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Navigating the Unspoken: A Critical Analysis of the Challenges in Translating Implicit Meaning in Political Discourse

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Abstract:

Translating a political discourse presents particularly a complex challenge due to the widespread use of implicit meaning, rhetorical ambiguity, and intentional metaphors. This paper examines the obstacles faced by translators when rendering political text through different languages and cultures, with a focus on the implicit meaning. The study also examines the role of translator in mediating between the source context and the perception of the target audience, emphasizing the tension between fidelity to the original message and sensitivity to the cultural reception. Similarly, moving from a linguistic analysis, this study adopts an interdisciplinary framework, integrating perspectives from pragmatics, discourse analysis, and translation studies to investigate the challenges inherent in rendering implicit political meaning across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

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Introduction

Nowadays world is witnessing overlapping events that draw daily new relations between nations and organizations all over the world which lead to different positions toward a particular event or decision made by leaders or states, and since there is no politics without language, this became an effective factor to defend interests and convince multiple audiences (interior or exterior). In this context leaders and politicians tend more to use implicit and connotations in their discourse in order to pass their opinions and plans in a vague way to a local or a foreign recipient, but implicit is used more between the political class than public class. However, capturing implicit through the political discourse represents a real dilemma for both translators and interpreters. Similarly, the problematic of rendering explicit or what is meant by the speech emerges in this field.

The present paper raises the problem of rendering implicit meaning in political discourse especially when cultural, ideological and linguistic differences may enclose mistranslation between different audiences or readers. By the present study, we try to obtain appropriate answers to the following questions: What are the major challenges faced by translators when interpreting implicit within a political discourse? What is the efficient strategy used by translators for mastering those obstacles for the sake of having a faithful translation and a similar effect on the target readers? To what extent the interpretation of implicit is allowed?

This paper hypothesizes that many factors such as linguistic, cultural, and particularly ideological affect widely the process of translating implicit within political discourse, and that some strategies are used by translators to master the obstacles that emerge through these factors. It is similarly hypothesized that choices of translators during the interpretive process could influence widely the meaning. This influence may have an impact on the target culture, and international relations in general.

This study aims at determining the major challenges faced by translators when rendering implicit in a political discourse through an analytical approach. The objective of this research is also exploring the different strategies used by translators to convey implicit meaning through linguistic and cultural framework.

As well as examining the different implications of translating political discourse into different cultures and ideologies all around the world.

One other objective of this study is contributing to the discipline of translation studies, political discourse, and political discourse analysis by exploring the specific relation between language, ideology and power. This paper also sheds light on the main obstacles that a translator may face when capturing and interpreting implicit within political discourse because the latter became a part of our daily life that's full of political events.

1.Characteristics of Political Discourse

Political discourse can be distinguished by some specific features that make it different comparing to the other types of discourse. It usually uses linguistic tools to draw its ideology, political position, and its framework. These tools are used to influence and convince the public opinion. The characteristics of political discourse vary according to the diversity of political positions; The politician sometimes needs to convince and influence; in another situation he misleads and in a different situation he tends to transfer implicit meanings to a specific audience.

The political discourse is an intentional discourse, it doesn't include any spontaneity, even a political discourse that seems spontaneous is in fact previously prepared because verbal acts of politicians are more controlled than their political ones. Therefore, we notice that they care much about each term or expression pronounced. The political discourse is then different from other types of discourses expressing their producer or embodying its personality, it is neither spontaneous nor instant employed by its producer to express his feelings, but it is produced and prepared perfectly to convince and influence the public. So, the politician knows more than others the value of the word and its impact on the public opinion. We can say that political discourse is not the entirety of politics, but there is no politics without political discourse (Charaudeau, 2005, p 29).

Political discourse is always relative to an ideological framing, this deep relation manifests in values, beliefs, and agendas adopted by personalities, groups, or organizations. This framing controls political speeches, debates and all forms

of interactions between power and people to achieve all the goals previously planned by a dominant group who always seeks maintaining its strategic interests.

Another significant feature of political discourse is the wide use of ambiguity and connotation; that's to say a politician is not like any ordinary speaker, he tends usually to employ connotative and ambiguous language to test public reactions in advance and leave a possibility to justify the policies or decisions made by the dominant group to the audience who always claim clarity from power.

Intertextuality is also an important linguistic aspect that distinguishes the political discourse from other types of speech because of including other texts, discourses or even events to create legitimacy, conviction, or contrast with political opponents. In addition, political discourse is frequently adaptive to its target audience since it is previously designed to be convenient to the ideological, cultural, and social backgrounds of the target audience. This adaptation ensures that the message is both captured and convincing.

