistic.
11. On the prediction of the study's second hypothesis (see 3.5. above), Arabic subtitles show that the translators in many examples attempt to reduce the offensive tone of swearwords using milder and politer Arabic words. This conclusion correlates to previous researchers' findings, i.e. Araújo in 2.2. above and Chen, Ch. in 2.3. above concluding that euphemism is a preferable translation strategy.
12. Censorship, probably due to translators' personal attitudes or to their employer's policy affect Arabic subtitles regardless the **ST** signs of swearing. This conclusion correlates to Chen Ch's findings in 2.3. And also to Gamal's in 2.7. Above.
13. As it has been foreseen in hypothesis III (see 3.5. above), some Arabic clichés, as many samples in the **Chapter IV** show, have been used to render various English

terms of diverse semantic and pragmatic interpretations. Examples of clichés include سافل, وغد, تبا and اللعنة. The conclusion also correlates to Gamal's conclusions as in 2.7. above.

14. There is a trouble applying punctuation marks in the Arabic subtitles. Dashes of dialogue are properly used; however, in many cases other marks like commas, full stops and question marks are ignored.
15. Arabic diacritic markers are rarely applied to Arabic subtitles. The ignorance of such inflections seems to make some Arabic terms ambiguous. So, viewers are expected to interpret some examples differently (see example 5 in 4.2.2.2. above).
16. There is no sign of violating the two-line convention in case of having two speakers in one shot. None of the cases has exceeded to make three lines, for instance.
17. Domestication manifests the **TT** as a broad strategy of translation. The translators have manipulated the **ST** to suit the target cultural and linguistic restrictions. This conclusion answers the sixth question of the study (see 3.5. above).
18. On hypothesis IV as in 3.5. above, 'interlingual diglossia' has become among the linguistic phenomenon that considerably appears throughout discussion. It is to claim that the Arabic subtitles have shifted the **ST** sound tracks from a low English variety into a higher Arabic variety known as **MSA**. This conclusion also coincides with Chen, Ch. in 2.3. above as he finds that English swearwords were sometimes formally translated into Chinese subtitles. Gamal in 2.7. above also talks about diglossic shift as it makes cultural shift.
19. 'Interlingual diglossia' indicates inevitable semantic and pragmatic translation loss in terms of dialect, idiolect and accent. In other words, using a higher variety could not only alert the **TT** semantically but it gives the **ST** speaker a higher social status and proficiency of language.
20. The translators fail to recognise the occurrence of some swearwords and so they translate them into irrelevant sense, in that neither they synchronise with verbal auditory intention nor with the none-verbal visual content of a given scene. (see examples 6. in 4.2.3.1. and 7. in 4.2.3.2. above)
21. **Chapter IV** shows no indication of foreignisation in that loaning English into Arabic subtitles for example does not happen.
22. The translators rarely opt for literal translation.

23. Some samples of the study indicate that the translators have depended on film scripts rather than the films themselves. This route is considered as a violation of subtitling constraints in which verbal discourse and image integrate to convey meaning without excluding the **TL** audience's attitudes.

### **5.3. Recommendations**

On the conclusions above, the researcher would like also to draw some recommendations for further academic research, subtitlers and translation houses in addition to media broadcasters.

#### **5.3.1. Recommendations for Academic Research**

- (a) First of all, **AVT** particularly subtitling should be widely explored within English-Arabic-English context, so as to proceed the process of translation for further progress on both theoretical and practical levels.
- (b) Researchers should study all dependent factors that influence the work of subtitling like technical constraints so that they can put forward a particular style of conventions for subtitling in Arabic.
- (c) Researchers are as well asked to study the impact of socio-pragmatic difference between English and Arabic on subtitling from either language to the other.
- (d) Besides, researchers in the field are recommended to devote some research papers to study broadcasting corporations that provide subtitles in Arabic-English-Arabic context. This is needed to achieve a comprehensive scene regarding the movement of subtitling chiefly in the Arab world.
- (e) Researchers are recommended to put forward an Arabic guidebook to list rules and suggest standards for different **AVT** modes.
- (f) Other researches are expected to explore the topic of translating profanity in a way to avoid the heavy use of Arabic clichés looking for other terms with various semantic and pragmatic loads.
- (g) Researchers are thought to conduct academic researches on subtitling from the audience point view.

### **5.3.2. Recommendations for Translators and Subtitlers**

(a) Subtitlers being the workers in the field, freelancers or as in-house employees are expected to consider the film as a unity with its all semiotic features. Taking films as a unity will help translators to produce cohesive and coherent subtitles that go in harmony with the audio-visual content on the screen. So, subtitlers are supposed to analyse all pragmatic, semantic and semiotic features of film before doing the translation.

(b) Subtitlers are recommended to join life-long training programmes so that they can update their knowledge, improve their skills and find about the latest findings and achievements in the field.

### **5.3.3. Recommendations for the MBC and Agencies**

(a) In-house agencies of translation like the MBC channels are recommended to apply a double task of editing towards a final refined version of subtitles. The first editing is meant to compare the **TT** to the **ST** whereas the other is to be done by a specialist in Arabic; e.g., a linguist to check about the applying of linguistic and spelling conventions of Arabic.

