The Role of Translation in Shaping Identity: Ideological Bias and its Impact on the Arabic Translation of Yemeni Political News

Ahmed Mohammed Ahmed Al-Kaina'ay
Sana'a, Yemen
Sana'a University, Faculty of languages
Department of English

ABSTRACT

This study explores the ideological bias in the Arabic translation of Yemeni political news, focusing on how translation serves as a tool for shaping identity and reinforcing or resisting political ideologies in politically sensitive contexts. By applying CDA and Bias Models to translated news articles, this paper aims to reveal the mechanisms through which translation can function as a tool for ideological representation and manipulation, particularly in politically charged environments like Yemen. Employing Critical Discourse Analysis and Merrill's Bias Categories; Attribution Bias, Adjectival Bias, Adverbial Bias, Contextual Bias, Outright Opinion Bias, and Photographic Bias, this paper analyzes how translation choices impact the representation of political events, figures, and groups within the ongoing Yemeni political climate. The paper examines ten samples of translated political news articles to identify the ways in which the translation process influences public perception and shapes political discourse. The study comes out with a number of results including the bias in portraying the events and people. The findings indicate that translation not only reflects political ideologies but actively participates in constructing or challenging political identities, especially in a conflict zone like Yemen. The paper contributes to the growing field of political translation studies, offering insights into the role of translation in the ideological shaping of news narratives and its potential impact on national and cultural identity formation in conflict situations.

Keywords: *Translation; ideology; identity; bias; CDA; political discourse; Media*

INTRODUCTION

Yemen, located at the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula, has been embroiled in a devastating political and humanitarian crisis since 2015. The country's internal conflict, involving multiple political factions and foreign interventions, has turned Yemen into a focal point of geopolitical tensions with far-reaching implications for the Middle East. In such contexts, media plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion and constructing political narratives. Translation, particularly of political news, serves not only to convey facts but also to shape the understanding of these events by diverse audiences. As Valdeón (2007) argues, media translations are rarely neutral; instead, they reflect the ideological biases of the translator or media outlet, influencing how political actors and events are perceived.

The translation of news, especially in conflict zones, often serves to reinforce or challenge prevailing political ideologies, thus shaping national identities and political discourses. In Yemen, where foreign powers like Saudi Arabia and the UAE intervene, translation becomes a battleground for competing narratives (Baker, 2006). Linguistic choices

in translated texts, such as reorganization of events or lexical shifts, can frame political realities in ways that influence public perception, both locally and globally.

This paper aims to examine the ideological biases inherent in the translation of Yemeni political news. Grounded in Merrill's Bias Categories, it explores how specific linguistic strategies—such as context manipulation, lexical choice, and framing—contribute to the construction of political identities and the portrayal of power relations. By employing Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), this study investigates how language intersects with power in translation, revealing the hidden ideological forces that shape media representations of the Yemeni conflict and the broader Arab world.

Together, these theoretical approaches provide a comprehensive toolkit for uncovering the hidden ideological influences in the translation process.

Media Bias and Translation Bias

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, bias refers to the action of supporting or opposing a particular person or thing in an unfair way, as personal opinions influence judgment.

Media bias is a widely discussed concept, yet there is considerable disagreement about its definition, measurement, and impact. Although the concept is debated by scholars and the general public alike, academic and public opinion often diverge in their understanding of the term and conclusions about its nature and prevalence. In academic circles, media bias is often referenced as a hypothesis to explain patterns of news coverage rather than as a fully developed theory of political communication. Entman (2007) lamented its status as a "curiously undertheorized staple of public discourse about the media … bias is yet to be clearly defined, let alone receive much serious empirical attention."

Mazzoleni (2002) and Thawabteh & Abu Radwan (2020) define bias, whether conscious or unconscious, as the act of portraying groups or actions in favor of journalists' and translators' attitudes. Mazzoleni (ibid) adds that intentional bias serves an ideological goal by conveying messages that support one or more political parties, leading to manipulation. Inadvertent bias, on the other hand, occurs when journalists offer subjective or manufactured reality without being aware of it. Under this definition, Chiang (2007) argues that when journalists report a narrative, they favor one particular political party over another. Baron (2004), Mullainathan and Shleifer (2005), and Gentzkow and Shapiro (2006) argue that media bias can stem from either readers' preferences or the editorial choices of media outlets, which select materials that can shape readers' beliefs. Simo (2022) further contends that bias occurs when individuals accept negative information about out-groups while rejecting similar information about in-groups without critically assessing the truth.

Recasens (2013) categorizes biases into two broad categories: framing bias and epistemological bias. The former involves the use of words or phrases associated with a particular viewpoint, while the latter refers to the acceptance of a claim as truth without verification. Ghazala (2002:154–158) further classifies biases in translation into negative and positive bias. Negative bias refers to any unjustified alteration of the source language (SL) text that distorts meaning due to personal motives, negligence, or prejudice. Positive bias, conversely, reflects a translator's effort to respect the audience, avoid insults, clarify ambiguity, correct errors, and eliminate offensive language.

Dietrich and Eck (2020) highlight that although machine-coded datasets can analyze vast amounts of news quickly, they rely on databases of news reports, which can introduce bias. Their study finds that media coverage is influenced by country-level factors such as international trade and subnational factors such as access to communication technology. Non-media sources cover significant events omitted by media sources, expanding coverage and reducing bias in datasets. This suggests that translators and journalists may be unconsciously biased due to factors like economic conditions, cultural presence, political dominance, and technological access in different countries.

For identifying political bias, Bánhegyi (2017) outlines a translation-centered analytical tool incorporating superstructure, macrostructure, and critical discourse theories, alongside political mass communication theories. He identifies the Political Bias Screener as a tool for pinpointing, identifying, and analyzing textual features that contribute to political and ideological manipulation. He concludes that this tool is both valid and reliable for analyzing political, ideological, and bias-related manipulative textual features.

