BIAS IN TRANSLATING POLITICAL DISCOURSE

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ABSTRACT

Translation is a product performed by translators who are people, who due to belonging to varied groups, come under the influence of the policies, beliefs, traditions, orientation, ideologies etc. of such groups. Accordingly, translators do not take an in-between stand but rather become biased in performing their job of translation; especially that of political discourse. To address this, this paper hypothesizes that (1) Translation of political discourse is not free of bias; (2) The bias in the translation of political discourse is due to ideology; (3) Bias occurs in the translation of political discourse due to personal, political and social reasons; and (4) Translators are aware of the remedial procedure that keep their translations of political discourse unbiased. To validate the preceding hypotheses, interviews were held with a selected sample of translators of political discourse. The questions posed in the interview were worded in a manner to be in alignment with the aims of the research in terms of forwarding information on the concept of bias, specifying the extent of translators' use of bias, identifying the role of ideology, and highlighting the impact of the political, personal and social reasons on bias in the translation of political discourse from English into Kurdish. Finally, the procedures that translators view as effective in minimizing bias in the translation of political discourse is a further aim that the current research aims to bring about. and the hypotheses of the study. The content analysis of the answers provided by the sample and the themes derived from the analysis have proved the acceptability of the four hypotheses with the main point that ideology, especially that of the agencies the translators are working for, impacts their translation of political discourse and turn it into biased.

KEY WORDS: Translation, Political Discourse, Bias, Ideology, Interview, Content Analysis.

INTRODUCTION

Since translation as a process and product is viewed as intertwined with its surrounding context, and since translators are people who are affiliated to social groups with shared history, values, behaviours and traditions, as well as cultural and religious beliefs and sentiments, they either take an in-between position or become biased by taking sides. As such, the possibility of having an unbiased translation is quite possible at any time. Put it differently, whether they are in favour of or are against it, the issue of bias haunts them in one way or another. This has made both objectivity and subjectivity in translation a must that should be investigated from varied perspectives so as to bring about the demanding diagnosis, comprehension and resolution.

This research sets out from the problem that the investigation and analysis of the translations of political discourse mostly come to be in lack of neutrality, i.e., they are biased as they reflect the viewpoints, beliefs and ideas of the persons or the groups to which the translators are affiliated and in such a way that makes all relevant statements, expressions and single words appear in favor of the persons or groups in question. The second problematic issue that the current research addresses is the scarcity of the literature on the topic under discussion, namely bias in the translation of political discourse in Kurdistan Region (KR), Iraq.

The current research puts forward information on the concept of bias in terms of its definition, nature and characteristics, and types. It further aims at identifying the role of ideology, whether personal or that of the group and/or party, in shaping translators bias, highlighting the impact of the political, personal and political reasons behind bias in the translation of political discourse from English into Kurdish, and identifying the procedures to minimize bias in the translation of political discourse. Based on the preceding aims, it is hypothesized that (1) Translation of political discourse is not free of

bias; (2) The bias in the translation of political discourse is due to ideology; (3) Bias occurs in the translation of political discourse due to personal, political and social reasons; and (4) Translators are aware of the remedial procedure that keep their translations of political discourse unbiased.

The current research is confined to the topic of bias in the translation of a selected number of political texts from English into Kurdish. As such, interviews were held with 10 randomly selected translators for media channels within the borders of Duhok Governorate. The interviewees were requested to give responses to 5 questions comprising (2 Yes-No questions (quantitative data)) and (3 open-ended questions (qualitative data)) that were purposely worded and directed to gather the required data concerning the personal, political and social reasons behind bias in the translation of political discourse and the procedures adopted by the translators to minimize such bias.

This research is expected to be of significance to people who are concerned with the topic of bias in translation. It can also benefit teachers and students of translation in terms of the abundant information gathered on translation, bias and political discourse. Finally, translators at large, and those of political discourse in particular, may go further and probe the concept bias, the reasons behind it and the procedures to minimize it so as to make their translated products obtain more popularity and acceptance.

DISCOURSE

Discourse has been the topic of study of many sciences. Research on discourse is conducted in the domains of linguistics, psychology, philosophy, sociology, theology, pedagogy, law, political science, etc. There is not yet a comprehensive definition of discourse that applies to all instances of its use and hence each branch of research that investigates this phenomenon has a definition (Rakhmatovna, 2022).

According to Kenzhekanova (2015:192,193), discourse may be viewed of as one in which systemic linguistic properties, the degree of spontaneity and completeness, thematic coherence, and intelligibility for other people all play important roles. It is a mode of communication with a specific goal to affect the addressee through a variety of techniques.

