

Pragmatic, Semantic and Sociopolitical Facets in TV News Subtitling: A Critical Discourse Analysis of American Televised Interviews in *The Real News Network*

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DOI: <http://doi.org/10.36892/ijlls.v6i4.1879>

APA Citation: Farahi, M. (2024). Pragmatic, Semantic and Sociopolitical Facets in TV News Subtitling: A Critical Discourse Analysis of American Televised Interviews in *The Real News Network*. *International Journal of Language and Literary Studies*, 6(4), 83–104. <http://doi.org/10.36892/ijlls.v6i4.1879>

Received: 21/09/2024	Abstract
Accepted: 30/10/2024	<p><i>Audiovisual translation has gained substantial attention over the past decade. Subtitling has played dynamic roles for all multimedia outlets, connecting narratives to a diverse global audience and allowing worldwide people to enjoy the same audiovisual experience. The study focused on an in-depth scrutiny of pragmatic, semantic and sociopolitical facets of two televisual news interviews in The Real News Network (2011, 2012). The first underscored the political rift within the Democratic Party as well as between the Democrats and the Republicans, while the second accentuated the presumed war on Iran trying to build a nuclear facility. The study aimed to identify the effect of conversational implicature, cohesion, coherence, deixis, ambiguity and figurative interpretation on the conveyance of connotative meaning in context, seeking to investigate the fluently elusive nature of news statements wherein ideologically bound microscopic language is operative. Part of the analysis equally aimed to control the intricate hindrances encountered in the subtitling process. The study investigated the way cognitive, social and ideological dimensions function in the process of subtitling TV news, adopting a critical discourse analysis approach (Van Dijk, 1998). The data of the study which comprise a corpus of the interviews' script and 379 subtitles were analysed to unveil the power of the devices implemented to accurately convey the intended beliefs. The findings, which showed strikingly salient specifics vis-à-vis the source and target utterances, can be of a riveting worth for audiovisual translators at large and news subtitling specialists in particular.</i></p>
Keywords: TV news subtitling, critical discourse analysis, pragmatic-semantic-sociopolitical facets, rendition strategies	

1. INTRODUCTION

Audiovisual translation (AVT), mainly TV news subtitling, is part of a multifaceted reconceptualization process in which the target text (TT) is often ideologically manipulated to meet the dominant norms of the target society. Many studies have tackled this phenomenon using different discursive approaches like critical discourse analysis (CDA), mostly addressing the semantic facet in TV news subtitling. In this vein, pragmatic and/or sociopolitical perspectives have largely remained less researched. The present study is an attempt to fill this research void, analyzing the threefold intricacies altogether in American TV news in light of the CDA model (Van Dijk, 1998). The study analyzes TV news subtitles to reconnoiter their representation of pragmatic, semantic and sociopolitical facets, connotatively examining the

underlying ideologies, language and discourse strategies in context. TV news refers to textual macrostructures that have numerous functions. Traditionally, they have been seen as having semantic and pragmatic functions (Bell, 1991; Van Dijk, 1988), although such a conception is not without its anomalous glitches (Ifantidou, 2009). A fascination with the global AVT and an interest in TV news have led to investigating the three facets in subtitling American onscreen news.

The realm of AVT has recently received considerable attention. A slightly growing number of research studies on subtitling televised news are now available. The setting for this research is Morocco in which subtitling and dubbing onscreen news from French, English or Spanish into Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) are the most common types of AVT. All subtitles shown in the Moroccan TV programs are open subtitles—rather than closed subtitles, indicating that the audience cannot turn them off. The omnipresence of subtitles on the Moroccan TV screen makes it a customary trait, as people are flagrantly adapted to watching TV programs and reading subtitles on a simultaneous basis. Subtitling does not only involve translating televised dialogue and narrative but reasonably includes the image and soundtrack. Diaz Cintas and Remael (2007) define subtitling as “a translation practice that consists of presenting a written text, generally on the lower part of the screen [...], as well as the discursive elements that appear in the image (letters, inserts, graffiti, inscriptions, and the like), and the information that is contained on the soundtrack (songs, voices off)” (p. 8). Additionally, there are two types of subtitling, i.e., intralingual and interlingual. Intralingual subtitling which refers to subtitles in the same language is frequently made for the deaf. Conversely, interlingual subtitling which is the focus of the current study chiefly involves two different languages.

In the present study, focus is shed on the pragmatic, semantic and sociopolitical facets of AVT—specifically in TV news subtitling. The topic is of paramount importance particularly when it comes to politically loaded televised interviews wherein fluently microscopic language is largely effective. The videos extracted from *The Real News Network* (TRNN) embody the use of microscopic linguistic items and discourse markers. TRNN founded by Paul Jay and Mishuk Munier in September 2003 in Toronto is a global news channel based in Baltimore, Maryland, USA, covering both national and international news (www.therealnews.com). Emphasis is equally shed on the hindrances encountered by the subtitler while rendering these ideologically seated items and markers. Various queries are raised as to whether the subtitler has kept the source text's (ST) intended meaning or has somehow misrepresented it, modifying it to re/frame the target addressee's beliefs. A misinterpretation of the intended meaning, which

might be triggered by an inappropriate use of the rendition strategy, would automatically lead to a change in the viewer's perception of the subtitled topic, yielding a different meaning and a different understanding of the source script items. The videos under concern tackle the US government's concerns about the political rift within the Democratic Party (DP) and Iran's attempt to construct nuclear weapons. Analysis is hence shed on the elusive and ideological nature of TV news statements.