Bias in Media Translation

Objectivity in news translation is one of the most extensively discussed topics in translation studies. Many studies have examined bias in news translation. Haj Omar (2015) states that stories produced and circulated by the media are often biased and subjective, framed to enhance and impose a certain narrative and interpretation of an event. The text is manipulated both semantically and stylistically to steer the audience's perception and emotions. Valdeón (2007) contends that news writers and media corporations influence translated texts, as target readers are often unaware of how interlinguistic transformations affect news reporting. This lack of awareness creates space for translators to shape the narrative more freely, employing strategies such as reorganization of events, additions, omissions, and substitutions. Through these choices, translators can frame the final product in ways that reflect specific ideological positions.

Simo (2022:12257) proposes a comprehensive framework for examining bias in translation, emphasizing three key aspects: identifying the nature of the bias, understanding how it is manifested, and exploring the underlying reasons for its presence. Central to this inquiry is the translator's cognitive and psychological engagement with the text, which often underpins and rationalizes their partiality. This subjectivity is further compounded by the role of language in shaping perception and constructing reality. As Simo notes, language is not a neutral medium but a powerful tool through which ideologies are conveyed and interpreted, rendering discussions of ideology inherently emotional and contested.

Baker (2006) argues that media translation shapes national identity by reflecting ideological biases in the portrayal of events and actors. In conflict zones, translation becomes a site of political struggle. In Yemen, where Saudi Arabia and the UAE are key external players, translation serves as a tool of ideological contestation. Saudi-aligned media may translate news to downplay foreign intervention and legitimize local authorities, while Houthi-aligned outlets emphasize sovereignty and resistance. These contrasting translations reinforce competing ideologies and influence public perception.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The translation of Yemeni political news into Arabic is a critical area of study, as it involves both linguistic transfer and ideological negotiation. While existing literature addresses translation in conflict zones and media's role in political narratives, there is limited research on how ideological biases are embedded in the translation of Yemeni news. This gap highlights the need to explore how news translation reflects and shapes political ideologies. In Yemen's fragmented political landscape, where factions compete for influence, translation plays a key role in shaping political identities.

Ideology and Translation

The relationship between translation and ideology has been central to translation studies, as theorists argue that translation is never a neutral process. Translation inherently involves choices that reflect the translator's perspectives, the power dynamics in the source and target cultures, and the political context of both. Ideology has increasingly become a key research interest in the field, yet scholars explore it from different angles and at varying levels—ranging from lexis and text to discourse and broader context. The intellectual and scholarly backgrounds of theorists play a crucial role in shaping their perceptions of how ideology operates in translation.

Venuti (1995) argues that translation is shaped by cultural, political, and social factors that influence both the source and target texts. His theory of "invisibility" describes how translators often attempt to conceal their presence by adopting translation strategies that align with the target culture's norms and expectations. This process can reinforce dominant ideologies, as subtle shifts in language and meaning alter how political or social issues are framed.

Similarly, Baker (2006) explores the role of translation in ideological manipulation in her work, Translation and Conflict: A Narrative Account. She emphasizes that translation choices, such as the selection of words or phrases, can either challenge or reinforce the prevailing ideological stance of the target audience. In politically sensitive contexts, the translator's role becomes even more significant, shaping public opinion by aligning with or resisting dominant political ideologies.

108

Hermans (1999) also examines translation as an act of manipulation, where ideological preferences and biases—whether conscious or unconscious—are embedded into the text. Manipulation in this context refers to subtle alterations in translation that frame the source text according to the translator's ideological position. In the case of Yemeni political news, these manipulations may reflect the political agenda of the translating entity or influence how particular events and actors are perceived.

Overall, translation is not merely a linguistic transfer but an ideological act. The translator's choices, shaped by cultural and political influences, contribute to how information is presented and understood. As seen in the works of Venuti, Baker, and Hermans, translation plays a critical role in reinforcing or challenging ideological narratives, particularly in politically charged contexts such as Yemeni political news.

Translation as a Tool for Shaping Identity

Translation does not only transfer linguistic meaning; it plays a critical role in the construction and negotiation of identity. Bassnett (2002) notes that translation is a means through which cultural and political identities are formed, negotiated, and transmitted. Translators mediate between cultures, often reshaping and re-contextualizing messages to fit the norms and values of the target audience. Translation has historically been used as a tool for colonial control, where colonizers shaped narratives, imposed language, and controlled knowledge. Niranjana (1992) emphasizes that translation in the post-colonial context is not just about linguistic transfer; it also serves as an ideological tool that can reinforce or challenge imperial structures. She argues that translation has been instrumental in the dissemination of colonial power by controlling what knowledge is shared and how it is framed. Through language, colonial powers shaped the way native populations viewed themselves, their history, and their culture.

In conflict zones like Yemen, translation can similarly serve as a tool for both resistance and reinforcement of imperial or colonial ideologies. While imperial powers often used language to assert dominance and control, translation in modern conflicts can either challenge these narratives or propagate them, depending on the political stances of the translators and the media outlets involved. The colonial legacies that continue to affect Yemen's political environment (through foreign interventions) mean that translation practices are often entwined with these power dynamics.

Regarding the translation of political texts, Baker (2006) argues that translation is a double-edged sword, capable of either preserving the neutrality of the source text or introducing political manipulation. This is particularly relevant for political texts in mass media, where translation can shape perceptions of events, actions, or actors. Baker (2006), along with scholars such as Valdeón (2007), Chan (2007), and Schäffner (1998, 2004), highlights how certain countries face international criticism due to the way their news or political actions are translated—often in ways that reflect negatively, either purposefully or inadvertently. This study aims to describe such instances of political manipulation by proposing a theoretical model to identify and analyze these biases in translation.

Translation can also be a site of ideological resistance, where those opposed to foreign intervention or imperial domination challenge hegemonic narratives imposed by dominant powers. In politically unstable regions like Yemen, translation provides an avenue for local resistance movements to challenge foreign ideologies, particularly through the translation of news stories that frame the conflict in ways that resonate with nationalistic or anti-imperial sentiments.

Hermans (1999) reinforces this point by showing that in the post-colonial context, translation is inherently ideological. Translators, often caught between the pressures of local political ideologies and foreign powers, may introduce biases in their translations to align with or challenge the ideologies they identify with. In Yemen's case, the choice of words, framing of political events, and representation of foreign powers could either reinforce a colonial mindset by downplaying local agency or resist it by emphasizing Yemen's sovereignty and rejecting external intervention.