(b) Audio-visual media providing translation facilities are asked preferably to publish their standards of subtitling in regard to the conventions of Arabic language in terms of script, font, linguistics and culture, etc. Otherwise, Arab subtitlers seem to follow foreign standards either introduced by translation scholars like Delabastita (1990), Gottlieb (1998) or Karamitroglou (2002), or else through subtitling guide-manuals of big media corporations like the BBC.

(c) As for MBC, it is recommended to produce a guide-manual of its **AVT** policy getting benefit from experience of other famous broadcasting corporations.

### **5.3.4. Recommendations for University Translation Programmes**

(a) Al-Quds University being one of a few pioneering Arab universities that teaches and trains translation students on the theory and practice of **AVT**, is recommended to participate in establishing Arab translation centres to provide translators with skills necessarily and particularly required for translators of interest in **AVT**. Such programmes are also thought to be of great benefit for those subtitlers already working for Arab TVs and satellite channels.

(b) Academic courses of translation are expected to include topics in sociopragmatic and cultural contrastive issues related to the English-Arabic-English context.

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# طواعية ألفاظ الإقذاع المُستخدمة في الأفلام للترجمة من اللغة الإنجليزية إلى اللغة العربية

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## ملخص:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى البحث في مدى إمكانية ترجمة ألفاظ الإقذاع في الأفلام من اللغة الإنجليزية إلى اللغة العربية على شكل تترات أسفل الشاشة. وعليه فقد عمد الباحث ولغايات البحث في هذه الدراسة فقط إلى ملاحظة ومتابعة ومُشاهدة أفلام انجليزية تم تسجيل ثلاثة منها كانت قد بثتها قنوات MBC2, MBC4 and MBC Action خلال شهري آذار/مارس ونيسان/ أبريل من العام 2010. حيث شكلت الأفلام الثلاثة (The Marine, Negotiator and Crash) مصدر بيانات وأمثلة هذه الدراسة. حيث قام الباحث باستخراج وتصنيف الأمثلة كما وردت في النص الإنجليزي، أي حوارات الأفلام، ومن ثم مقابلتها بالترجمة العربية. وأثبع الباحث ذلك تحليلاً شمل ثمان وعشرين حواراً تباينت في سياقاتها واختلفت من حيث ورود ألفاظ الإقذاع فيها. وقد تناول الباحث الأمثلة بالتحليل الوصفي استناداً إلى دراسات الترجمة الوصفية مُتخذاً نموذج (جوليين هاوس: 1974) كأسلوب براغماتي لتقييم الترجمة في إطار سياقي أخذت فيها صيغ الإقذاع ضمن الإطار اللغوي والحوار الذي استُخدمت فيه دون استبعاد ما وراء المفردات من قصد يتوارى خلف الصورة السطحية للألفاظ فضلاً عن تقييم الارتباط أو التوازي والانسجام بين كل من محتوى الصورة والحوار الأصلي في العمل الدرامي كصوت وصورة من جهة وبين التترات العربية أي الترجمة الظاهرة أسفل الشاشة من الجهة الأخرى.

وقد خلصت الدراسة إلى أن مسألة المفقود من الرسالة المقصودة ومعناها لدى نقلها من لغة المصدر أي الحوارات الواردة في الأفلام باللغة الإنجليزية على شكل نصوص مكتوبة على الشاشة باللغة العربية أمر لا يمكن نقاديه. ويُعزى ذلك لأسباب تتعلق باليون الشاسع بن نظامين قيميّين وثقافيين لا تستبعد منها معتقدات أصحابها فضلاً عن التفاوت بين لغتين مختلفتين. كما تبين أن مترجمي هذه الأفلام يتبعون أساليب الحذف الكلي أو الجزئي لدى ترجمة صيغ الإقذاع أو الفُحش الشائعة في الأفلام الإنجليزية للمتلقى العربي. هذا إلى جانب إتباعهم طريقة الحد من بذاءة المفردات بنخفيف صيغتها الفاحشة مستخدمين صيغ عربية فيها من التلطف والتعريض ما يُجنب المشاهد العربي التعرض لبذاءة مثل هذه الألفاظ بصيغتها الأجنبية.

يمكن القول أخيراً بأن الترجمة العربية المُشار إليها ضمن هذه الدراسة تُظهر استعمال كلمات أكثر تلطفاً من مقابلاتها في اللغة الإنجليزية بيد أن ذلك لا ينفي استخدام المترجمين مفردات عربية فاحشة قديمة الاستعمال وإن عمد المترجمون إلى استخدام بعضها على نحو متكرر لترجمة مفردات انجليزية متباينة في الدلالة والسياق الأمر الذي يعكس حالة من التتميط للمفردات العربية المستخدمة في ترجمة الفُحش اللغوي من الإنجليزية إلى العربية. كما تعرضت الدراسة إلى ظاهرة الانتقال باللغة من مستوياتها الدنيا إلى مستويات عليا ومثال ذلك التحول من اللهجة الإنجليزية المحكية كما هي في حوارات الممثلين إلى اللغة العربية المكتوبة أو الفصحى مثلما تظهر في الترجمات أسفل الشاشة واث ذلك على الترجمة من الناحيتين الدلالية والبراغماتية.