The purpose is to improve comprehension of the tripartite underpinnings of media discourse and its complexity in TV news subtitles, investigating the pragmatic, semantic and sociopolitical facets represented and the accompanying discourse techniques implemented. The study, thus, examines how various TV news subtitlers use language and discursive markers to reproduce ideological standpoints, and how these ideologies are linguistically constructed. The current study contributes to the field of media studies, investigating how TV news uses language and discourse to re/shape public opinion. In CDA, the approach is critical as it is both linguistically bound and sociologically seated. Transcending the mere portrayal of language and formal features of discourse, CDA seeks to examine the relations between ideology, language and society. CDA fills the breach between linguistic microstructures and semantic macrostructures, unveiling hegemony relations and hidden sociopolitical moves in the source script. That being said, the study seeks to answer two main research questions. First, what are the strategies implemented by the subtitler to render the pragmatic, semantic and sociopolitical facets into the subtitled MSA TV news version? Second, are there any hindrances encountered while rendering the ST English items into the TT Arabic items? If there are any, what are these hindrances? The research study hypothesizes that an improper rendition of the three facets in onscreen subtitling does not affect the target audience's utmost comprehension of the connotative meaning.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Media discourse refers to the language and communication implemented in numerous forms of media such as TV news programs, newspapers and social media networks, covering the language style and descriptions used by media outlets to disseminate various forms of content to the target audience. Being created by media professionals or journalists, media discourse is mostly constructed to re/shape public opinion on a given issue. Van Dijk (2019) examined the way media discourse was implemented in the coverage of the Syrian war. The study found that media discourse is influenced not only by politicians and military structures but also by the media industry itself, concluding that the media industry should take an active role in creating a more effective communication process. Adopting a CDA approach, Kalsi

(2017) equally investigated US national newspapers' representations of the discursive construction of the war in Iraq, involving contextual, textual and historical-diachronic analyses. The findings showed that mass media offer a narrow range of discursive possibilities that delimit the parameters of discourse.

AVT is a branch of translation studies pertinent to audiovisual products, transferring the global meaning of an ST into a new sense that is equal to the first but in another language (Perego & Taylor, 2012). AVT occurs through two key channels, that is, the visual channel which includes subtitles, captions and commentaries, and the auditory channel which encompasses music, noise and silence. The most popular types of AVT are dubbing and subtitling. Dubbing replaces the source language soundtrack with a target language soundtrack. Subtitling, on the other hand, keeps the original soundtrack, superimposing a translation on the visual image of the TV program (Pedersen, 2011, p. 4). There are other types of AVT. Voice-over is performed by a speaker who reads a script during a show. Simultaneous subtitling is performed during a live show by a re-speaker. Simultaneous interpretation involves a pair of interpreters who translate the message simultaneously. Audio commentary is a comment supplemented to a soundtrack by one or more speakers adding information to the audience. Multilingual diffusion is an option of choosing languages on a TV menu. Captions provide further explanations on screen like places, dates, names, years, etc. Finally, displays consist of newspapers titles, road signs, posters, etc. (De Linde & Kay, 2009, p. 2).

The importance of TV news subtitling is self-evident as it is considered an effective tool by which news information is diffused beyond the national boundaries. Although the relationship between televised news and translation studies has been relatively limited (Scammell, 2016), many scholars have attempted to set the ground for investigating the subject from various angles. Bielsa (2016) posits that news translation requires the “thoroughgoing modification of texts in order to make them suitable for new audiences” (p. 200). The adaptation of TV news is affected by the type and original representation of the information delivered, given that news originates in one source culture and is re-arrogated and renovated in a different target culture (Orgad, 2012, as cited in Bielsa, 2016, p. 200). In the field of TV news, the connotative meaning is tackled with respect to the selection of proper words and phrases in a way that preserves the intended meaning, taking into account the subtitler's background, censorship, norms and beliefs towards the target audience. Alternatively, foreign TV news subtitling can be challenging if the discourse is already ideologically oriented, resulting in a different interpretation of the authentic intended meaning.

Unlike other typologies of translation, subtitles are depicted as “transient” since they follow the image and disappear shortly after having read them, without allowing re-reading them again. Subtitles are also considered “polysemiotic” for they use both visual and spatial bounds. In general, subtitles are classified according to five parameters. First, linguistic parameters include intralingual subtitles, interlingual subtitles and bilingual subtitles. Second, temporal parameters can be pre-prepared subtitles—i.e., offline subtitling or real-time subtitles—i.e., human-made/machine-translated subtitling. Third, technical parameters are composed of open subtitles and closed subtitles. Fourth, methods of projecting subtitles can be mechanical, photochemical, optical, laser or electronic. Fifth, distribution format involves cinema, TV, DVD, Internet or other pattern (Pedersen, 2011).

Baker (1992) has defined pragmatics as the study of language in use, that is, “meaning as generated by specific participants in specific communicative situations, rather than meaning as generated by an abstract system of linguistic relations” (p. 302). AVT acts as an explanatory tool of the language in use as it tackles various languages to which it restates what has been said or written in the source material (Hickey, 1998, p. 46). Therefore, it is thought that pragmatics and AVT share common features. Pragmatics is regarded as “a division of semiotics” and AVT is viewed as “a kind of semiotic interpretation” (Hassan, 2011, p. 13). Pragmatic, semantic, sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic and cross-cultural aspects are essential in AVT, rendering an effective interpretation of the writer’s intended meaning in the ST for the target audience (Hatim & Mason, 1990, as cited in Dicerto, 2018, p. 52).