In conclusion, translation in conflict zones like Yemen plays a key role in shaping narratives and identities. It reflects and negotiates competing ideologies, often influenced by broader geopolitical dynamics.

Translation in Conflict Zones

Translation plays an essential role in the media landscape of conflict zones, as it directly impacts how political narratives are shaped and disseminated. Studies on translation in conflict zones have demonstrated that translation is a powerful tool for either reinforcing or resisting political ideologies. For example, Loupaki (2010) outlines three key

translation strategies that translators often employ when translating ideological elements related to conflict. The first is reproducing ideological conflict, the second is erasing ideological conflict, and the third is introducing new conflicts in the target text. These strategies are aimed at increasing, toning down, or eliminating ideological content and elements related to conflict in the target text. González (2014) investigates how translation in the media reflects the political and ideological leanings of different factions during periods of conflict.

In conflict zones, translation is often used to either emphasize human suffering or justify political and military actions. In Yemen, where multiple foreign actors are involved, media translation shapes how the conflict is perceived. Translations into Arabic may reflect the biases of different factions—whether aligned with the Aden or Sana'a governments, or with external powers like Saudi Arabia or the UAE—by highlighting certain aspects, such as humanitarian needs or downplaying foreign intervention to support local narratives.

The Role of Media in Political Narratives and Ideology

In politically unstable environments, media outlets become critical actors in shaping public discourse and influencing political ideologies. The power of the media to shape political narratives is well-documented in translation studies.

According to Al-Hazorah (2023), Yemeni media both influences and is influenced by the ongoing conflict, serving as a tool used by warring parties to promote their agendas and mobilize public support. This dual role makes media a double-edged weapon, capable of both spreading hatred and escalating tensions. Given the extensive coverage of crises, media outlets often frame narratives in line with their ideological and political affiliations. They selectively highlight topics and issues that align with the interests of the parties they support, effectively turning news platforms into tools of political contestation. This bias becomes evident in their use of propaganda techniques—personalizing issues, downplaying the actions of allied groups, and amplifying those of opposing factions.

Baker (2006: 19), refers to narratives as stories people tell themselves and others, shaping personal lives and public issues while influencing actions and beliefs. Although this study includes a micro- and macro-textual analysis of translated narratives, the focus is not on their structure but on their impact. As Bennet and Edelman (1985: 159) suggest, narratives shape behavior, thinking, morals, values, and perceptions of self and the world. Their significance lies in their function as tools for shaping attitudes and constructing identity (Bruner, 1991: 5-6).

According to Miller (2017), the media plays a central role in framing political events and in constructing the identities of political actors through the language used in news coverage. By framing specific events in a particular way, the media influences how political realities are perceived by both local and international audiences.

The translation of political news becomes a key site where media institutions assert their ideological positions. González (2014) shows that media outlets selectively translate or omit information, depending on the political leanings of the media organization. In Yemen, media outlets, both local and international, have the power to frame the ongoing conflict in various ways, and these translations can have a profound impact on both national identity and international diplomacy.

As Niranjana (1992) argues, translation not only conveys messages but also reinforces or resists political ideologies. In the case of Yemen, media translation has the potential to influence international opinion and support for various factions, contributing to the perpetuation of the conflict.

Translation and Media in Yemen

The media landscape in Yemen has been deeply affected by the ongoing conflict. With various factions vying for control of media outlets, the way political news is translated has become a significant site for ideological contestation. Here's a more professional and concise rephrasing of your paragraph:

News websites are a primary source of information for Yemeni citizens, as highlighted by Saleh and Abdulwaha (2024), who conducted a survey on Yemeni youth's reliance on online news. The study found that 71.2% of respondents accessed news through websites, indicating a moderate level of dependence. Among these, 35% identified international websites as their main news source. Outlets such as *The Washington Times*, *Foreign Affairs*, *The Independent*, *The Economist*, and *Al Arabiya* frequently publish news on Yemen, often reflecting their own political

agendas or the geopolitical interests of affiliated states. Similarly, local Yemeni news agencies may exhibit bias in their translated content, shaped by the political affiliations of the outlet or its leadership.

Aden government, Sana'a government, and foreign-backed forces each present differing perspectives on Yemen's political landscape, shaping how news is translated and received in the Arabic-speaking world. Translation becomes a strategic tool for reinforcing or contesting political ideologies, often portraying allies favorably while casting opponents in a negative light. As the literature confirms, translation is rarely neutral—particularly in conflict zones— where it plays a key role in shaping public perception and political identity. In Yemen, translation sits at the intersection of language, power, and ideology, influencing how narratives are constructed and received.

Theoretical Framework

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has long been used to examine the intersection of language and power. Scholars like Teun A. van Dijk , Wodak and Norman Fairclough have explored how language serves as a tool for social control and the reinforcement of dominant ideologies. According to van Dijk (1993), language functions as a means of communication and a form of social action, where word choices and discourse structures reflect and reinforce power dynamics. Fairclough (1995) further emphasizes how discourse serves to construct social identities, relationships, and political realities, especially in the context of media and news reporting.

In the context of political news translation, CDA helps illuminate how news about conflicts, such as the Yemeni crisis, is not just a factual report but a reconstruction of reality through language. CDA examines how the framing of events and the portrayal of political actors (e.g., Aden government, Sana'a government, foreign powers) influences the public's understanding of those events. Norman Fairclough's work, particularly in "Media Discourse" (1995), explores how media texts are sites of ideological struggle, where linguistic choices are used to uphold specific social and political interests.

Bias models also offer valuable insights into how media and translated texts can shape public perception through the use of biased language. Merrill's Bias Model (1976) outlines how media can convey ideological bias through word choices, framing, and the selective inclusion of certain facts. In this model, adjectives and adverbs can carry significant weight in shaping how an event or actor is perceived. For example, the use of terms like "militias" "rebels" or "legitimate" can shift the audience's understanding of who is in the right or wrong in a conflict.

Alongside Merrill's Bias Model, other scholars have discussed how Attribution Bias plays a key role in media coverage. Attribution Theory, developed by Fritz Heider (1958), suggests that people tend to attribute the causes of actions to internal or external factors, influencing how individuals or groups are judged. In political news, Attribution Bias can influence whether an event is framed as a spontaneous protest or a coordinated rebellion, which directly impacts the reader's perception of the situation.

