

The problem of translating "new media" from English into Arabic

مشكلة ترجمة مصطلح "الإعلام الجديد" من الإنجليزية إلى العربية

KOBIBI Hafssa*

Mostaganem - Algeria -University of Abdelhamid IbnBadiss

Hafssa.kobibi@univ-mosta.dz

Date of submission: 25/09/2024

Date of acceptance: 06/12/2025

Abstract

Advances in media and communication technologies have brought about radical changes in media practices. Media have shifted from traditional means to electronic media, commonly referred to as "new media" in English. Due to the diversity and proliferation of media practices, as well as the translation of scholarly literature from foreign languages, especially English, into Arabic, there is a difficulty in translating technical terms and variations between translation schools. As a result, several terms have emerged that refer to the same concept, such as "الإعلام الجديد", "الوسائط الجديدة" and "وسائط الإعلام الجديدة". However, Arabisation through borrowing remains a compromise solution to this translation problem

Keywords: : Arabicisation; borrowing, new media; technical term; translation.

المخلص

أحدثت تكنولوجيات الإعلام والاتصال تغييرات جذرية في الممارسات الإعلامية، حيث تحول الإعلام من وسائل تقليدية إلى وسائط إلكترونية، أصبحت تعرف بـ "new media" باللغة الانجليزية، ونتيجة لتعدد الممارسات الإعلامية وتشعبها وترجمة الأدبيات العلمية من اللغات الأجنبية وخاصة الانجليزية إلى اللغة العربية، وصعوبة ترجمة المصطلحات التقنية واختلاف مدارس الترجمة، ظهرت عدة مصطلحات تحيل على نفس المفهوم، كإعلام الجديد، الوسائط الجديدة، وسائط الإعلام الجديدة، فيما يبقى التعريب من خلال الاقتراض الحل الأوسط لهذه الإشكالية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: : ترجمة؛ ميديا جديدة؛ إعلام جديد؛ اقتراض؛ تعريب؛ مصطلح تقني.

* Corresponding author: KOBIBI Hafssa, Email : hafssa.kobibi@univ-mosta.dz

Introduction

The field of media and communication sciences has recently witnessed an increasing translation movement from various foreign languages into Arabic, due to its close association with contemporary technological advances and its connection with various human activities. However, it has also been affected by the terminological chaos resulting from the specialist translation crisis in the Arab world (بن عيسى، 2020، الصفحات 117-118)، especially in recent years with the rapid and numerous developments in media and communication technologies.

Translation is the process of conveying the meaning of a text in the source language through an equivalent text in the target language. Technical translation refers to the translation of materials dealing with technological subjects and the use of specialised terminology in scientific and technological information. Technical terms include all categories of terminology used in the field of computers and technology, including the Internet, hardware, software, units of measurement and abbreviations.

It is worth noting that the translation of technical texts related to technological innovations serves as an example of the observation of the phenomenon of "terminological instability" and the emerging need for standardisation of terminology in the relevant field. This instability is particularly evident when it comes to translating technical texts into a "weak" or marginalised language such as Arabic. Arabic is not the only language facing this problem, as most technical publications in the fields of exact and applied sciences are currently produced in English. This can be observed by examining the literature related to computer science fields (Amattouch, 2005, p. 450). Despite the global status of Arabic and its adoption as one of the official languages of the United Nations, Arabic plays a significant role in both the commercial and cultural spheres in the era of globalisation.

Modern linguistics is characterised by its complexity, resulting from the multiplicity of schools and linguistic approaches on the one hand, and the reflective function of linguistic terms on the other. In the face of this terminological situation, Arabic discourse makes use of borrowing, copying or translation by equivalence. However, the translation of linguistic terms from English to Arabic poses several methodological difficulties due to the differences in term structure between the two linguistic systems (Lahlou, 2017, p. 73).

With the emergence of new media, the term has acquired numerous and diverse denominations, which we will discuss in our study. Since the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century, much has been said about social media journalism and blogs, forming a new media environment different from its predecessors. It has been referred to as "new media" in much Arabic literature, and there have been different opinions about this term and its different connotations, as well as its relationship and characteristics compared to traditional media.

Therefore, the aim of our study is to show the different translations of the term "new media" in Arabic literature, based on different literary works that have dealt with the

topic. We will use analysis and criticism in our study. The importance of this study lies in its focus on establishing terminology, as concepts and terms serve as primary keys to any science, research, or study, especially in the field of media, which relies on the continuous advancement of media and communication technologies.

