

Pragmatic Aspect of Translation: The Interpretation-Based Inference and Its Implications for Translation

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Abstract

The elements of encoding, transferring and decoding are crucial in all processes of communication, however, drawing the appropriate inference from the current context is equally important in communication according to relevance theory (Gutt, 1998, p. 41). Semantic content is not always sufficient to fully comprehend the exact meaning of a particular utterance as the meaning of that utterance may hinge upon the contextual detail with which it is inferentially associated. The success of the process of communication relies on whether or not the recipient makes use of the context intended by the speaker. Failure to do so would give rise to miscommunication (Gutt, 1998, p. 42). Translation, as a communicative act, involves interpretation made by the translator, which takes the context of the target text (TT) reader and his/her knowledge into consideration. The present paper argues that even though the translator, according to relevance theory, is required to reproduce a TT that can stand as a faithful rendering of the source text (ST), the translator, however, needs to make his/her translated text relevant to the target reader. This, in many instances, may demand following certain procedures of explications in the TT to equip the target reader with the relevant contextual information needed to draw the appropriate inferences from the utterance concerned, and therefore make the right interpretation. Such exegesis needs to be added to the target text as what is inferable for the ST user may not be inferable for the TT receiver owing to cognitive and cultural differences.

Keywords: Communication, inference, interpretation, relevance theory, translation

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Introduction

The elements of encoding, transferring and decoding are crucial in all processes of communication, however, drawing the appropriate inference from the current context is equally important in communication in accordance with relevance theory (Gutt, 1998, p. 41). Semantic content is not always sufficient to fully comprehend the exact meaning of a particular utterance inasmuch as the meaning of that very utterance may hinge upon the contextual detail with which it is inferentially associated. The success of the process of communication does heavily rely on whether or not the recipient makes use of the context intended by the speaker. Failure to do that, i.e. using the speaker-unintended contextual detail, would give rise to miscommunication (Gutt, 1998, p. 42).

Translation, as a communicative act, involves interpretation made by the translator, which takes the context of the target text reader and his knowledge into consideration. The translator's interpretation is made in such a way which is deemed relevant to the target reader in the sense that the target reader can understand something from the utterance translated by the translator in accordance with relevance theory (Gutt, 2000, p. 116; Boase-Beier, 2011, p. 153-154; Baker, 2011, p. 234). Within the same line of thought, Mason (1998, p. 170) claims that translating is deemed a communication act, which involves both source and receptor texts that are viewed as having the same relevant intentions where their users presuppose and infer meaning. Sperber and Wilson (1986, p. vii) hold the view that communication involves the notion that the information conveyed is relevant to the addressee as attention in communication is only paid to the detail relevant to us. They go on to argue that the relevance of new detail to the addressee may be assessed in light of the improvement made by such relevance on how he/she depicts the globe (p. 103). This is lent credence by Baker (2011, p. 232), who contends that the acceptability of a particular text is not assessed by its correspondence to a specific state of affairs in the globe, but it is evaluated on the basis of its homogeneity and relevance to the recipient.

The present paper offers a relatively succinct account of relevance theory and its connection to translation within the sphere of pragmatics. It introduces at the outset the notion of text and how it fulfils a performative function on its recipients whether it is a spoken or written text. The paper then presents the formidable task that needs to be performed by the translator, which resides in identifying the illocutionary act and perlocutionary effects of the source text and then attempting to reproduce them in the target text. Context, as a psychological construct, will then be addressed, showing the paramount importance of possessing the relevant contextual details by the recipient as they form an important part of his assumptions, which epitomize the premise upon which his interpretation of a particular utterance is predominantly based. The paper sheds some light on the concept of optimal relevance, explaining how it works and showing that a particular utterance is optimally relevant when it enables the recipient to understand the intended meaning of the message with no unnecessary effort made, while such meaning, at the same time, provides the recipient with the appropriate benefits sought therefrom. The different uses of language, in accordance with relevance theory, will next be presented, with clear demonstration of translation as an interpretive use of language. The paper will then deal with the pragmatic aspect of translation, emphasising the utmost significance of context and its substantial role in clarifying the intended meaning of a particular utterance. A complete section

will next be devoted to providing appropriate examples of specific utterances with sufficient analysis and discussion to further illuminate the concept in question. Finally, the present paper will argue that even though the translator, according to relevance theory, is required to reproduce a target text that can stand as a faithful rendering of the source text, the translator, however, needs to make his translated text relevant to the target reader. This, in many instances, may demand following certain procedures of explications in the target text to equip the target reader with the relevant contextual information needed to draw the appropriate inferences from the utterance concerned, and therefore make the right interpretation. Such exegesis needs to be added to the target text as what is inferable for the source text user may not be inferable for the target text receiver owing to cognitive and cultural differences.