In addition, contextual bias, which involves the omission or distortion of information, often appears in media translations when background details are selectively presented or left out. This selective framing can have significant ideological consequences, particularly in politically sensitive translations, where omitted information can lead to skewed perceptions of political actors and events.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative approach to analyze the ideological biases in the translation of Yemeni political news. The qualitative approach is chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of the ways in which language and translation are used to shape and reflect political ideologies, identity, and power dynamics. Moreover, a qualitative approach allows for a nuanced understanding of how translation operates as a tool of ideological resistance or reinforcement.

Research Design

This study will employ content analysis as its main research method. Content analysis allows for a systematic examination of translated news texts to identify patterns of ideological bias. The study will focus on news articles reporting on the ongoing Yemeni conflict, specifically those translated from English into Arabic, as this bilingual context offers the opportunity to study ideological shifts in the translation process.

111

The analysis will apply Merrill's Bias Categories as the analytical framework. These categories, Attribution Bias, Adjectival Bias, Adverbial Bias, Contextual Bias, Outright Opinion Bias, and Photographic Bias, will guide the identification of ideological influences in the translated texts. The categories will be used to examine the subtle ways in which translators may alter the meaning, tone, and framing of political events through their translation choices.

Corpus Selection

For the purpose of this study, a selection of news articles that have been translated from English to Arabic will be examined. These articles have been chosen based on their relevance to the Yemeni conflict and their coverage of key political events, such as military operations, peace talks, or international interventions. The chosen texts will be sourced from reputable international news outlets (e.g., Washington Post, The UK, foreign Affairs) to ensure that the articles reflect widely circulated perspectives on the conflict.

Data Collection

The translated texts will be analyzed for linguistic features that reveal ideological bias. The focus will be on identifying patterns in the language used to describe political actors, events, and actions. Specific attention will be paid to attribution bias, adjective/adverb bias, context bias, opinion bias and image bias.

1. Sampling of News Articles
A sampling method will be used to select ten Yemeni political news articles from reputable international news outlets which have been translated into Arabic. The sample will focus on articles related to key events in the Yemeni conflict, such as the truce, Saudi-led coalition interventions, and humanitarian issues in Yemen. These articles will span different periods of the conflict from January 2022 to December 2023 to provide a broader view of how the translation of political news has evolved over time.

Inclusion/exclusion Criteria: Articles published in the English language by major international news outlets and have been translated into Arabic by local media outlets covering Yemeni political events. figures, or geopolitical dynamics in Yemen. Opinion pieces or editorials and articles that are not available in both English and Arabic are excluded.

Analytical Framework
The analysis will follow the steps outlined below:
1. Bias Identification: Applying Merrill's Bias Model and other Bias Models, I will identify how ideological biases are embedded in the text through linguistic features like adjectival bias, attribution bias, and opinion bias.
2. Framing and Ideology: By using CDA, I will analyze how the framing of events in the translation reflects and sustains particular ideologies.

Data Analysis
1) Application of Merrill's Bias Categories
The selected translated news articles will be analyzed using Merrill's Bias Categories, a framework that identifies different types of bias that might influence how political information is conveyed. These categories include:
-    Attribution Bias: This refers to how the source of an event or action is attributed, which may influence how responsibility is assigned. For example, does the translator highlight or downplay the role of foreign powers in the conflict?
-    Adjectival Bias: This type of bias is introduced when certain adjectives or descriptive terms are used in translations to color the portrayal of political actors or events. The study will examine the use of adjectives in describing Yemeni political figures, events, or factions.
-    Adverbial Bias: Similar to adjectival bias, adverbial bias looks at how adverbs used in translation may influence the tone of the news report. For example, does the translator choose adverbs that exaggerate or minimize the actions or responses of key political actors?
-    Contextual Bias: This bias arises when the context surrounding a political event or actor is selectively presented or omitted in translation. This could include the omission of historical context or key facts that could influence the reader's understanding of the situation.
-    Outright Opinion Bias: In cases where translators introduce their opinions into the text, outright opinion bias involves overt or covert expressions of bias that reflect the translator's personal or political beliefs.

- Photographic Bias: This bias involves the selective use or interpretation of images and their captions in the translated news. The study will consider how photographs (or their absence) may influence the framing of political narratives.

   2)   Coding Process

A coding scheme will be developed based on Merrill's Bias Categories. Each article will be coded for the presence of these biases, with particular attention paid to how the biases manifest in the translation. The coding will be performed in stages:

- Stage One: Identifying the general themes and political narratives presented in the original and translated articles.
- Stage Two: Applying Merrill's Bias Categories to the text, focusing on key linguistic choices (adjectives, adverbs, and attribution), contextual elements, and visual representations.
- Stage Three: Analyzing how these biases contribute to the reinforcement or challenge of political ideologies, such as the legitimization of certain political actors, the portrayal of the conflict's origins, or the framing of international involvement.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This section presents the findings from the content analysis of Arabic translations of Yemeni political news articles. The analysis is based on sample articles selected from reputable international news outlets and their Arabic translations. Merrill's Bias Categories—Attribution Bias, Adjectival Bias, Adverbial Bias, Contextual Bias, Outright Opinion Bias, and Photographic Bias—are used to identify ideological biases and their impact on framing Yemeni political events, either reinforcing or resisting political ideologies related to the Yemeni conflict.

Each sample article reveals distinct patterns of ideological bias. Below are the findings based on these categories:

   1. Attribution Bias

Attribution bias plays a key role in how responsibility for events and actions is assigned to specific political actors. In the first sample article (translated from English: *Attacks on shipping threaten to upend peace talks in Yemen*), the framing of Yemen's role in the Israel-Palestine conflict differs significantly between the original and translated texts. While the English version describes attacks on shipping as a threat to peace talks in Yemen.

ST: *Attacks on shipping threaten to upend peace talks in Yemen.*
The Arabic translation shifts the focus by quoting a British magazine

<div dir="rtl">مجلة بريطانية الحوثيون لا يحاصرون إسرائيل بقدر ما يحاصرون بلدهم الفقير</div>

   (The Houthis do not besiege Israel as much as they besiege their own poor country.)