1. The Concept Of The Term Tnd Its Elements

What does the word “concept” mean? Since the appearance of the term “concept”, which is supposed to be in 1876, although in the 18th century the Ukrainian thinker Georgy Konysky used the word “termin” in the Ukrainian language, it has not had a single definition. It is obvious that it is impossible to formulate a comprehensive view of all existing definitions of the term. Therefore, it is appropriate to limit it to the most important ones. In its historical development, the concept of “word” has been interpreted as follows (Vakulenko, 2013-2014, p. 14):

- A word is a well-defined name for a specific concept.
- A word represents a specific philosophical, scientific, technical, etc. concept.
- A word or phrase expresses a concept in certain specialised sciences, technologies, arts, social life, etc.
- A word specifically coined or derived from a natural language.
- The word or combination is the precise name for a specific concept in any field of science, technology, production, social and political life, culture, etc.
- A word or set of words in a specific language (scientific, technical, etc.) created to accurately express specific concepts and symbols for specific things.

Therefore, a technical term is a term whose use or content is limited to a specific field and its specifications (قلو، 2020، صفحة 297) :

- The scientific or technical term should be a concise term or composition and not a long phrase used for description.
- Technical terms may sometimes appear simple, but they are often compound words or abbreviations.
- The scientific or technical term should have clear connotations within the field in which it is used.

The elements of the term are as follows (عميرات و زارري، 2020، الصفحات 305-306) ::

- Form: This is the linguistic container or label, i.e. the word or group of sounds that make up the word that carries the concept.
- Concept: The cognitive mental structure derived from a specific thing, the mental image of something existing in the external world.

_Field of terminology: It represents the field of activity in which it is used. The concept of a single term varies according to the different fields in which it is used.

Scholars have affirmed that the true value of any term is achieved only through two conditions:

1. **Unity:** This means that the term should be unified within the specialisation, and each terminological concept should have its own distinct characteristics, exclusive to it. If it is accompanied by synonyms or multiple meanings in the terminological language, it becomes a mere word.
2. **Common usage:** The term should be widely used and prevalent among its users in the field of its application.

The multiple translations of the term “new media” pose a challenge when translating technical terminology into Arabic. It requires the use of extensive multilingual resources of technical terms and techniques for Arabisation and extension. In fact, by examining a large number of electronic articles, it is possible to identify numerous terms that are circulating among researchers and scholars within the framework of their respective interests, the most prominent of which is “New Media”. Other related terms include “Alternative Media”, New media and the cloud of associated words demonstrates the multiplicity of labels associated with new media.

Perhaps the most popular translation of the term “new media” is “الإعلام الجديد” , However, the term “الإعلام” , in its common representation in Arabic, refers to traditional media, often referred to as conventional or classical, such as television, radio and print journalism. The term directly refers to media institutions that disseminate their public message. “الإعلام الجديد” represents a constellation and a diverse field where traditional media coexist, including journalism, radio, and television, either through new content or simply by reproducing traditional content through dedicated websites or social networks. It also encompasses new interactive forms of media communication practiced by various network users, such as blogging, which require electronic devices connected to the network, often condensed into the term (Meta media) or simplified through the metaphor of the network.

So, how can this intertwined and rich constellation be summarized in the term “إعلام” ? which typically refers to news and information dissemination

Keeping the term “الإعلام” suggests that the concept of renewal includes only media as a new version of “الإعلام القديم” . with classic television versus new television, analogue radio versus digital radio, and print journalism versus electronic journalism. However, the distinction between the two does not always lie in the actual new or old nature of the media, as the new is not always truly new, but rather the emergence of a somewhat different field in terms of media components and the practices formed within it (الحمامي،

(2012، صفحة 17)

Despite the widespread use of the term new media in the field of media and communication studies and its frequent use in Arabic literature as a translation for “new media”, it has not been recognised by many researchers.

This is because the word الإعلام “ “ itself is a subject of debate, and some prefer to use the Term “الإعلام البديل” to refer to the emergence of new forms of media and communication that we have not seen before, along with the emergence of new actors in the media arena. Therefore, it is preferable to use the term “The New Media and Communication Channels” while keeping the new media “in brackets (العبد الله و شين، 2014، صفحة 47)

(2014، صفحة 47)

The term “media” does not seem to be the optimal translation for الإعلام “media”. In the general Arabic context, the term الإعلام “is associated with media institutions that disseminate their mass messages and are often described as traditional or classical, such as television, radio and print journalism. The term refers directly to these media institutions that communicate their public messages.

On the other hand, some researchers prefer direct translation through borrowing, which means converting the term “media” from English (or even French) into Arabic by simply transforming the Latin letters into Arabic script, resulting in (ميديا جديدة). This approach is known as lexical borrowing or Arabization.

Arabization refers to phonetic borrowing through transliteration or transcription, referring back to the term “new media” composed of two parts. The challenge does not lie in translating the first part of the term, “new,” which is synonymous with the English language’s “new.” However, this novelty itself has its cultural-historical contexts, and it is sometimes translated as (الحديثة), meaning modern.

The challenge lies in translating the term “media.” Some resort to borrowing the term in both parts to create a transliterated Arabic term such as (نيوميديا).