A pragmatic approach to AVT examines the rules and principles governing the use of language over and above the rules of syntax and/or morphology, exploring what makes some uses of language in communicative situations appropriate than others. Speech acts, deixis, rhetorical structure, presupposition, conversational implicature and the management of reference in discourse are some pragmatic aspects mostly studied in subtitling. Grice (1975) features additional information derived from inferences, viz. “implicature,” distinguishing conventional implicature from conversational implicature. Conventional implicature is derived from the meanings of particular expressions. Conversational implicature is derived from pragmatic principles like conversational maxims and cooperative principle. According to the cooperative principle and the maxims, if the presenter’s comment looked irrelevant, the listener would seek to build a set of inferences to make it relevant or at least cooperative (Green, 1989, p. 91).

Deictic features have also been subject to extensive treatment in referential semantics and pragmatics (Levinson, 2004). In addition to the person, time and place deixis of the speaker, Levinson (1983) adds the discourse deixis defined as “the point [wherein] the speaker is currently at” and the social deixis understood as “the speaker’s social status and rank” (p. 64). Following Lyons (1977) and Fillmore (1997), Levinson (2004) adds social deixis which covers the encoding of social distinctions that are relative to participant roles and discourse deixis which involves the encoding of reference to portions of the unfolding discourse in which the utterance is located. The deictic center is generally “located within the context of utterance by the speaker” (Brown & Yule, 1983, p. 52), shifting in a conversation as the speakers take turns. While deixis is understood as a semantic-pragmatic phenomenon, previous studies have tackled the linguistic forms through which it is expressed, mainly connectives, subordinators, verbal tenses and adverbs, to name but a few.

Pertinent to this analysis is the use of cohesion and coherence as characteristics of the written as well as the spoken discourse. According to Baker (1992), “cohesion is the network of surface relations which link words and expressions to other words and expressions in a text, and coherence is the network of conceptual relations which underlie the surface text” (p. 218). Connectives are closely related to the formation of cohesion and coherence. Pander Maat and Sanders (2006) define connectives as one-word items or fixed-word combinations that express the relation between clauses, sentences or utterances. According to Hoey (1991), “cohesion is a property of the text and [...] coherence is a facet of the reader’s evaluation of a text” (p. 12). Put differently, cohesion is viewed as objective, whereas coherence is regarded as subjective. The judgments of the former are somewhat fixed, while those of the latter may vary from addressee to addressee. The relationship between cohesion and coherence can be further illustrated by the following example: “A cat entered the classroom. Thus, I activated it and switched it off”. The example is cohesive by the presence of the connective “thus,” but it is not coherent. How can you activate a cat and switch it off?

AVT hindrances are the concern of all subtitlers, either novice or professional. The term “rendition strategy” refers to a method or procedure used by translators to solve a particular translation problem. Baker (1992) proposed eight translation strategies—i.e., superordinate, neutral/less expressive words, cultural substitution, loan words, paraphrasing using related words, paraphrasing using unrelated words, omission and compensation. According to Ghazala (1995), translation problems can be related to sound, lexis, grammar or style. The author introduced three main categories of translation strategies, that is, literal strategies (word-for-

word and one-to-one), free strategies (bound and loose) and direct strategies. Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) also proposed seven rendition strategies, namely, borrowing, calque, literal translation, transposition, modulation, equivalence and adaptation. According to Assis Rosa (2001), reduction in subtitling which is equally a common strategy is triggered by several reasons. First, reduction may result from the change of channel, medium or code such as the change from spoken register to written register. Accordingly, spoken features of the ST are often deleted. Second, reduction may be caused by the selection criteria of subtitling such as the need for text density due to time and space constraints—typically limited to a maximum of two lines.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Public foreign TV news mostly serves an agenda-driven cause, attempting to influence or convince the audience with specific ideas and facts that are re/framed from their original sources (Fawcett, 1997, p. 108). Consequently, translators entrusted with rendering such news should systematically deconstruct the language intricacies of the original source material and adapt them to meet the linguistic and social conventions of the target audience. In this regard, the current paper explores two primary points. First, it unravels the elusive nature of TV news in which microscopic language is operative, unveiling pragmatic, semantic and sociopolitical facets in subtitling televised interviews. Second, it underscores the predominantly employed translation strategies and frequently encountered hindrances in the process of subtitling TV news. The current study focused on onscreen news because TV has a vital role in public information processing.

The research design adopted is a qualitative CDA. CDA can uncover hidden bias and manipulation in communication and discourse. A corpus of TV news scripts and 379 subtitles streamed on the TRNN TV channel are analyzed.¹ The research is dedicated to focusing on a textual corpus of the news subtitles that revolve around the rift within the DP and the American-Iranian conflict, specifically Iran attempting to build a nuclear facility. The representation of such topics by the presenters and the interviewees under concern reflects a sort of ideological

¹ The Real News Network. (2011, Nov 6). *The Emperor Has No Clothes* [Video]. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j7ZliwyGZJQ>

The Real News Network. (2012, Jan 12). Why Did Defense Secretary Edward Leon Panetta Say Iran Not Building Nukes? [Video]. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OJy7MneOH1g&t=48s>

conception, identifying different discourses and positions. Firm methodical procedures are applied to critically analyse the corpus data. The first procedure is collecting and transcribing news subtitles from the channel, with due focus on the underlying facets represented in the subtitles. The second procedure is analyzing the subtitles based on the concepts addressed through converging a linguistic description, a discourse analysis and an interpretation of the connotative meaning. The third procedure is listing the implications of the tripartite facets in foreign TV news subtitling.