This shift reframes the issue by portraying Houthi actions as more harmful to Yemen than to external adversaries like Israel. The translation moves the blame for Yemen's suffering onto the Houthis rather than considering broader geopolitical factors, such as Israeli aggression against Palestine or the Saudi-led coalition's blockade on Yemen since 2015. Unlike the English version, which is action-focused and highlights consequences, the Arabic translation is actor-focused, depicting the Houthis as failing their people by prioritizing external conflicts over domestic needs. This selective attribution reflects an ideological stance and aligns with a particular geopolitical perspective.
A similar pattern appears in another translated excerpt concerning Yemen's humanitarian crisis. The original English text states:

   Sana'a, Aden, 5 December 2022 – Mental health disorders have increased in Yemen <u>over the past 8 years due to the impact of conflict</u> on people's lives, homes, communities, and livelihoods.

However, the Arabic translation alters the attribution of responsibility:

<div dir="rtl">قالت منظمة الصحة العالمية إن <u>الحرب في اليمن التي اشعلتها مليشيات الحوثي منذ ثمانى سنوات</u> والاقتصاد المنهار، أدى إلى شل المرافق الصحية وتفاقم الأمراض النفسية التي تؤثر على جميع فئات المجتمع.</div>

   (The World Health Organization said that the war in Yemen, ignited by the Houthi militias eight years ago, along with the collapsed economy, has crippled healthcare facilities and worsened mental health conditions affecting all segments of society.)

Here, the phrase "ignited by the Houthi militias" introduces a strong attribution bias, implying that the conflict is primarily their responsibility, whereas the original version presents a neutral, consequence-based description. This

113

framing serves to promote the Saudi-led coalition's narrative as a defender of peace while casting the opposition as the aggressor. Such translation choices highlight the underlying political biases shaping the portrayal of the Yemeni conflict.

2. Adjectival and Adverbial Bias

One of the most prominent forms of bias identified in the translations is adjectival and adverbial bias. These biases arise from the emotive language used in the translations to describe the political situation.

> *"While the Houthis do possess missiles and armed drones that can reach Israel, neither are likely to evade Israel's air defenses."*

> "وذكر المعهد، أنَّ القدراتِ العسكريةَ للمليشيا الحوثية لا يمكنُها تحقيقَ أي تأثيرٍ فعلي على القواتِ الأمريكية أو الإسرائيلية".

In the third sample article (covering the limitation of effectiveness of Yemeni missiles on Israel), adjectival bias was evident in the description of the political factions involved in the conflict. The original English text refers to "the Houthis," while the Arabic translation adds emotionally charged adjectives like "Houthi militias" (المليشيا الحوثية). This label carries a negative connotation, often used to delegitimize the Houthis as armed non-state actors. This alteration shifts the tone, creating a polarized representation that influences the Arab audience's perception, framing the Houthis as an illegitimate armed group rather than a recognized military entity. This linguistic choice may serve to undermine the Houthis' credibility while portraying their military capabilities as ineffective and unworthy of international attention.

> These challenges have been prevalent across <u>Ansarullah (AA)-controlled areas</u>; and recently in a few tribal-influenced <u>governorates controlled by the Government of Yemen</u> (GoY).

> ولفت، إلى أن التحديات "كانت سائدة في جميع أنحاء المناطق التي تسيطر **عليها ميليشيا الحوثيين**، ومؤخراً في عدد قليل من المحافظات الخاضعة لتأثير القبائل في مناطق **سيطرة الحكومة اليمنية المعترف بها**".

In the fourth sample article, the translation employs terms like "Houthi militias" for Ansarullah and "the Yemen recognized government" for the Government of Yemen. These choices elicit emotional responses, reinforcing a narrative where the government is portrayed as legitimate and the opposition as an illegitimate threat.

> *A third party to end years of violence and establish a stable, compromise administration with popular legitimacy. If Yemen's current exile government and the Houthi rebels are going to reach a more lasting settlement.*

> إلى أن طرفا يمنيا ثالثًا غير مرتبط بأي دولة خارجية، سيبرز خلال الفترة القادمة، ليقلب الطاولة على الجميع، ويطيح بالمتمردين الحوثيين، المدعومين من إيران، والحكومة الشرعية المعترف بها دوليًا،

Similarly, in the fifth sample article (on the future of the warring sides in Yemen), the original text refers to "the Houthi rebels" and "exile government," while the Arabic translation intensifies the language with "Iran-backed Houthi rebels" and "the internationally recognized government." This bias polarizes the representation of both sides, reinforcing the legitimacy of the government while framing the Houthi movement as a foreign-backed entity. These linguistic choices illustrate how translation can be used to shape political narratives.

> *They also provide Iran with new options for targeting American forces in the Middle East.*

> كما أنها توفر لإيران خيارات جديدة لاستهداف القوات الأمريكية في الشرق الأوسط، <u>**وتهديد الملاحة والتجارة في البحر الأحمر**</u>

Adverbs were also strategically placed in translations to exaggerate or downplay actions. In the sixth sample article, phrases like "threatening navigation and commerce in the Red Sea" (وتهديد الملاحة والتجارة في البحر الأحمر) appear in translations critical of the Sana'a government's stance on the Palestine-Israel conflict, framing the event in a more aggressive manner. The adverbs intensify the action, portraying the Houthis as an international threat. This manipulation of adverbial language subtly influences the perception of events by amplifying certain actions while minimizing others.

114

3. Contextual Bias

Contextual bias was evident in the omission or minimization of historical and geopolitical background information, particularly regarding foreign intervention in the Yemeni conflict. These omissions alter the reader's understanding by downplaying external influences and shifting the focus to internal dynamics.

> *During the April prisoner exchange, the Houthis released prisoners and journalists, **including Saudi and Sudanese troops fighting with the Arab Coalition**. Hundreds of Houthi fighters were released in exchange.*

> وخلال عملية تبادل الأسرى في أبريل الماضي، أطلق الحوثيون سراح **عدد من الأسرى**، وفي المقابل تم إطلاق سراح عن المئات من مقاتلي الحوثي

The translation of the seventh sample omits references to Saudi and Sudanese troops, erasing the role of foreign militaries in the conflict, which skews the reader's perception.