Karasik (2002) points out that discourse comprises the following specific set of circumstances for which and when it was created:
- The author's communicational intentions;
- The relationship between the author and addressees;
- All circumstances, "significant" and unimportant;
- The ideology and stylistic climate of the time period in general;
- The concrete setting;
- Connections with earlier experiences that influenced the author.

POLITICAL DISCOURSE

- Political Discourse: Definition and Meaning
The main focus of political linguistics study is political discourse. As such, Baranov (1991) defines political discourse as the whole of all discourse utilized in political situations, as well as the principles of public policy. On his part, Trosborg (1997:119-121;145-146) views political discourse as a part of politics, political action that has a political theme. It is a "hybrid" of literature from other cultures that shed light on the historical circumstances in which they were written and might be utilized for a variety of communication goals, including propagandistic or thought-provoking ones. According to Chilton and Schäffner (1997:212), a text is political if a politician wrote it and it depicts a struggle for power in some way. Political discourse is a collection of all speech actions that are predetermined and expressed through linguistic forms, with politics serving as the content, subject, and addressee of each speech act. Levenkova (2011) claims that political discourse is the professional use of language, which is founded on the nationally and socio-historically conditioned mindset of its speakers, and is a linguistic manifestation of public activity in the field of political culture. Banhegy (2014:140) defines political discourse as any spoken or written act of communication that interacts with, refers to, or otherwise discusses any political event, organization, or actor in formal or informal political situations. Finally, Harm (2023) states that although spoken and written words make up the majority of discourse, the term may be expanded to encompass action-based communication, such as sit-ins and political protests. So, political discourse should be seen as the political actions

of voters, pressure groups, the media, political parties, and other participants in the political process rather than just the words and text created by politicians and other members of a democracy.

POLITICAL DISCOURSE: CHARACTERISTICS

Under the topic "political discourse content", it is advised to have a thorough understanding of a selection of all essential components that distinguish political discourse from other genres of discourse. Due to the fact that distinguishing qualities are a very flexible frame whose attributes rely on the nature and distinctiveness of a particular discourse, it is challenging to develop a comprehensive and exact system of distinguishing characteristics. On this basis, Kenzhekanova (2015:197-199) outlines the following characteristics of political discourse:
- Agonistic ability;
- Aggressiveness;
- Ideological character; and
- Theatricality.

The cornerstone of political discourse is a never-ending dialogue battle between the party in power and the opposition, in which opponents sometimes trade blows, maintain their ground, deflect blows, and then go on the attack. This is an example of agonistic ability, or competitiveness. The competitiveness of a political discourse is best shown in the two formats of parliamentary debates and primary elections.

As for aggressiveness, one of the most important characteristics of a political speech is aggression. English explanatory dictionaries define aggressiveness as "violent or hostile feelings, conduct, or attitude." (Oxford, 2000). Dominance and hierarchy are also linked to aggressiveness in a political discourse. Relationships of subordination, the chain of command, and the sequence of commands from the lowest to the highest are all examples of hierarchy. Aggression is said to be built upon dominance, which results from violence and creates a hierarchical order in interpersonal relationships (Sheygal, 2004).

The network of social representations, accumulated knowledge, and beliefs founded on common goals, principles, and practices are represented by the ideological character. The military and politics are combined with this feature. War, as it is known, is the continuation

of policy with alternative tactics. The variety of their interaction includes genres like military doctrine, military and political agreement, an ultimatum, and peace negotiations that give the war's philosophy and direction from the perspective of the combatants.

Finally, political discourse becomes theatrical when the people assume the role of the spectator addressee, who perceives the current political events as a special play performed for them with an engaging plot and an unpredictable conclusion.

Chilton and Schäffner (1997) point out another aspect of political discourse by claiming that political leaders employ certain language strategies by incorporating patriarchal and combative words into their discourse. Hence, they use analogous words and the literal figure of exaggeration to describe their political rival. All political activity is, in fact, planned, accompanied, directed, and influenced by language. This is strengthened by Fairclough (1989:23), who asserts that language is politics in and of itself rather than just a tool for the development of politics. Language is crucial in the conversion of political desire into social action. Fairclough argues that language has a lot of power in politics because it "makes lying seem genuine and murder respectable".