Van Dijk's (1998) model, which highlights the cognitive, social and ideological dimensions of discourse, is adopted as a theoretical framework. The model examines the interaction between cognitive structures and social structures in the process of discourse production, interpretation and comprehension. It is a comprehensive framework that combines insights from cognitive psychology, linguistics and social sciences to examine how language and discourse re/shape cognition, social structures and ideologies. Cognitive processes such as inference, presupposition and implicature are crucial in understanding how meaning is derived from linguistic expressions. The social dimension focuses on the role of social context including the broader sociopolitical and historical contexts. It also stresses the role of social structures—such as race, gender, class and institutional settings—in influencing the production, interpretation and comprehension of discourse. The ideological dimension emphasizes how language contributes to the construction and dissemination of resistance against dominant ideologies, beliefs, values and representations. Discourse can reflect hegemonic ideologies, strengthen cultural norms and re/shape public opinion. It explores how ideologies are entrenched in discourse through numerous microstructure linguistic strategies, i.e., re/framing, presuppositions, persuasive techniques and lexical choices. The microstructure strategies emphasize the linguistic components used to transfer the macrostructure's representations.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Although onscreen subtitles are practically short in length, they are pointers to guide the attention of the target audience. They give the viewer whose perspective is to be taken into account an idea or a summary of what the story is about in a mesmerizing way. To make an effective rendition of the ST items, the subtitler translates the connotative meaning of some given items and structures to help transfer the cognitive, social and ideological dimensions inherent in politically loaded TV news discourse. What follows is a fittingly panoramic and

critical analysis of the subtitles in light of the conveyed pragmatic, semantic and sociopolitical facets and the encountered technical hindrances amid the process of subtitling.

4.1. The Pragmatic Facet in Televised News

It has been argued that although the news media presents reality “as it is,” news presenters, editors or subtitlers most of the time construct a subjective picture of that reality. This is accomplished by selecting and organizing information in a way that makes sense to them and their audiences, re/framing and guiding their thoughts. News translation would be considered, at least in this sense, a subjective representation of the world. TV discourse is politically and ideologically seated. Unlike the science language which is characterised by its technicality and the language used in cartoons which is incarnated by its comicality, TV news language is politically defined. For example, the statements given by the Secretary of Defense L. E. Panetta are an interesting case study to highlight the ideological dimension of TV discourse. News presenters and interviewees eclectically select their words using “microscopes” before they would say anything to the public. This suggests in the long run that between lines is what the reader, the listener or the viewer is left with to comprehensively grasp the full picture. Without grasping what is not explicitly stated, the fully understood connotation of the utterance would be unanimously incomplete or misinterpreted. This entails that the subtitler has to conduct previous deep research of the subtitled audio-visual material.

The first video under concern tackles the splits within the DP. In the USA, there are two dominant contemporary political parties which are, to use the video terms, the centre-right to right-wing which constitutes the Republican Party (RP)—also known as the Grand Old Party (GOP)—and the centre-left being the range of left-wing ideologies which institutes the DP. Within the DP, there is also a division that encloses two other wings, a center-left which is progressive and an extremist side. The latter consists of proponents who are so close to the republican conception and policy. Norman Solomon who is an American journalist and media critic tries to defend the outlook of the DP to which he belongs, providing a critical view against his opponents within the DP, i.e., the extremist side. According to him, the fact that the DP has its own set of affluent as well as common people that stand in the opposite direction or at the end of the “spectrum” produced this political split. The working class needs social security, jobs, health care, etc. As for the rich, they are not in need of state aid at least at this level.

Norman Solomon criticises Obama’s policies, suggesting that the latter compromises too much. Put differently, the president is not strong enough to hold the democratic conception or ideology but rather shifts repeatedly in both directions. According to Solomon, Obama

crosses the “borderline” between the Democratic and the Republican conception. In contrast, the Republicans do not compromise as their beliefs are somehow fixed. The interviewee tries to defend the outlook of the DP, providing a critical view against his opponents within the DP who have ideas that slightly intersect with the RP conception. Thus, all the words which are used in this context are not at random but rather stand for ideologically loaded discourse.

The subtitler should then be aware of these facts while translating a given discourse. The language which is used by the Democrat is not neutral, given his discourse is produced from an ideological standpoint, that of the progressive Democrats. One of the main difficulties is the subtitling of some utterances that have implicit meanings. That is to say, the intended meaning is the unsaid. Translating the title of the first TV news interview “*The Emperor Has No Clothes*” should not be interpreted at the literal level, that is, a person scantily clad. Accordingly, the title should not be translated as [ʔal 'imbra:tʃo:r bidu:ni malabis ʔaw 'jibh ʃa:rin] but rather as [ʔa'rraʔi:s bidu:ni ʔafka:r]. The task of the TV news subtitler is to provide a translation of the connotative meaning, finding proper semantic equivalence of some terms such as “the emperor” subtitled as [ʔa'rraʔi:s] and not as [ʔal 'imbra:tʃo:r].

Consider this sentence as well “We have to fight for progressive principles or this country will continue to move rightward” (TRNN, Nov 6, 2011), plainly translated as [... ʔaw satastʃami'rro ha:ðihi ʔal bila:d fi: ʔal i'ttiʒa:hi naħwa ʔal jami:ni]. The subtitle is literally correct, but it does not render the intended meaning. It is possible to translate it differently by means of interpreting the implicit message, which is encoded [... ʔaw satastʃami'rro ha:ðihi ʔal bila:d naħwa taba'nni ʔal xitʃa:b ʔal zumho:ri]. The second translation is much more acceptable as it matches the pragmatic facet, rendering the connotative meaning using H. P. Grice’s pragmatic theory of conversational implicature. Implicature which is a term coined by Grice (1975) refers to what is suggested or implied in an utterance even if it is not openly expressed. Conversational implicature is one of the four maxims, referring to the “extra meaning” implied within discourse (Grice, 1975, p. 56). The pragmatic facet of the intended meaning is also represented in this instance “This country is not about Wall Street” (TRNN, Nov 6, 2011), translated as [ʔi'na ha:ðihi ə'ddawla lajsat li'wa:l stri:t]. This highlights the fact that Wall Street stands against the interests of the proletariat, the common people. Hence, the following subtitling would sound much more appropriate to the target audience [ʔi'na ha:ðihi ə'ddawla lajsat lil zumho:ri'jji:na].