Text and Translation

Drawing on the fact that text can either be spoken or written on condition that it is assumed to create a coherent piece (Dickins, Hervey & Higgins, 2002, 6), it is crucial to address the notion of text as it covers both utterances as well as written words. Scholars of translation studies have put forward a number of functions which texts have to fulfil in relation to the primary function of language. They speak about the intentional dimension of texts, the nature of which should reach recipients and make an effect on them (Beaugrande, & Dressler, 1981). The evaluative pattern, i.e. the main theme expressed by a particular text, has recently been defined and identified by certain pragmatists and systemic linguists (Thompson & Hunston, 2000; Martin & White, 2005; Labov, 1972). Such ways may arguably be viewed as different methods through which the impact of texts on the de facto state of affairs can be seen. In crude terms, it is argued that when a particular text is written and then published, it fulfils a performative function, which may have an illocutionary act as well as perlocutionary effects on the whole universe (Hatim & Mason, 1990, p. 76-92; Hatim, 1998, p. 73; Morini, 2013, p. 15). The same may unequivocally apply to the spoken text in the sense that when specific speech is given, it may fulfil a performative function, which may have an illocutionary act as well as perlocutionary effects on the listeners.

Within the sphere of translation, the pragmatic theory can never operate without a text act theory as both translators and theorists are required to find and fully comprehend the intended effects of original texts and target text so as to recreate, discuss and analyse them (Morini, 2013, p. 15). If the translator plans to reproduce a target text in the target language in exactly the same way as the source text is written, keeping in tact all the linguistic and cultural obstacles, he/she should, in this case, reproduce a text act, rather than a mere text. Both illocutionary act and perlocutionary effect should be kept in tact in both theory and practice (Morini, 2013, p. 15-16). Illocutionary forces found in the source text rather than the writer's intentions are more crucial than the text's perlocutionary effects (Morini, 2013, p. 16). This is owing to the fact that aiming at producing the equivalent effect on the target reader is not always possible as different texts across different languages may create distinct impacts on their readers due to differences in culture and language norms. This has been an important reason behind the heavy criticism against dynamic equivalence, which is based on the principle of equivalent effect, and which was propounded by Nida (1964). Needless to say, it is not easy for both translation scholars and translators to identify each text act on its own, though this feature seems possible in advertisement texts and manuals as texts of such types have a clear function. Indeed, both

illocutionary forces and perlocutionary effects of a particular text are deemed complex, numerous and difficult to identify with certainty. It is the task of the translator and/or the theorist to determine the weight of analysis he/she should carry out with regard to the notion of text act. The interpretation may unquestionably differ from a translator/theorist to another as more than a single interpretation is often possible (Morini, 2013, p. 16).

The translation act involves pragmatic uncertainty, however, this can be concealed by the translator's inclination to hide his voice and make himself/herself invisible, in an attempt to produce a target text that can stand as a faithful equivalence to the source text (Venuti, 1995). However, translation inevitably involves some sort of rewriting of the original text. The translator's ideology will influence his work, which will, of course, run in line with the norms of his society and cultural milieu, even if the translator has no clear vision identifiable in the target text (Morini, 2013, p. 18).