> "…to halt the crisis and humanitarian catastrophe **caused by the Saudi war and the blockade of the north."**

> "… لوقف الأزمة والكارثة الإنسانية مشددا أنه حان الوقت لإنهاء المأساة الناجمة عن حرب اليمن

Similarly, here, the eighth sample article omits the reference to Saudi Arabia's blockade, reducing the emphasis on external intervention and portraying the crisis as primarily a local civil war. This unilateral framing influences the readers' perception of the conflict by eliminating references to Saudi Arabia and other allies which makes the text more acceptable across various Arabic-speaking regions.

4. Outright Opinion Bias

Outright opinion bias appears in translations where editorial opinions are embedded, often altering the neutrality of the original text.

> *What is China doing in Yemen?*

> مركز أمريكي يفجر مفاجأة: الصين تعترف ضمنيا بحكومة المتمردين الحوثيين وتتوسط لوقف الحرب باليمن

In the ninth excerpt, the translation introduces an opinion by claiming that China "implicitly recognizes" the Houthis' government, reflecting a political stance not present in the original.

> *Houthi drone attack on Emirates a wake-up call for <u>Israel</u>*

> صحيفة بريطانية: فشل الحوثيين بالسيطرة على الشمال دفعهم للانتقام من الإمارات

The last example exhibited that the neutral phrase "wake-up call" is replaced with "revenge," shifting the framing from a strategic military action to an emotional and reactionary move, aligning the translation with a political narrative that portrays the UAE as a victim and the Houthis as aggressors. It reveals the translator's perspective wich aligns with the UAE and opposes the Houthis.

These instances demonstrate how translation is used not just as a linguistic tool but as a means of shaping ideological perspectives and influencing reader perception.

3.   Photographic Bias

While the analysis mainly focuses on the linguistic aspect of the translation, photographic bias also plays a role in shaping the narrative. Photographs and their captions were also a source of bias in the translations. Images were selectively chosen to accompany translated articles, with pictures of military action, destruction, or suffering civilians often serving to either sympathize with one side or demonize the other. For example, images of Sana'a forces parade were often replaced by group images to downplay their presence and accompanied by captions that framed them as militias or rebels, portraying them as aggressors or occupiers, while government forces might be shown in a more dignified light, emphasizing their control and order. These visuals, along with the emotive language in the caption, added a layer of emotional manipulation, shifting the reader's perception of the conflict.

115

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The analysis revealed a clear pattern of ideological bias in the translation of Yemeni political news articles. The biases identified in the translations serve to either reinforce or challenge the prevailing political ideologies of the factions involved in the Yemeni conflict. This reinforces the argument that translation is never a neutral act, but is deeply embedded in political power dynamics. Across all sample articles, the analysis revealed significant ideological biases in the Arabic translations. These biases were evident in the language choices (adjectives and adverbs), framing of political events, and selection of images. Each article reflected different political ideologies based on the translators' affiliations and the media outlet's editorial stance. These findings suggest that the translation process is not neutral and that ideological manipulation is an inherent part of political news translation.

DISCUSSION

The analysis of the translated Yemeni political news sample articles reveals a clear ideological bias embedded in the language choices and framing strategies used in the translations. It shows how translation functions as a tool of ideological shaping in the context of the Yemeni conflict. By applying both Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Bias Models, this study uncovers how linguistic strategies such as adjectival bias, attribution bias, and contextual omission contribute to the construction of ideological narratives that align with specific political agendas. Each category of bias identified in the sample articles underscores the political stakes involved in the translation of news content. The presence of various biases in the Arabic translations of Yemeni political news demonstrates the role of translation in shaping public perception, both within Yemen and internationally.

The Attribution Bias observed in the first sample indicates how translation can shape the reader's understanding of Yemen involvement in the Palestine-Israel conflict. By framing the Yemeni stance as either an act of aggression or a self-destructive, translation actively influences how international audiences perceive the conflict wagers. The translation choices in this case help solidify or undermine the legitimacy of political factions based on the translator's ideological stance.

One of the most striking findings is the framing of political actors, in which, the Adjectival and Adverbial Biases underscore how language choices can subtly influence how political actors and events are perceived. The choice of adjectives and adverbs serves not only to describe the events but also to construct political identities by framing one side as legitimate and the other as illegitimate. It was observed in the second and third samples demonstrate the emotional and evaluative power of translation where the Saudi-backed government is often presented as the legitimate authority, while Sana'a government is portrayed as violent rebels or terrorist groups. This is consistent with Merrill's Bias Model, which highlights the role of media in presenting conflicting viewpoints through biased language. These linguistic choices are more than just stylistic preferences; they are ideological markers that reflect the political stakes of the conflict.

The study also finds that contextual bias plays a significant role in shaping how events are understood by international audiences. Contextual Bias in the seventh and eighth samples reflects the way history and geopolitical context are selectively presented or omitted in translation. The omission of key context, particularly relating to foreign interventions, significantly alters the reader's understanding of the conflict, making it appear more like a domestic issue than a proxy war between regional powers. The exclusion or inclusion of context directly influences the interpretation of the conflict's origins and its ongoing impact. This aligns with the findings of Entman, 1993 who has explored how contextual omissions can influence public perception in political news coverage.

The Outright Opinion Bias in the last two samples demonstrates how personal or editorial viewpoints are sometimes embedded in the translation of news. These opinions frame the political parties involved in the conflict in a biased way, guiding the reader toward a particular perspective on the legitimacy of the warring factions. This is a clear indication that the translation of news articles is never objective but inherently shaped by political leanings.

Finally, the Photographic Bias demonstrates the power of visual media in shaping narratives. The choice of images, along with their accompanying captions, plays a crucial role in framing the conflict and influencing how political figures and events are perceived. The visual element adds another layer of ideological manipulation, where photographs can either humanize or demonize certain actors in the conflict.