In the quotation below, the ideas are uttered in a coherent way to exert an effect on the target audience. This can be interpreted as an attempt to evoke the idea that the Democrats are seriously determined to help the common people find practical solutions for societal problems. It is no wonder that the progressive Democrat has organized his speech in a certain cohesive and coherent way:

We have seen, **however**, a way in which the administration has accommodated itself to the wall of the right-wing [...]. **And then after** moving in that direction, moves in that direction again and again **while** the right-wing Republican wall moves not at all. And **so this** dynamic of continuing to enable the rightward move of the frame of discourse and political debate **has, I think, been very** damaging for progressive possibilities. **That is why** I often quote Paul Walston [...] who said that he wanted to fight for and represent the Democratic wing of the Democratic Party. **And I certainly** intend in Congress to fight for and represent the progressive wing [...]. **We have to** fight for progressive principles **or** this country will continue **to move rightward**. (TRNN, Nov 6, 2011, Scene 01:34–02:33).

The interviewee used many deictic tools to make his speech coherent and cohesive (the items in bold). The deictic elements relate the utterance to a particular time, place, speaker and discourse context. The source language items need, thus, to be aptly rendered and properly subtitled to help convey the identical intended meaning. By mentioning “the Democratic wing of the Democratic Party,” he underlines the fact that the DP has a wing which does not uphold the Democratic principles and progressive conception. Nonetheless, the interviewee asserts that the Democratic wing ideology aligns with the Republican conception solely in certain crisscrossing policies.

4.2.The Semantic Facet in News Broadcast

Semantics which is the study of the meaning of words, phrases and sentences deals with the interpretation of linguistic items as used by agents within particular contexts or circumstances. In conventional semantic analysis, there is always that tenacious attempt to focus on what the words, phrases and sentences literally typify, instead of what the speaker might want them to mean on a given topic (Yule, 2010, p. 112). In the current CDA qualitative study, the connotatively interpreted semantic facet of the subtitled items and utterances rendered interesting data. First, the title “*The Emperor Has No Clothes*” is a metaphor. It can be read as an allusion to a fairy tale translated into over 100 languages by the Danish author Hans Christian Anderson. It is about a vain emperor who is exposed before his subjects. The

emperor cares only about his clothes and his appearance. He asked to have a cloth that is invisible to anyone who is not apt for his position. No one could admit that the emperor has no clothes; otherwise, he might be considered not fit for his position. However, a child inadvertently revealed that the emperor is undressed. The idea refers to the fact that the majority of people ignore absolute truth and immerse in collective ignorance, even if all the blatant circumstances show otherwise.

TV news titles are actually textual macrostructures that have numerous functions. They have been previously seen as having semantic and pragmatic functions (Bell, 1991; Van Dijk, 1988). In this context, the title can be used to stand for a situation in which the majority are somehow unable to criticize given facts because others think they are good or right the way they are. They may even know the truth but still ignore it and claim the contrary. “*The Emperor Has No Clothes*” reflects the idea that the president lacks or even has no practical ideas pertinent to the political rift within the DP or between the Democrats and the Republicans. Hence, it is translated using figurative interpretation as [ʔa'rraʔi:s bidu:ni ʔafka:r ʔaw tanqos'ohu ʔafka:r] to sidestep semantic ambiguity. Semantic ambiguity arises when an utterance can have two or more different meanings due to the syntactic structure of the utterance. Semantic ambiguity is when a person, a televised news presenter or interviewee in this case, makes a microstructurally ambiguous statement, impeding the ST meaning and equally befuddling the target audience. Semantic ambiguity is intentionally used in this specific instance to undermine the stance of the political opponent, the DP to be specific.

The interviewee used the item “Wall Street” to stand for the businessmen and the item “Main Street” to signify the common people or the working class. Both are used as metaphors to embody thematic meaning, being one of the seven types of meaning instigated by Leech (1981). Thematic meaning is a conception that is communicated by the way a speaker organizes the message—in terms of focus and emphasis, helping the audience to fully grasp the message and its implications on a proper basis. Likewise, the interviewee used the term “wall” as a metaphor to highlight the political stability of the Republicans, implying the idea that the wall does not move at all like the Republicans’ policy over time. At this point, the interviewee endorses the DP conception, reinforcing the position where the Democrats stand in complete disagreement with the Republicans and equally stand against those Democrats who are near to hold the policies and beliefs advocated by the Republicans, i.e., the extremist side.

Social meaning is a meaning transferred by a piece of language in the social context of its use. The decoding of that meaning is highly dependent on the knowledge of stylistics and linguistic disparity. The social meaning is pertinent to the situation wherein an utterance is used. Stylistic variation embodies social variation, denoting that styles help the addressee to know about the period, field and status of the discourse. Some words are similar to others concerning their conceptual meaning, but they have miscellaneous stylistic meanings. For instance, “North Bay” might stand for a sub-region in San Francisco Bay in California, a hamlet in Oneida County in New York or a village in Racine County in Wisconsin. In the absence of target language unambiguous equivalents and for the sake of preserving the cultural load of the ST items, the social/stylistic meaning of some proper nouns used by the interviewee—people, locations and organizations—are unswervingly subtitled by means of borrowing and transliteration, viz. Norman Solomon, Paul Jay, Golden Gate, North Bay, Main Street and Wall Street. Transliteration is the practice of transcribing an item written in one orthographic system into another orthographic system. Transliteration across languages having the same orthography is unimportant. However, the task becomes more defying when the language pairs use different orthographies. The issue of transliteration from English to languages using other alphabets, MSA and/or Classical Arabic (CA), is a source of flouting challenge for subtitlers.