Context

According to relevance theory, the context of a particular utterance is viewed as a 'psychological construct', which is deemed part of the assumptions made by the hearer about the universe. Indeed, such assumptions represent the premises that the hearer depends on in the interpretation of a given utterance (Sperber & Wilson, 1986, p. 15; Gutt, 1998, p. 42). This is lent credence by Hatim and Mason (1990), who point out that the task of the listener/reader is to create a model of the intended meaning communicated by the speaker/writer, a model which is consistent with the indications comprehended from the text and with what the listener/reader knows about the universe as a whole. In other words, Hatim and Mason (1990) make a distinction between what Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) term 'text/presented knowledge' and 'world knowledge' (p. 92). Along similar lines, Larson (1998, p. 43) holds the view that the amount of the detail comprised in a particular text, whether spoken or written, primarily hinges upon the amount of the shared knowledge between the speaker/writer and the recipient. Hatim and Mason (1990), agreeing with the term utilised by Sperber and Wilson (1986), substitute the term 'knowledge' for the term 'assumption' as the factual connotation of the former seems unhelpful. This is crystallised by Prince (1981), who asserts that speakers, when treating a particular matter as a shared knowledge, are indeed assuming the hearer to assume the same (p. 232). A distinction can be drawn between evoked entities textually or situationally, inferable entities and new discourse entities. Evoked entities are deemed active in the discourse model being created, and are either situationally relevant or emanating from co-text (Prince, 1981; Hatim & Mason, 1990). The notion of context is ipso facto not restricted to preceding discourse, however, several factors may contribute to the process of interpretation. Amongst these factors are future expectations, religious beliefs, cultural assumptions, scientific hypotheses, anecdotal memories, expectations about the speaker's way of thinking, etc (Sperber & Wilson, 1986, p. 15; Gutt, 1998, p. 42-43). The notion of context is also extended to include the concept of co-text, as indicated above, a concept which refers to the text that surrounds the utterance in question. With translation studies in mind, it is worth pointing out that what is situationally evoked or inferable for the reader of the source text, may never do the same to the reader of the target text. Being influenced by different cognitive and cultural settings, readers of both the source and target texts are not equally capable of performing the task of drawing the same inferences (Hatim & Mason, 1990, p. 93). This is advocated by Larson (1998, p. 46-47), who asserts that it is invariably

possible that a particular person, reading a written piece about a different culture, does not comprehend a huge amount of detail inasmuch as this information has been left implicit in the text concerned. However, what the translator as a text producer is required to do is to strike a balance between new, evoked as well as inferable entities to the point that the combination of these enables the hearer/reader to draw the appropriate inference intended by the speaker/writer. This balance is properly maintained through the principle of effectiveness, which mainly lies in accomplishing maximum conveyance of pertinent detail or fulfilment of communication objectives, and efficiency, which primarily resides in achieving the task in question with minimum effort exerted (Hatim & Mason, 1990, p. 93).

Organisation is another aspect that characterizes the notion of context in relation to relevance theory; this organization facilitates access to contextual detail on specific occasions (Gutt, 1998, p. 43). For instance, having raised the issue of academic majors, detail on university days may flexibly be accessible. Conversely, having talked about the same topic, it may take you very long to remember the name of your linguistics instructor. Hence, it can be argued that there exists a link between the accessibility of a particular piece of information in our mental capacity and the effort exerted to recall the information concerned (Gutt, 1998, p. 43).

Optimal Relevance

It is claimed that the pursuit of optimal relevance from the side of both the communicator and the recipient is deemed the crucial factor that makes communication successful (Sperber & Wilson, 1986; 1995). According to Sperber & Wilson (1986), a particular utterance is optimally relevant when it allows the recipient to comprehend the intended meaning of the message with no unnecessary effort, while this very meaning, at the same time, provides the recipient with the appropriate benefits sought therefrom. Such benefits are naturally psychological as they are composed of specific knowledge pertaining to a particular person, and are known as 'positive contextual effects' (Gutt, 1998, p. 43). Found within the principle of relevance is the function of optimal relevance in communication, which is argued to be a natural element of people's psychological construct. Based on the foregoing, when a particular person intends to communicate a specific matter, he/she spontaneously conveys the presumption that what he/she will convey is argued to be optimally relevant to the recipient (Gutt, 1998, p. 43).