Theoretical Implications

The findings support post-colonial theories on translation, particularly the idea that translation can serve as a tool of colonial resistance or reinforcement. As noted by Niranjana (1992), translation can either reinforce or challenge dominant ideologies. In the Yemeni context, the translations examined in this study reflect the struggles of national identity, where the Yemeni people are caught between foreign intervention and local resistance. The ideological manipulation in translation serves as both a reflection of and a tool for shaping these broader political dynamics. It shows how translation plays a key role in shaping international perceptions of the conflict, either legitimizing or delegitimizing the actions of various political actors.

Moreover, the findings also highlight the role of media outlets in shaping public perceptions of conflict, as discussed by Baker (2006). Media translation is not a neutral process; it actively participates in the construction of political identities and narratives that support particular ideologies. The biases observed in these translations are also consistent with Venuti's (1995) theory of manipulation in translation, where the choices made by translators reflect their own ideological alignments and those of the media outlets for which they work. The language of translation, therefore, does not just transfer information but shapes identities, political allegiances, and international relations.

Limitations and Future Research

While this study provides valuable insights, the sample size is relatively small, and future research could expand the scope by including a larger number of translations from different media outlets and languages. Additionally, future studies could also explore the impact of these biases on audiences by conducting surveys or focus groups to gauge how different ideological biases in translation affect public opinion in the Arabic-speaking world. Future research could also expand the sample to include a broader range of media outlets and examine the role of social media and user-generated content in shaping political discourse in Yemen.

CONCLUSION

The media plays a crucial role in shaping political discourse and public opinion. Numerous examples from today's mass media show how political affiliations and ideological views influence media strategies. Understanding the underlying discourse and editorial policy is often essential to explaining media decisions. This paper has explored the ideological biases inherent in the translation of Yemeni political news, applying Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Bias Models to uncover the linguistic strategies that shape the representation of political actors and events. The study has demonstrated that translation in the context of Yemeni political news is a powerful tool for shaping political ideologies. Through the analysis of sample articles, it is clear that translation biases, whether through language, context, or visual imagery, play a crucial role in framing the Yemeni conflict in ways that reflect and reinforce particular political agendas. By identifying various biases in the translation process, it is clear that translation is not a neutral act but a site of ideological struggle that influences how political events are perceived by international audiences. The study underscores the importance of critically evaluating translated news content, especially in politically sensitive regions like Yemen, where translation can influence both national and international perceptions of conflict.

The findings show that linguistic choices, including the use of adjectives, adverbs, and framing devices, play a critical role in shaping the portrayal of political actors. This ideological bias is further reinforced by contextual omissions and attribution biases that influence how responsibility for the conflict is assigned.

By combining CDA with Bias Models, this study provides a broad understanding of how translation can serve as a tool for ideological representation. It emphasizes the need for greater awareness of bias in translated media and the ways in which language can be manipulated to support particular political agendas.

Future research could expand the scope of this study by analyzing a larger corpus of translated texts or by examining the role of social media in shaping perceptions of political conflicts. Understanding how translation and media bias intersect is crucial in an era where global audiences are increasingly dependent on translated news to form their views of distant conflicts.

The study reveals that all are biased, the journalist is biased to the group he supports, the translator is biased because of preferring one group over the other, the reader is biased too, in which preferring one opinion over the other is an example.

REFERENCES

Al-Hazorah, N. A. (2023) Journalists' attitudes towards the ethics of media handling of the Yemeni crisis in satirical programmers (Survey study), *Sana'a University Journal of Human Sciences* (Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 1-41).

Baker, M. (2006). *Translation and conflict: A narrative account*. Routledge.

Baker, M. (2019). Narrative analysis and translation. In *Researching translation in the age of technology and global conflict* (pp. 190-207). Routledge.

Bánhegyi, M. (2017). Identifying political and ideological bias in translated newspaper articles: The Political Bias Screener. In *Forum* (Vol. 15, No. 1, pp. 1-26). Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Baron, David, (2006) \Persistent Media Bias," Journal of Public Economics 90(1-2): 1-36.

Bassnett, S. (2002). *Translation studies* (3rd ed.). Routledge.

Bennett, W. L. and Edelman, M. (1985). Toward a New Political Narrative. *Journal of Communication*, 35(4), pp. 821-71.

Bruner, J. (1991). The Narrative Construction of Reality. *Critical Inquiry*, 18(1) pp. 1-21.

Cambridge Dictionary.

Chiang, C. (2007). Sources of Media Bias. Working paper.

Cronin, M. (2006). *Translation and identity*. Routledge.

Deuze, M. (2004). Journalism Studies Beyond Media: On ideology and identity: research section. *Ecquid Novi*, *25*(2), 275-293.

Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43 (4), 51-58. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1993.tb01304.x

Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analyzing discourse: Textual analysis for social research*. London: Routledge. [Fairclough offers his well-known and widely used approach to "critical discourse analysis"]

Fairclough, N. (1995). *Media discourse*. Arnold.

Gentzkow, Matthew and Jess M. Shapiro (2006), \Media Bias and Reputation," Journal of Political Economy, 114(2):280-316.

González, M. C. (2014). Translation in the media and the politics of representation. *Translation Studies, 7*(1), 67–82. https://doi.org/10.1080/14781700.2013.846131

Heider, F. (1958). *The psychology of interpersonal relations*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Hermans, T. (1999). *Translation in systems: Descriptive and system-oriented approaches explained*. St. Jerome.

Jacobs, Jenny Eva. 2016. Language Ideologies and Identity Construction Among Dual Language Youth. Doctoral dissertation, Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Li, P., Tian, C., & Huang, Z. (2016). Ethics, identity and ideology: A study of the interpreters in the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression (1937–1945). *Linguistica Antverpiensia, new series–themes in translation studies*, *15*.

Loupaki, E. (2010). Investigating Translator's Strategies in Rendering Ideological Conflict: The Case of News Translation. In, Schäffner, C. and Bassnett, S. (eds) *Political Discourse, Media and Translation*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Mazzoleni, G. (2002 [1998]). Politikai kommunikacio [Political Communication]. Osiris Kiado: Budapest. Screening Political Bias and Reality in Media Translations. Volume 16, No. 3. Retrieved from URL:

http://translationjournal.net/journal/61bias.htm

Merrill, J. B., & Tobin, A. (2019). Facebook moves to block ad transparency tools–including ours. *ProPublica. Available at: www. propublica. org/article/facebook-blocks-ad-transparency-tools*.