4.3. The Sociopolitical Facet in Onscreen Subtitling

The use of specific words, which are politically loaded with hidden meanings, is one of the main characteristics of this facet. News writers, reporters or journalists sometimes build up a subjective picture of what they are discussing. The nature and importance of the topic tackled is what forces a presenter and an interviewee to select a certain jargon. At the onset of the second video under study, the presenter says, “We hear even more sabre-rattling from Israel” (TRNN, Jan 12, 2012). “Sabre-rattling” is a politically loaded concept. Why did not the presenter simply say threats from Israel? This would not have the same effect as the previous item intended to intimidate rather than simply threaten Iran not to build a nuclear facility. There seems to be a kind of contradiction in Panetta’s statement. The question that has to be brought up here would be why an attack on Iran is being discussed when we know that Iran is not building nuclear weapons. The use of the word “sabre-rattling” instead of threats and the contradiction noted in Panetta’s statement all highlight the hidden diplomatic intentions of the Americans and Israelis as to what is assumed to be Iran’s nuclear capability.

Subtitling this video into MSA and retaining the same politically loaded meaning of the items depends on the translation strategy and approach chosen by the subtitler. The item “threats” would sound semantically and politically inappropriate by the news presenter,

compared to the item “sabre-rattling” which is ideologically defined. An effective semantic connection between the original text item and the subtitled version requires keeping that ideological load of the word in MSA. The item would be discharged of that sociopolitical load if not well tackled first at the semantic level, evading a shift in the general intended meaning of the subtitled word or expression. This is an interesting case to underscore the elusive nature of televised news statements, highlighting the political subtlety and ideological flexibility of the news language. All this propaganda is created to “sabre-rattle” Iran not to build a nuclear weapon. Otherwise, the US government would be forced to launch a war against Iran.

The investigative journalist, Gareth Porter, is in an ideologically bound position, upgrading the interests of the US. The American administration looks softer with Iran but at the same time shows that it cares for Israel, willing to support it. The whole process is a kind of calculation of interests. That is what makes TV news subtitling more demanding because the subtitler has to keep the sociopolitical intended meaning of the rendered items or utterances intact in the MSA version. The task rested upon the shoulder of the subtitler is a stiffly hard one. If not properly rendered, that is, misrepresented, the target viewer or addressee would grasp the situation differently. Gareth Porter has strained to enlighten the audience about the reasons behind the US threatening of Iran not to develop a nuclear weapon. All the propaganda that is raised aims at “sabre-rattling” Iran which is trying to just develop a nuclear capability, according to their statements in the video under concern.

Strikingly important is the way Panetta has put it when asked about their reaction if Iran crossed “the red line”. If Iran tries to develop a nuclear weapon, Israel will automatically launch an attack. Panetta states, “We would have to be prepared to protect our forces in that situation” and congruently assures “We will defend our forces, our troops” (TRNN, Jan 12, 2012). He did not plainly state that they would support Israel in their war against Iran. The US forces are there training and getting ready along with those of Israel. If Israel engages in a war against Iran, the US government will “defend its forces”. However, Panetta did not palpably say that they are going to take part in the alleged war. Publicly made onscreen political statements which are highly elusive and diplomatic in nature cannot be properly translated using direct literal linguistic expressions. The rendition of such elusive microscopic items and utterances which are sociopolitically defined entails that subtitlers are well versed and hold unprejudiced positions, as well.

Another conspicuously remarkable instance to shed light on the sociopolitical facet would be “exactly and more to the point not strong enough in support of Israel, of course” (TRNN, Jan 12, 2012). If we attentively scrutinize this quotation, two interpretations might be deduced. The first is that the investigative journalist could be an RP proponent. In other words, he intends to undermine the position of the US president. This leads us to the second interpretation vis-à-vis the president himself, as is put by the presenter “he looks so soft on Iran” (TRNN, Jan 12, 2012). The use of the word “soft” demonstrates that he is not launching a war against Iran in the short run. Here becomes blatantly clear the responsibility rested upon the shoulders of the subtitle. If Panetta or Gareth’s utterances are mistakenly interpreted and subtitled, this would conjure up miscellaneous false phantasmagorias in the mind of the viewer. The abovementioned examples stand as an epitome of the frequent use of microscopic and ideologically loaded language that needs chary and meticulous attention on the part of the subtitle, keeping faithful to the ideological connotations of the ST statements.

4.4. Televisual News Subtitling Hindrances

The technical side of the work is of a paramount importance. The subtitling of televised news triggers various technical impediments and barriers. Despite the benefits provided by the free subtitling programs, numerous difficulties still arise. One of the most frequent difficulties encountered in subtitling TV news is timing and synchronization. The standards of subtitling allow for the use of only a predefined number of letters or lines in the same subtitle, a maximum of two lines. Nevertheless, more than this amount of letters or lines in the same subtitle is occasionally transcended. Dividing the entire sentence would create problems for viewers, mainly issues of simultaneous harmonization. What is usually noted in TV news subtitling is the use of long multi-clause sentences wherein sub-clauses are highly employed. Long strings of incomplete phrases and verbless clauses equally make the subtitle’s job vastly perplexing. One of the most common issues encountered in subtitling TV news is the use of long utterances. For the subtitle, this creates teething troubles of faithful rendition and predefined measures. The two videos under investigation are full of those instances in which long sentences are profoundly employed.