It is argued that optimal relevance helps lead the recipient to interpret and understand the context of a particular utterance intended by the speaker. It enables the recipient to make appropriate expectations with regard to the possible access to the contextual detail required for correct interpretation. He/she therefore starts the process of interpretation with the use of the detail obtained. The recipient will make the assumption that when he combines the detail he has obtained with the appropriate contextual information, the utterance in question will with no doubt offer the interpretation whose processing has required certain effort to be exerted (Gutt, 1998, p. 43-44; Morini, 2013, p. 20). Drawing on such assumptions, the recipient will move through the process of interpretation until he reaches the point of interpretation that meets the two requirements: it is an interpretation that brings about appropriate contextual effects as well as it is derivable with little or no effort (Gutt, 1998, p. 44). This runs in line with Hatim and Mason (1990, p. 95), who claim that the interaction of new detail taken from a particular utterance and the old information known to the recipient may lead to contextual effects related to

three possible types. It may enhance old-held assumptions when the new detail approves the old information. Conversely, it may undermine or eliminate unapproved or untrue assumptions when the new detail opposes the old information. The last possibility is that the fusion of the new detail and the old information may stand as premises which may serve as the main source from which different contextual implications are gained. An assumption is then deemed optimally relevant to a particular context if it accomplishes a certain contextual effect. This means that optimal relevance guides the recipient to approve the initial interpretation, which is in line with the principle of relevance, as the appropriate interpretation intended by the speaker. Consequently, the notion of optimal relevance leads the recipient to both the speaker-intended context and interpretation together. Such interpretation processes often occur subconsciously such that people are usually unaware thereof (Gutt, 1998, p. 44). Moreover, there is no ample explanation on how recipients utilize contextual detail to make appropriate interpretations of utterances, which may seem less explicit than others (Morini, 2013, 20).

Relevance Theory and Language Use

According to relevance theory, there exist two distinct uses of language: descriptive use as well as interpretive use. A descriptive use of a language utterance is achieved when the utterance is viewed as a true utterance somewhere in the world. An example of this use is the sentence: ‘Peter: ‘Robert has joined an MA Programme in translation studies’’. On the other hand, an interpretive use of a language utterance is accomplished when the utterance stands to represent a particular person’s words. An example of this use is the sentence: ‘Peter: ‘Harry said: ‘Robert had joined an MA Programme in translation studies’’. (Gutt, 1998, p. 44; Sperber & Wilson, 1986, p. 224).

The Pragmatic Aspect of Translation

Translation, in view of relevance theory, is naturally classified within the interpretive use of language. In other words, translation is meant to reproduce the words uttered or written by a particular person in one language with the use of a different language. In crude terms, it is akin to speech-reporting in intralingual linguistic situations, though translation differs in that source text and translated text belong to two different linguistic and cultural settings (Gutt, 1998, p. 46). With relevance theory in mind, the translator will seek to plan his translation such that it resembles the source text as closely as possible in relevant respects (Wilson & Sperber, 1988, p. 137). Indeed, relevance theory offers a clear account of translations as explicit examples of the language’s interpretive use. This is usually achieved without the need for providing theoretical framework that would help offer a translation definition (Gutt, 1998, p. 48).

Successful communication demands following the principle of relevance consistently, including the use of the appropriate contextual detail during the utterance processing. The assignment of a specific communicative act to certain category can at times be helpful in this respect, though it can never be deemed an important condition for communication success. Indeed, there exist certain methods through which the communicator can guide his recipient to the appropriate way in which the recipient can properly comprehend the text concerned. Such methods are represented by introductory remarks, notes, comments, etc. (Gutt, 1998, p. 49).

A crucial aspect of translation is directly related to context. A single utterance may relay opposite interpretations on the basis of the context in which it is placed. In other words, the speaker-intended interpretation of a particular utterance is wholly contingent upon context. This aspect of context-dependence is owing to the fact that human communication is naturally inferential. A change in the context of a particular text will ipso facto give rise to a change in the whole meaning of that very text (Gutt, 1998, p. 49).

At times the translation process may involve the situation where the translator renders a culture-specific text in such a way that suits the cultural expectations of the target reader, and at the same time runs contrary to the way adopted in the source text by the original writer. Following this huge cultural amendment in the translated text by the translator would make him/her quote the author out of context, or create what Gutt (1991) terms 'secondary communication situations' (p. 72). Indeed, the translator is faced with two options and needs to opt for one of them. He/she either transfers the context of the source text to the target reader as it is, a context which may look alien to the recipient. In this case, the translator is advised to tailor his translated text accordingly (Nord, 1997, p. 23). Alternatively, he/she may choose to adapt the context of the source text to fit the cultural expectations of the target reader. Following the latter may involve omission (Sager, 1983, p. 122; Hatim & Mason, 1990, p. 96) of certain elements specific to the source culture, which, if kept intact, would create exoticism to the target reader (Dickins, Hervey & Higgins, 2002, p. 29-30). Having opted for the second option, the translator would be deemed to have created secondary communication situations. Hatim and Mason (1990) argue that the technique required for serving a particular communicative purpose within the culture of the target language is wholly left to the translator's judgement (p. 94).