Merrill, J. B. (1976). *Bias in the news: A study of the news reporting of the Vietnam War*. Routledge.

Mhandi, C. (2019). Translating news texts during wars and conflicts: challenges and strategies. *ANGLICA-An International Journal of English Studies*, *28*(2), 141-151.

Mullainathan, S. and A. Shleifer (2005) \Market for news," American Economic Review 95(4): 1031-1053.

Nick Dietrich & Kristine Eck (2020) Known unknowns: media bias in the reporting of political violence, International Interactions, 46:6, 1043-1060, DOI: 10.1080/03050629.2020.1814758 https://doi.org/10.1080/03050629.2020.1814758

Niranjana, T. (1992). *Siting translation: History, post-structuralism, and the colonial context*. University of California Press.

Omar, H. H. (2015). Translating the Middle Eastern Conflicts: A Narrative Approach. *Norwich Papers: Studies in Translation*, 23, pp. 52-77

Omar, H. H. (2016). Ideology, Media and Conflict in Political Discourse and Its Translation During the Arab Spring: Syria as a Case Study*:* University of Leeds, Leeds, UK.

Rashid, H. S. A. (2024). The Role of News Translation in Portraying the Islamist Discourse in News Reports for both Media Institutions (BBC & Al Arabiya). *Arabic Journal for Translation Studies*, *3*(8), 119-133.

Recasens, M., Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil, C., & Jurafsky, D. (2013). Linguistic models for analyzing and detecting biased language. In Proceedings of the 51st Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics (Volume 1: Long Papers) (pp. 1650-1659).

Saleh, M. M., & Abdel Wahab, A. M.(2024) Yemeni Youth's Reliance on News Websites and its Relation to Degree Obtaining News on War in Yemen. *Sana'a University Journal of Human Sciences.* (Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 211-256).

Simo, H. I. A., & Ahmed, H. A. (2022). Bias in translation. *International Journal of Health Sciences*, *6*, 12250-12261.

Thawabteh, M. A., & ABU RADWAN, A. (2020). Biased Unbiased Translation: The Case of English into Arabic Translation . Traduction Et Langues, 19(2), 85-97. https://asjp.cerist.dz/en/article/145982

Van Dijk, T. A. (2008). *Discourse and power*. New York: Palgrave/Macmillan [Van Dijk has done a great deal of work on using his own style of discourse analysis to deal with important social and political issues]

Van Dijk, T. A. (1993). *Elite discourse and racism*. Sage.

Venuti, L. (1995). *The translator's invisibility: A history of translation*. Routledge.

Van Dijk, T. A. (2021). *Discourse and Ideology: A New Perspective*. Sage Publications.

Zhu, C., & Zhang, J. (2015). Dancing with ideology: Grammatical metaphor and identity presentation in translation. *Meta*, *60*(3), 387-405.

Websites:

1- Alarabiya English (2023, June 29). Yemen truce progress good, but 'not enough': Senior State Department official https://english.alarabiya.net/News/gulf/2023/06/29/US-envoy-praises-Yemen-truce-progress-but-says-it-s-not-enough- Translated by Marebpresshttps://marebpress.org/news_details.php?sid=193409

2- Brookings Bruce Riedel (2023, January 27). The Houthis after the Yemeni cease-fire https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-houthis-after-the-yemeni-cease-fire/ Translated by NewsMax https://newsmaxone.com/news53227.html

3- Foreign Affairs Asher Orkaby (2023, July 11). Yemen's Hidden Path to Peace https://www.foreignaffairs.com/yemen/yemens-hidden-path-peace?check_logged_in=1&utm_medium=promo_email&utm_source=lo_flows&utm_campaign=registered_user_welcome&utm_term=email_1&utm_content=20231227 Translated byhttps://ift.tt/pMHI3bf

4- NyTimes (2023, Dec 8). Iran Looks to Houthi Proxies to Escalate Fight With Israel https://www.nytimes.com/2023/12/08/world/middleeast/iran-israel-houthis.html Translated by Almashad alyemeni https://www.almashhad-alyemeni.com/270067

5- **The conversation (2023, Nov 1). How Houthi attacks affect both the Israel-Hamas conflict and Yemen's own civil war – and could put pressure on US, Saudi Arabia** https://theconversation.com/how-houthi-attacks-affect-both-the-israel-hamas-conflict-and-yemens-own-civil-war-and-could-put-pressure-on-us-saudi-arabia-216852 **Translated by Almashad alyemeni** https://www.almashhad-alyemeni.com/267103

6- The economist (2023, December 19). Attacks on shipping threaten to upend peace talks in Yemen DUBAI AND JERUSALEM https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2023/12/19/attacks-on-shipping-threaten-to-upend-peace-talks-in-yemen **Translated by Almashad alyemeni** https://www.almashhad-alyemeni.com/271423

7- The independent David Isaac (2022, January 20). H*outhi drone attack on Emirates a wake-up call for Israel.* https://www.jns.org/houthi-drone-attack-on-emirates-a-wake-up-call-for-israel/ Translated by Alrasseef press https://alraseefpress.net/?p=news_details&id=11281

8- Responsible statecraft Emily Milliken(2023, July 13). What is China doing in Yemen? https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2023/07/13/what-is-china-doing-in-yemen/ Translated by https://ift.tt/3CpHlIA

9- UN.org (2023, January 16). UN Humanitarian chief: Access constraints widespread in Yemen https://www.unocha.org/news/un-humanitarian-chief-access-constraints-widespread-yemen Translated by Alrasseef presshttps://alraseefpress.net/?p=news_details&id=8016

119

10- *World Health* Organization (2022, December 5). Tackling mental health challenges in Yemen by building capacities   https://www.emro.who.int/yemen/news/tackling-mental-health-challenges-in-yemen-by-building-capacities.html   Translated   by   Marebpress https://m.sa24.co/article/15486702/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%AD%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%86-%D9%86%D8%B3%D8%A8%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B6-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D9%81%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%82%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%AA%D8%AC%D8%A7%D9%88%D8%B2%D8%AA.html