An ultimate challenge in political discourse consists of its dependence on implicit meaning, where meaning is conveyed implicitly through connotation, symbolism, or shared cultural knowledge. This implicit conveyance can make interpretive act complicated, especially when discourse is translated across linguistic and cultural perspective. It has been emphasized that both in politics and in political science, such discourse is primarily seen as a form of political action, and as a pan of political process (Van Dijk, 1997, p 20). Appealing to ethical and moral is of high importance in political discourse since politicians usually tackle justice issues, fairness, or common values to justify policies or positions previously adopted. These appeals aim at making political action convenient with public acceptance. It is also noticed that in contemporary communication, political discourse is highly influenced by media which plays a major role in its dissemination, impact, and interpretation. On the other hand, the rise of social media has introduced new challenges such as misinformation and manipulation.

Another notable feature of political discourse is illustrated in its manipulative potential; it may be used in distorting opponents' reputation and facts, spreading misinformation, or minimizing achievements of opponents, or

obscuring reality. This proves the importance of critical analysis in understanding and assessing political messages. In this context, the interpreter of the political discourse must be qualified by four distinguished competences: Linguistic, encyclopedic, logical, and rhetorico-pragmatic (Orecchioni, 1986, p 160).

2.Political Discourse Analysis and Translation

Developed in linguistics, "discourse analysis" does not work on language as a system; it works on the use of language. (Mazière, 2010, p 7). Some linguists use the term "discourse analysis" for the study of both connections among and across sentences as they follow one after the other, and for the study of language-in-use in specific contexts. Other linguists use the term "discourse analysis" just for the first meaning (the connections among and across sentences as they follow one after the other), and they use the term of "pragmatics" for the study of language in context, for how context gives meaning to words and words give significance to context (Paul Gee, 2014, p 20).

Political Discourse Analysis (PDA) and Translation Studies consist together a deep relation, especially nowadays when world is plenty of daily political events and the increasing role of media that made all the world linked to each other. They present how power, ideologies, and cross-cultural communication are shaped; that is to say, the importance of translation as a mediator has become crucial in the process of rendering the political meaning.

Political Discourse Analysis (PDA) is a discipline that made the study of the relationship between language, power, and ideology in specific contexts its major framework. PDA also analyses the way politicians use language to attract, convince, or prove their positions by some specific tools, and one of the efficient tools is implicit.

For a long time ago, translation was regarded simply as a linguistic substitution, but in recent decades many contemporary scholars highlighted the importance of political, ideological, and cultural dimensions of translation. Translators then become crucial agents in the process of communication in politics in general by rendering the meaning that can be captured between the lines. In this context, to achieve a perfect translation, translators must deal with political discourse in a pragmatic way regarding linguistic and metalinguistic

factors that turn around the production of this discourse because any political discourse has its different contexts, dimensions and targets

The common aspect of both PDA and translation rely basically on the role of language as mediator between power and ideology. Both fields emphasize that discourse is not neutral, but it is created through social and political contexts in which they were produced. The discourse analyst has to take account of the context in which a piece of discourse occurs. Some of the most obvious linguistic elements which require contextual information for their interpretation are the deictic forms such as *here*, *now*, *I*, *you*, *this* and *that.* (Brown & Yule, 2010, p 27). Also, all authors are aware of the importance of the social, cultural and situational context of their data by providing background for their analyses (Fetzer & Lauerbach, 2007, p 4).

3.Challenges in Translating Political Discourse

Translating political discourse has its specific aspects and consists of several challenges due to its context dependent and ideological nature.

3.1 Objectivity and Neutrality

Political discourse is usually shaped by ideologies and agendas of political actors, and translators are committed to dealing with these biases while preserving fidelity to the source text. However, complete neutrality is impossible as translators inevitably add their own perspectives and values to the translation process. This raises ethical concerns about the extent to which translators should intervene in the text to master ideological bias.

3.2 Cultural and Contextual specificities

Discourse confers meanings to social and physical realities. It is through discourse that individuals, societies, and states make sense of themselves, of their ways of living, and of the world around them (Epstein, 2008, p 2). Political discourse is particularly shaped by the historical, cultural and political context that contributes to its production since there is context only when the linguistic features of the text are related to contextual factors that discourse is realized (Widdowson, 2004, p 53). Terms such as Patriotism, democracy, freedom or socialism may carry different connotations in different cultures which make it

more difficult for the translator to find equivalent terms in the target culture. Translators then are required to balance the need for accuracy with the need to make the text accessible and meaningful to the target audience.

3.3 Rhetorical Strategies and Persuasion

Political actors usually depend on rhetorical strategies such as metaphors, repetitions and analogies to persuade their audience. Because of the different use of these rhetorical strategies between cultures, translators tend to make a suitable adaptation to the previous strategies to have a similar effect on the target readers because each culture has its specific rhetorical way to convey the message.