It is worth pointing out that not all problems encountered during the translation process are translation-related. In fact, when the text is rendered from its source context to a different context, it is unequivocally affected by this change, which would also affect its meaning, even if there is no language change involved in this process (Gutt, 1998, p. 50). For instance, understanding classical Arabic poetry by an Arab person of twenty years old, may cause a problem due to difference in time period and context.

Significant mismatches with regard to contextual detail may lead to incorrect meaning alongside affecting the original text. The reason behind this dilemma resides in the principle of relevance which demands consistency with optimal relevance; such consistency is primarily founded on context (Gutt, 1998, p. 51). When the translator confronts problems emanating from secondary communication situations, he/she can find ways of surmounting them. These may lie in strategies of providing the target reader with additional contextual detail (Gutt, 1998, p. 52). Recent research has advocated the notion that translators who work between languages often have propensity for clarification, simplification and making implicit ideas in the source text explicit in the target text (Laviosa, 2002, p. 18; Blum-Kulka, 1986, p. 21; Baker, 2011, p. 223). This is arguably due to the notion that translators are usually viewed as partially accountable for the information offer of the receptor text, and any exotic details are indeed ascribed to them rather than to the original writers (Venuti, 1995). It goes without saying that acceptability generally requires clarity (Toury, 1995) however, on certain occasions, particular societies may demand specific types of texts to be characterized with obscurity and vagueness as such features

are deemed the qualities of these specific types of texts and add to them a kind of prestige (Morini, 2013, p. 22).

Examples and Discussion

Having provided a relatively succinct account of certain aspects of relevance theory and its connection to translation, it is time now to give some examples for further clarification and discussion.

Example 1:

- (a) John: 'Is Mike going to spend a long time there?'
- (b) Peter: 'He is being interviewed by Frans at the moment'.

The above exchange is somehow similar to the one given by Gutt (1998). It is clear that Peter has not given John a direct answer as to whether or not Mike will spend a long time there. He has replied, assuming that John knows of the nature of Frans in interviewing people, that Mike is being currently interviewed by Frans. If John is aware of how Frans interviews people and that he is quick in his interview, he will be able to draw the right inference from the sentence uttered by Peter. On the contrary, if John is not familiar with how Frans interviews people and whether or not he spends a long time with them, John will encounter two contradicting possibilities. The first rests on the notion that Frans is quick in interviewing people and therefore, Peter's answer implies that Mike will not spend a long time there and will come back shortly. Conversely, the second lies in the concept that Frans takes a considerably long time in interviewing people, hence, Peter's reply implies that Mike will spend a long time there and will never show up soon.

It is evident that Peter's answer to John's query flouts the maxim of relevance propounded by Grice (1975). Based on relevance theory, the communication will only take place if Peter assumes that John will assume the same with regard to Frans. In other words, Peter's utterance will be optimally relevant if John's assumption about Frans's nature in interviewing people is true. By contrast, if John's assumption about Frans's nature in interviewing people is different from the one held by Peter, the latter would be deemed to have miscommunicated in accordance with relevance theory. In this situation, the contextual details available to John, which form an important part of his assumption about the world, an assumption which represents the premise on which his interpretation of Peter's utterance is primarily grounded, would seem incomplete.

If this exchange is to be translated into Arabic, for instance, there will be two significant steps to be taken. The first concerns the translator, who, in this situation, can be treated as John, as what has been said about John, will apply to the translator. In other words, if the translator has no knowledge about how Frans deals with his interviewees, he/she will face the two opposing situations indicated above, thus interpreting or misinterpreting Peter's answer correctly. The translator's interpretation of Peter's utterance will wholly be contingent upon the assumption he/she will make with regard to Frans's way in interviewing people. If the translator is well-versed in the way in which Frans deals with his interviewees, he/she will be in a good position to correctly interpret Peter's utterance, thus drawing the appropriate inferences.