However, there is no unified system of phonetic and transliteration for translating foreign words into Arabic. As a result, there are different spellings of these terms, influenced by different Arabic dialects and foreign languages (Darwish, 2009, p. 114). For example, it may be written as (ميديا جديدة), (ميدية جديدة) or even (ميديا حديثة).

Going back to the term “media”, it is a plural form of “medium”, meaning an intermediary or means of communication in all its levels. It also refers to “milieu”, the environment. Therefore, some researchers prefer to use the term (الوسائط الجديدة), which means new media.

Another perspective suggests that the term “media” in the Arabic context does not indicate the specific field in which it operates and is not commonly used. Therefore, they prefer to add the term (الإعلام) as an attribute to the term (الوسائط), resulting in (الوسائط الجديدة), using the technique of interpretation in translation.

2. Reasons for the multiplicity of Terms in Arabic:

The problem of the multiplicity and duplication of Arabic terminology is an old problem, not a new one. The reasons for this can be attributed to (الفاسي، 1986، صفحة 84)

1. The variety of foreign languages from which Arabic borrows its scientific terminology.

2. The variety of entities involved in the process of formulating scientific and technical terms.
3. Linguistic factors such as synonymy and verbal overlap, both in the source language and in Arabic itself.
4. The neglect of the scientific heritage of Arabic terminology in the creation of modern scientific terms.
5. The diversity of methodologies followed in formulating scientific terms.
6. The phenomenon of having multiple terms in Arabic for a single concept due to translation discrepancies. The reasons leading to this situation include (قلو، 2020، صفحة 298)

(2020، صفحة 298)

- The multitude of term creators:

There is no single linguistic or scientific institution responsible for creating terms. There are several institutions, dictionaries and language academies for the Arabic language.

In addition, some researchers and professors in the field of media and communication make efforts to translate foreign books and articles into Arabic.

- Multiple sources of terminology:

Foreign languages vary within the Arab region, with French being the second language in the Arab Maghreb and English being the second language in the Arab Mashriq.

- Linguistic duplication of terms:

This is due to the lack of a refined Arabic term for the foreign term.

- Resistance to new terminology.

- Translation challenges such as translating a single term into multiple expressions due to different cognitive backgrounds of translators, lack of coordination between them, and lack of consistency in definitions. This is particularly relevant to the Arabic language, where there are multiple translations for a single text, differing in literal or semantic translation, grammatical errors and expression styles. Correction methods include grammatical correction, word-for-word or phrase-for-phrase translation, or paragraph-by-paragraph translation.

- Choose the appropriate meaning: It is important to remember that the aim of translation is to achieve semantic accuracy, not just formal accuracy. Therefore, when translating, we should aim to convey the content.

There are some words that cannot be translated from a content point of view (محمد عثمان، 2020، صفحة 155)

It is a challenge for translators to distinguish between technical and descriptive terms, as Newmark notes. He suggests that the author may use descriptive terms in the source

text to describe a newly coined technical term, or use them as synonyms to avoid repetition.

We note that (الإعلام البديل) is a translation of the term “alternative media” itself. It is a descriptive rather than a technical term because it replaces something else, i.e. it serves as a substitute. Therefore, some researchers prefer to use the term (الإعلام البديل).

Some researchers prefer to use the term الإعلام البديل because of the emergence of new forms of media and communication that have not been seen before, as well as the emergence of new actors in the media field. The term derives its meaning from its audience, as it has been adopted by the public as an alternative to traditional media. It refers to a platform where criticism takes place, generating new ideas and methods for organising, collaborating and educating members of society. It also addresses sensitive issues related to social, political and economic mechanisms, tensions between control and freedom, work and unemployment, and opposition and government (جميل اسماعيل، 2011، صفحة 11).

However, the term (وسائل الإعلام البديلة) “alternative media” is not easy to define. The word البديل “alternative” can describe the content provided by media outlets, which are often dedicated to presenting opposing opinions and addressing issues and events that are usually overlooked or not covered by other media outlets (اللبان، 2011، صفحة 73).

3. Towards Unifying Terminology

The problem of having multiple terms for a single concept is multifaceted and has three main dimensions :

The first dimension revolves around the fact that the inventor of a technology names it in his own language, which poses a challenge to those who later translate or discuss the technology. They must make an effort to search dictionaries to find an appropriate name for the invention, resulting in some accurate and some inaccurate translations.

The process of Arabisation, in which foreign terms are translated into Arabic, has been slow to keep pace with technological advances. As a result, the Arabisation of foreign terms became widely accepted, leading to the birth of the Arabised term.

However, there has been no agreement to standardise terminology, as each country may have its own unique terms. Therefore, foreign terms are still widely used and dominate the discourse surrounding the concept, especially in the Arabic language.