One of the main difficulties is the use of abundantly continuous and connected speech. It is very hard to synchronise the subtitle with the image it embodies. A portion of this difficulty is that the subtitle fills the screen with long sentences or adopts reduction and ellipsis of unnecessary items in the utterance to surmount the issue. Part of the complications faced is when translating a stream of ideas which are full of hesitations and disrupted speech or are accompanied by gestures and body language. These also need to be properly subtitled to help

convey the same ST meaning. The technical aspect of subtitling is important to the overall coherence of subtitles. The latter is often distorted regardless of the assistance provided by digitized tools. With the ongoing development of novel technologies, several free subtitling programs and applications are made available for the same purpose. Nonetheless, the human touch is irreplaceable in surmounting such specific hindrances. Subtitle placement onscreen, timing rules for reading speed, integrating sound effects and target language cues are some other issues encountered.

The subtitling of acronyms and abbreviations is another strikingly stumbled upon difficulties in the two videos. A genuinely reasonable question is raised. Should the subtitler render them using the initials of the English version or look for appropriate correspondences in the target language (MSA)? This is mostly solved when the target language has equivalently pre-set parallels. If, on the other hand, parallels do not exist, the subtitler has to search for suitable counterparts, creating a proper acronym in the MSA. The challenge lies in the choice of accurate initials. Light is shed on two cases in the videos, i.e., N.P.T. standing for Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty and IAEA standing for International Atomic Energy Agency. The N.P.T. is a landmark international treaty whose objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, seeking to achieve worldwide nuclear disarmament. Opened for signature in 1968, the treaty entered into force in 1970. The IAEA is an international organization that seeks to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy, inhibiting its use for any military purposes. It was established as an autonomous organization in July 1957. The first acronym is subtitled as [m. ħ. ʔ. s. n.]. The second acronym is subtitled as [w. d. tʰ. ð.].

Another common issue bumped into in the videos is the translation of proper nouns. The untranslatability of some of these nouns was overcome by transliteration. The latter is the practice of transcribing a word or text written in one writing system into another writing system. Technically, transliteration across languages having the same orthography is unimportant. However, the task becomes more challenging when the language pairs use different orthographies (English and MSA). The problem of transliteration from English to languages using different alphabets is a source of much discomfort. Here are some examples: [ðɪ: 'ri:.əl nu:z], [pəl 'dʒeɪ], [feɪs ðɪ: 'neɪ.ʃənz], ['gæɪ.əθ 'pɔ:r.tə] and [pə'nitəh]. Transliteration is opted for to render all these proper nouns. The problem lies in how some of these items might be pronounced in the TT. In the first instance [ðɪ: 'ri:.əl nu:z], we cannot but just notice that the definite article “the” is transliterated with the sound “ð” and not with “d”. The latter might erroneously create a different meaning that could lead, in turn, to thinking of an auxiliary verb,

as is the case in most subtitled cinematographic movies. In the example [pəl 'dʒeɪ], the challenge lies in “Jay” plainly transliterated as ['dʒeɪ] to avoid creating unnecessary false inferences on the part of the onlooker. Therefore, even proper nouns are to be rendered or transliterated appropriately to avoid misinterpretations.

A frequently noted issue during the subtitling of the videos relates to the use of repetition, knowing that repetition is highly avoidable in subtitling. The omission of repeated additional linguistic expressions occasionally makes the meaning unclear or incomprehensible. For spatial and temporal constraints, various strategies such as deletion, modulation or semantic equivalence are implemented to render the ST meaning using a minimum of words. “We will defend our forces, our troops” is subtitled as [sanuda:fiʃu ʃan ʒunu:dina:]. “In what appears to be a bit of a campaign by the White House” is subtitled as [fi:ma: jað'haru ʃala ʔa'nnahu min ʒa:nibi oo'ba.mə]. “But he doesn’t talk about the legitimacy of it, and he doesn’t talk about the legality of it” is subtitled as [la:ki'nnahu lam jataha'ddaθ ʃan ʃarʃi'jjatihi ʔaw ʃan qa:nu:ni'jjatihi]. The three examples highlight the omission of all the unnecessary repeated expressions and the use of semantic equivalence. Keeping thoughtlessly faithful to the original ST recurrently culminates in unsolicited long sentences.

Another major difficulty faced in TV news subtitling occurs at the sociopolitical level wherein ideological re/framing is triggered via lexical connotation. The subtitler’s choice of specific words or expressions, rather than others, can indeed re/shape the audience’s mind-set, re/framing the way they would approach a topic or creating a swing in their perception of that topic. Indeed, one of the key problems of subtitling onscreen news is a phenomenon known as shifts in meaning. It is practically an alteration in perspective through linguistic manipulation and reconstruction. One could argue that lexical shifts in news subtitling re/shape the message through altering the meaning from one trend into another. The mistranslation of ideologically loaded terms may create superfluously unnecessary alterations of the intended meanings. All likelihoods are provided for the subtitler to create those changes and re/frame thoughts from a source language to a target language that is not copiously assumed.

5. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The research study has presented valuable insights into the pragmatic, semantic and sociopolitical facets and technicalities deemed as vital in televisual news subtitling. The findings highlight the significant role of unbiased lexical choices in re/shaping an ideological discourse that is presented to the target audience through news subtitles. The results of the qualitative CDA study typify that the American presenters and interviewees in the selected TV

streaming channel employed multimodal cognitive and discursive strategies to convey specific ideological standpoints and conceptions. Abundant pragmatic constructions and syntactic structures have played that significant role, re/shaping and re/framing the depiction of the sociopolitical facet. The prevalence of prearranged given items or utterances which highlight negative aspects are properly rendered in the TT, attending to the connotative meaning in its ST context.

The role that the ST items play in re/shaping the portrayal of onscreen news is noteworthy, intentionally using meticulous constructions and structures to influence viewers' attitudes towards specific issues and to re/frame their understanding of critical events, i.e., the political rift within the DP or the nuclear facility in Iran. The strategic use of microscopic linguistic items permits the televised news presenters and the interviewees to re/frame events in a way that aligns with their ideological stances. The study findings display that the choice of a technical jargon can meaningfully influence the way news events are perceived by the target viewers. Examining these partial linguistic choices allows subtitlers to gain a deeper understanding of the underlying cognitive, social and ideological dimensions promulgated by different TV news channels. It equally allows them to be critically aware of the impact of language used in media. The study findings also indicate the stereotypically impactful use of both simple declarative structures and complex utterances. The latter are partly in line with Van Dijk's (1988) analysis of news discourse, implying that televised news interviews are usually structured in a more complex mode and do not profoundly rely on simple structures.

For the first research question, i.e., the strategies implemented by the subtitler to render the pragmatic, semantic and sociopolitical facets into the subtitled MSA TV news version, the results revealed that the frequently adopted translation strategies to render the tripartite facets into the MSA text are conversational implicature, omission, deictic elements, semantic equivalence, coherence, cohesion and transliteration. The adopted strategies have led to a fully unbiased understanding of the ST message by the target audience. Concerning the second research question, i.e., the hindrances encountered while rendering the ST English items into the TT Arabic items, it was found that long complex sentences, interrupted speech, hesitations, acronyms, abbreviations and proper nouns are some of the obstacles faced. The use of the aforementioned strategies helped the subtitler to surmount the hitches, properly rendering the pragmatic, semantic and sociopolitical facets inherent in the TV news interviews under concern. Based on the highlighted findings, the research hypothesis that an improper rendition of the three facets in subtitling TV news does not affect the target audience's utmost

comprehension of the connotative meaning was thus rejected, epitomizing that the rendition strategies are of a critical value for an aggregate understanding of the ST alluding insinuations.

Overall, the findings reveal significant inconsistencies and hampering technicalities, attempting to ensure that the target addressees succinctly grasp the source material in its contextual connotative modus. The findings of the current qualitative research study have significant implications for subtitlers to fully inspect media discourse and its impact on the re/shaping of public opinion and social dynamics in the MSA context. Accurate televised subtitling of media discourse entails a number of well-planned procedures. First, a blend of linguistic and technical shrewdness is mandatory. Second, the expertise of experienced subtitlers is essential in rendering subtitles that are faithful and unbiased. Third, indispensable mastery of language and familiarity with both source and target cultures to make the subtitled content relatable is vital. Fourth, subtitlers should be “neutral” as regards the conveyance of the source version incidents. Fifth, subtitlers have to keep up pace with the political changes on the ground to effusively render the ST connotative message in its context.

6. CONCLUSION

The researcher investigated the pragmatic, semantic and sociopolitical facets depicted in subtitling American televisual news using Van Dijk's (1998) theoretical framework. The research study findings shed light on the intentional linguistic and discursive patterns employed by the presenters and the interviewees to re/frame the source and target audience perceptions. The proper use of rendition strategies helped retain these aspects, constructing a TT narrative in alignment with the ideological stances and connotations of the source material. The conclusions drawn from this qualitative CDA study highlight the deliberate use of linguistic and pragmatic patterns to re/shape and reinforce specific ideological outlooks. The strategies align with Van Dijk's (1998) framework, highlighting the cognitive, social and ideological dimensions of discourse analysis. The study underscores the power of language and discourse in re/shaping ideological perception in media representations.

TV news subtitling is a demanding task as it is technically constructed and ideologically seated. The whole process is a real endeavour to the full interpretation of the intended meaning of the scrutinized topic. Media discourse, more specifically onscreen foreign news, tends to employ microscopically diplomatic and linguistic utterances to make public statements on given critical issues. Therefore, subtitlers are invited to heed these facts in their renditions. A simple un/intentional misconception of a given ST item or utterance would ultimately re/frame the perception of the target audience in a prejudiced manner. TV news subtitling embodies a

captivating, yet undervalued, domain within translation studies. Professional subtitling imposes a profound analysis of all the dimensions inherent in media discourse. Political discourse is the domain wherein ideological beliefs are exceedingly prevalent, with politicians unremittingly trying to influence the cognizance of the source and/or target recipient. The findings of this study, which can be informative for audiovisual translators, can be of a practical importance to televisual news subtitling specialists.

The outright generalizability of the present study findings to other identical CDA contexts or precincts can be crippled by two central limitations. The first noteworthy limitation relates to its sole focus on qualitative data to seek answers to the two raised questions. The second significant limitation pertains to its reliance on merely two televised news interviews. The two aforementioned limitations highlight the need for further research, adopting mixed methodologies that blend both quantitative-qualitative data gathering techniques to broadly tackle the pragmatic, semantic and sociopolitical facets raised in the present qualitative CDA study. Future research can equally rely on a larger sample size in terms of the number of onscreen news interviews to fully investigate the interplay among the tripartite facets in TV news subtitling. Further research can also unravel the scrupulous use of microscopically bound and ideologically loaded terms in source and target languages other than English and MSA.

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