The second step resides in the process of the complete transfer of the exchange in question into Arabic. According to relevance theory, the translator should produce a target text that closely resembles the source text. Having considered the exchange above, if the translator does not have the appropriate contextual detail that helps him/her build his premise on which his interpretation of Peter's utterance is based, the translator will be required to produce the two contradicting possibilities concerning Frans's nature in dealing with interviewees, justifying this procedure by the fact that the utterance of the communicator in the source text has flouted the maxim of relevance assuming that his addressee possesses the relevant contextual detail, which he/she obviously lacks. Following this procedure, the translator, after rendering Peter's utterance verbatim, should add text that does not exist in the source text. This text may read as 'if Frans is quick in interviewing people, Mike will come back soon, however, if Frans takes a considerably long time in holding interviews, Mike will never appear soon' (إن كان فرانس سريعاً في إجراء المقابلات، فلن يعود مايك قريباً). Inserting such exegesis in the target text would, arguably, save the translator from any possible criticism put forward by the target reader concerning the vagueness of the target text.

Even if the translator is capable of drawing the right inferences from Peter's utterance for he/she has the relevant contextual information that has formed an important part of the assumption that stands for the premise upon which his interpretation of Peter's utterance primarily hinges, he/she still cannot expect the target reader to have possessed the same relevant contextual detail as that obtained by the recipient of the source text. This is because, as Hatim and Mason (1990) point out, what is inferable for the source text reader may not be inferable for the target text reader due to cognitive and cultural differences. Therefore, as Hatim and Mason (1990) contend, the translator needs to strike a balance between new, evoked and inferable entities such that the fusion of them scaffolds the hearer/reader to draw the right inferences intended by the speaker/writer.

Hatim and Mason (1990) suggest two principles that the translator needs to follow to succeed in maintaining the balance concerned. The first is effectiveness, which rests upon the transfer of any relevant detail that can enable the target reader to draw the appropriate inferences, thus achieving the communication goals. The second is efficiency, which resides in performing the task in question with no unnecessary effort exerted. Based on the foregoing, certain exegesis is required to enable the target reader to draw the same inferences as that drawn by both the source text hearer/reader and the translator. The exegesis may read as 'Frans is quick in interviewing people' (فرانس سريع في إجراء المقابلات مع الناس) or 'Frans takes a considerably long time in holding interviews' (يستغرق فرانس وقتاً طويلاً في إجراء المقابلات), depending on the relevant contextual detail truly assumed by the translator.

Example 2:

- (a) John: 'As today is Friday, what kind of drinks are you going to have tonight?'
- (b) Peter: 'I will see Frans tonight'.

Again, Peter's answer to John's question is not direct; he has not specified to John the kind of drinks he may have tonight. However, Peter states that he will meet Frans tonight, thus flouting

the maxims of relevance and leaving John with diverse possible situations if he does not possess the contextual detail relevant to Peter's utterance.

As indicated above, if John has the relevant contextual detail that forms a significant part of the assumption that epitomizes the premise on which his interpretation of Peter's utterance is grounded, i.e. he is aware that Frans does not drink, for instance, and that Peter will certainly do the same as a way of respecting Frans, John will therefore draw the appropriate inferences from Peter's utterance that he won't drink tonight. Conversely, if John lacks the relevant contextual information that constitutes a substantial part of his assumption that typifies the premise on which his interpretation of Peter's utterance is built, he will confront different possible situations.

The first lies in the notion that Frans does not drink and that Peter will do the same as a way of respecting his guest. The second is that Frans enjoys drinking a particular type of drink, which is also likable by Peter and therefore, he will opt for this particular type of drink tonight. Another possible situation is that Frans enjoys drinking on Friday and that he does not mind drinking more than one type of drink and that Peter will do the same consequently, he will have several drinks tonight. It is worth pointing out that whatever applies to John does also apply to the translator who is accountable for rendering the above exchange into Arabic. Whether or not the translator possesses the relevant contextual detail required for drawing the appropriate inferences from the utterance of the communicator, he/she still requires to explicate whatever he/she has inferred from the utterance in question to the target reader who can never be expected to draw the appropriate inferences. This is due to the fact that the translator is not cognizant of whether or not the target reader is conversant with the contextual detail required for comprehending the utterance concerned. Hence, certain exegesis needs to be added in accordance with what the translator considers to be sufficient for the target reader to fully understand the utterance in question, utilizing the principles of both effectiveness and efficiency simultaneously.