The second dimension is the psychological one, which is closely related to Ibn Khaldun’s concept of the defeated individual who imitates the victor. The underdog follows the dominant, given the high regard and admiration for technology and the fascination with the language used to present its products.

The third dimension is related to the creation of an educational environment in Arab countries that is free from the negative influence of foreign concepts and their contents. It is necessary to focus on directing attention to the Arabic language without any external intervention. The danger lies in normalising the use of foreign languages,

which can lead to visual pollution and chaos. This, in turn, creates a separation between the Arabic language and its speakers.

In order to overcome this situation, several principles can be applied:

- The first principle: Matching the verbal individual with its equivalent.
- The second principle: Assign a single translation to each term and focus on that.
- The third principle: Match synonyms with their equivalents.

Conclusion:

Thus, we observe the existence of multiple translations in the Arabic language for the same term, such as (الإعلام الجديدة) (الوسائط الإعلامية الجديدة) (الإعلام (نيوميديا) (نيوميديا الجديدة) (الإعلام الجديد) (الوسائط الإعلامية الجديدة) (الإعلام (البديل (الإعلام الشبكي) and researchers and other professors use different terms, which can be described as comprehensive, such as (الايكو ميديا الجديدة) or (البيئة الإعلامية الجديدة) among others.

If we examine these aforementioned terms, we can see the degree of overlap between them, reaching a level of similarity and even occasional equivalence. This is in addition to the confusion between the broad concept of “new media” and its various elements, such as citizen journalism, social media, online journalism and others.

The proliferation of these indicative terms is due to the use of imported Western terms in the face of the difficulties associated with translation processes. The bigger problem remains the lack of stability in Arabic technical terminology due to several factors, the most important of which is translation. Direct borrowing remains unavoidable, especially in the face of rapid and successive technological advances.

Bibliographie

- Amattouch, M. (2005, jul). Quelques problèmes de la traduction technique vers l'arabe. L'exemple des technologies nouvelles. Arabica , 52 (03), pp. 450-455.
- Rogers C. R.. (1996) Le développement de la personne. Paris: Dunod.
- Darwish, A. (2009). Terminology and translation: A phonological-semantic approach to Arabic terminology. Australia: Writescop Publishers.
- Fischer ,G. N.. (1996) Les concepts fondamentaux de psychologie sociale. Paris: Dunod.
- Lahlou, H. (2017, 06 09). La terminologie linguistique de l'anglais vers l'arabe: quels procédés de création, quels procédés de transfert? AL-LISANIYYAT, 02 (23), pp. 73-84.
- Vakulenko, M. O. (2013-2014). Term and terminology: basic approaches, definitions, and investigation methods (Easterm-European perspective). IITF Journa , 24, pp. 13-28.
- الصادق الحمامي. (2012). الميديا الجديدة، الاستمولوجيا والإشكاليات والسياقات. تونس: المنشورات الجامعية منوبة.
- آمال عميرات، وعواطف زراري. (2020). إشكالية ضبط وتوحيد المصطلحات في علوم الإعلام والاتصال، السيميولوجيا والاتصال العمومي أنموذجا. تأليف المصطلح في علوم الإعلام والاتصال في العالم العربي، كتاب الملتقى الدولي الخامس للرابطة العربية للبحث العلمي في علوم الاتصال. بيروت: منشورات دار النهضة.
- بشرى جميل إسماعيل. (2011). مدخل الإعلام الجديد: المفهوم والنماذج. (كلية الإعلام، جامعة بغداد، المحرر) مجلة الباحث الإعلامي، 14.
- شريف درويش اللبان. (2011). مداخلات في الإعلام البديل والنشر الإلكتروني على الانترنت (المجلد 01). القاهرة: دار العالم العربي.
- علي القاسمي. (1986). المصطلح الموحد ومكانته في الوطن العربي، العدد 27. مجلة اللسان العربي، 27.
- غادة محمد عثمان. (2020). إشكالية استخدام المصطلحات الإعلامية في ظل الإعلام الجديد. تأليف المصطلح في علوم الإعلام والاتصال في العالم العربي، كتاب الملتقى الدولي الخامس للرابطة العربية للبحث العلمي في علوم الاتصال. بيروت: منشورات دار النهضة.
- قواسم بن عيسى. (2020). أزمة الترجمة وفوضى المصطلحات في علوم الإعلام والاتصال. مجلة الحكمة للدراسات الإعلامية والاتصالية، 07 (04).
- مي العبد الله، وعبد الكريم شين. (2014). المعجم في المفاهيم الحديثة للإعلام والاتصال. بيروت-لبنان: دار النهضة العربية.
- ياسين قلو. (2020). ترجمة المصطلح التقني: دراسة حالة لبعض من النماذج في مجال هندسة البرمجيات من الإنجليزية إلى العربية. مجلة الترجمة واللغات، 19 (01).