3.4 Power Dynamics

The international relations and the daily political events carry in its core unbalanced powers, and this highly affects the attention to the discourse between source and target cultures. In this context, we can illustrate with translated discourses of great powers that are usually given more attention and fidelity than marginalized cultures. However, professional translators are called to be as faithful as possible to all discourses so that marginalized cultures must be heard like dominant cultures without any shortage.

4.The Role of the Translator in Political Discourse

In the political field, the role of translator in conveying the political message between different languages and cultures is highly important. He is not a conduit for conveying political messages between different cultures but considered as a key participant in shaping the political meaning in the international scene. The following section explores the responsibilities and ethical consideration of translators in political contexts.

4.1 Translators as Cultural Mediators

Translators must be fully aware of cultural and ideological differences between source and target texts. Since political texts raise the problem of loyalty and ideology, its terminology is considered as the most controversial type because the connotation of a term in this context is more important than its denotation, so translators must pay careful attention to this aspect of political texts. To avoid mistranslation, translators are committed to being familiar with the main political

ideologies and trends in both source and target cultures since the impact of the political discourse is so sensitive especially to the audience.

4.2 Translators as ethical agents

Any translator must have ethical standards such as transparency, accuracy, and respect for the source text and culture. However, they must also assume the possible consequences of their translations, particularly where political discourse is produced in some contexts when the situation contains some tensions between countries or when it provokes some sensitive historical, ideological and political conflicts.

4.3 Translators as Political Actors

Translators function as political actors may go far away than just transferring linguistic structures from one language to another. Through the translation process, the translator has an authority over the discourse that he translates. This authority can be illustrated in the choice of terms, thoughts, and ideologies that will have legitimacy between cultures. By determining the adoption of domestication or foreignization in the process of translating a discourse, the translator takes already a political position that surely influences his translation.

The terminology of political text is considered as most controversial type, the reason behind this is that a connotation of a term in this field is more important than its denotation. For instance, there may be an agreement about the denotation of the term «Liberal» when it is characterized by non-commitment to a dominant perspective. However, when it comes to its denotation there will be much disagreement among the different political systems. In this context, the role of translator emerges as an active participant in shaping the political meaning and reality. This role is usually influenced by sociopolitical contexts that turn around the production of any discourse.

5. Translation Implications on Policy and Practice

Translation has a paramount importance in shaping policy on both local and international levels. It is no longer considered as a linguistic operation but become

a sociopolitical act that intervenes in policy making, implication, and the way different audiences receive it. Choices made by translators may carry ideological implications by their use of domestication or foreignization, and this affects power dynamics. Misinterpretation of political discourse can convey confusion, exclusion, or even debates which undermines efficiency of governance. However, accurate translation support inclusivity, sense of participation, and mutual trust between communities. On the professional framework, translators are considered as mediators between authorities and public, this requires ethical values in their work because the latter needs an awareness of sociocultural contexts. In addition, the recognition of translation as an element in shaping policy shows its crucial importance in diplomacy and international relations.

Conclusion

The present paper has discussed the different features and challenges of translating implicit in political discourse though a critical analysis. By analysing the different aspects and characteristics of political discourse, we noticed that the latter is not merely a linguistic operation that occurs on language, but it is a complex operation that embodies multidisciplined act comparing to the sensitivity of the political contexts on which he operates, this is due to the deep consequences of the choices that a translator of a political discourse may carry during the process of translation, because any mistranslation in the political field may lead to a disaster in the international relations.

The analysis proved that most difficulties emerge when tackling the concept of objectivity, neutrality and the inevitable cultural and contextual specificities that turn around the production of the discourse. During the translation process, translators must operate not only on the linguistic level but also on the semantic one including rhetorical features and persuasion procedures. Furthermore, this process is highly relative to power dynamics where translator's options play a crucial role in balancing the ideological framing between the source and the target text.

After analysing the different challenges, this paper calls for a reconsideration of the translator's role. A new perspective toward the translator of political discourse emerges as a cultural mediator owning huge cultural background in both source and target language for the sake of filling the cultural

gaps between these languages. The translator is then considered as an ethical agent because choices that he makes may carry a deep impact. In addition, he is also recognized as a political actor in the political scene by his correct interpretive readings of the political discourse which contributes to shaping the global political vision and its perception all around the world.

Finally, interpreting implicit meaning between lines in the political field is highly a sensitive task due to the difficulty of finding an appropriate equivalence. The translator is committed by the fidelity to the source text, and on the other side by the responsibility of transferring the same impact to the target audience by all the cultural and contextual charge brought by the source text. By recognizing the complexity of the role that translators play, it is highly recommended that we call for a nuanced approach in translating political discourse because of the sensitivity and complexity of events happening in the international scene.

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