Another problem that may form a real obstacle to the target reader, particularly if he/she is not familiar with the Western culture is the word 'drink' stated in John's utterance. In Islamic culture, 'drink' may refer to any liquid which is legally permitted in Islam to be swallowed by Muslims. Consequently, all alcoholic drinks are clearly exempted from the circle of permitted drinks in Islam. On the contrary, the mention of drink, particularly in relation to Friday's night is highly likely to point to alcoholic drinks according to the Western culture. Therefore, the term 'drink' in the utterance concerned is deemed culture-bound term that needs to receive special treatment when rendered into Arabic.

As stated earlier, there are two options available to the translator when rendering a culture-specific term into another cultural setting. The translator either transfers the context of the source text as it is into the target language, thus producing exotic elements to the target reader. Alternatively, he/she may adapt the source text to live up to the expectations of the target reader and run in line with the cultural norms of the target language, thus sacrificing the accuracy of the original text and creating 'secondary communication situations', as termed by Gutt (1998). It is claimed that opting for the first option alongside inserting certain exegetic detail after the term 'drink' in the Arabic translation, such as 'alcoholic drink' (الكحوليات), would unequivocally

inform the target reader, who belongs to a totally different culture, that what is intended by the term 'drink' in the utterance concerned is alcoholic drink. Following this strategy would save the translator from creating secondary communication situations if he/she has opted for the second option. Also, this strategy helps produce a target text void of any alien element emanating from the source culture as any culture-bound term mentioned in the target text is explicated by the translator. This would ultimately enable the target reader to fully comprehend the meaning intended by the translator with no difficulty.

Concluding Remarks

It goes without saying that encoding, transferring and decoding are unquestionably substantial elements in communication, however, a great deal of communication does also depend on exploiting the appropriate context by the recipient and making his interpretation of a particular utterance accordingly. In other words, semantic content is not always ample to wholly understand the intended meaning of a particular utterance for this meaning may hinge upon the contextual detail with which it is inferentially combined. Consequently, failure to utilize the context intended by the communicator would undoubtedly give rise to miscommunication.

Translation is classified under the umbrella of relevance theory as an interpretive use of language. The translator, as a text receiver, needs to be equipped with the appropriate contextual details that form a pivotal part of his assumption that typifies the premise upon which his interpretation of a particular utterance is essentially founded. On the other hand, the translator, as a text producer, should create a target text that is deemed relevant to the target reader, taking into account the context and knowledge of the target reader. The translator is required to produce a text act, thus fully comprehending the illocutionary forces and perlocutionary effects of the source text and trying to reproduce them in the target text. This what may indeed create differences among translators as the interpretation of a text's illocutionary forces and perlocutionary effects may largely differ from one translator to another.

Given that the translator is required to produce a target text that can stand as a faithful equivalence to the source text in accordance with relevance theory, it should always be remembered that what is inferable for the source text recipient may not be inferable for the target text user due to cognitive and cultural differences. Consequently, the translator should do his best to make the target text relevant to its recipient through certain procedures of explications, exploiting the principles of both effectiveness and efficiency in an attempt to equip the target text recipient with all relevant contextual detail needed to draw the appropriate inferences from the utterance in question and make the right interpretation. This research paper has been limited in scope as it has offered a relatively brief account of relevance theory and its connection to translation. It has only discussed and analysed two examples that flout the maxims of relevance and how they should be rendered into Arabic in accordance with relevance theory. Further research is needed to test the usability of relevance theory when translating similar texts into other languages to see as to whether or not the same results shall be arrived at. Also, the principles of effectiveness and efficiency need to be further tested to see their appropriateness with the other languages.

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Rafat Y. Alwazna works as an Associate Professor of translation studies, TESOL and legal translation at King Abdulaziz University, KSA. He has published a number of research papers and book chapters, currently serves as an International Advisor for the *International Journal for the Semiotics of Law* (Springer) and he is guest editor of a special issue for the aforementioned journal, entitled: 'Islamic Law: Its Sources, Interpretation, Its Economics, Finance And The Translation Between It And Laws Written In English', which was published in 2016.

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