Prifti (2017) adds that a variety of theoretical devices, including metaphors, repetition, antithesis, heavy use of comparative and superlative forms, idioms, and emotive language, are utilized in political speech to influence and control the general audience. Likewise, Ayyad (2012:252, 273) mentions that political discourse appears to be influenced by the ideological and political concerns of the individuals who create it. As such, it is possible that different interpretations of negotiated political documents will result from these individuals' ideologies and political orientations in their efforts to advance their various political interests and develop narratives that resonate with their constituents.

Schäffner (2002:17) adds that political production's discourse seldom functions as discrete grammatical circumstances, hence intertextual components are frequently used in it. It often interacts with other significant discourses and operates within historical settings. Due to intertextuality, several genres are positioned in complementary, inclusion/exclusion, or oppositional tension connections in political discourse, and political

speech in particular. These connections give rise to additional forms like recontextualization, the importing of one genre into another, and dialogism, the connections between texts in a communicative setting. An illustration would be the use of a politician's catchphrase or a political party's catchphrase in casual conversation or a news headline.

Rakhmatovna (2022) notes that many scholars are looking at the linguistic components of political discourse, often known as "political language," which refers to a certain style and method of contact with the audience. Political language and extralinguistic reality are mutually dependent. On the one hand, because it represents the life of the nation with its values, customs, and goals, it is greatly impacted by the political climate on the international arena. For instance, political reality frequently compels speakers to distinguish between "their own" and "strangers" in their discourse, and it is frequently important to carefully draw this line in order to avoid causing fresh disputes.

Rakhmatovna (2022) further asserts that language choice has a significant impact on political discourse. It enables to shape the addressee's awareness, influencing how they will think about and act upon various pieces of information. It is crucial to recognize the impact political language has on how a candidate or political party is seen and how choices are made. Political discourse's substantive and formal components bear the stamp of its functional characteristics. Political speech mixes uniformity and expressiveness, which is one of its characteristics. The first element is required for the discourse to be understandable by a variety of receivers. It involves paying attention to certain discourse creation and replication sequences as well as language usage guidelines. Expressiveness also facilitates communication of the author's emotional state and attitude toward the subject. In addition to being represented through stylistic speech patterns, expressiveness also adds appeal for the reader, which is crucial in the field of politics since the more meaningful the discourse, the more sway it may have over the audience. Also, political discourse, which is defined by the preponderance of the mass addressee, bears the stamp of the audience as well. This oddity results from the author's expectation that whatever sample of conversation they produce and reproduce would be heard simultaneously by a sizable audience. For instance, arguments in parliament take place in front of the lawmakers, while radio and television broadcast the new president's inauguration address both domestically and internationally (Rakhmatovna, 2022).

On his part, Sheigal (2000) states that political discourse also includes the use of political jargon. It is marked by uncertainty, which is frequently communicated through polysemy and words with abstract meanings. Politicians frequently have to talk subtly about unpleasant things that put a negative light on them. This involves the anonymity of some remarks in order to conceal the identity of the person in charge of a specific choice. In order to avoid revealing their ignorance in any subject, the presenters may also employ ambiguity which aids in averting potential confrontations since it frees the speaker from having to defend what they said or makes it much simpler to push back against them. Consequently, political discourse adapts to external conditions.

Finally, commenting on the creation and perception of political discourse, Dyck (2000) tackles the idea of two types of knowledge and contrasts between them, namely "general cultural knowledge shared by participants of various social groups" and "knowledge shared by participants of a separate social group". The first category, which serves as the foundation for communication, is impartial and undeniable. The second sort of knowledge satisfies the first's requirements with just one restriction—the similarity only holds true for that civilization. Everyone else seems to see this information as merely a belief or an opinion.

TRANSLATION OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE

Translation is becoming increasingly important as politics becomes more internationally focused. There are more things at play than might initially appear. It involves more than simply copying the words from the ST and pasting them into another language; it also requires careful selection of applicable idioms and phrases that are skilfully accounted for. When a text is translated, the intended audience will be in the new target language (TL) community at a different location and time (Neubert, 1985:71). Additionally, Newmark (1991) points out that strong emotional sentiments are one common way that language reflects politics. Political statements are regarded as authoritative. These assertions are all backed

up by the illustrious credentials, dependability, and language skill of their writers. Political vocabulary terms are underlined, exaggerated, and pulled out of context when translated, regardless of how culturally or individually unique they are. Despite efforts, the historical background of these concepts hinders them from becoming tangible. Thus, it is essential to protect the fundamental meaning of a word like "democracy". Political language is characterized by a variety of linguistic elements, including jargon, euphemisms, and metaphors. As such, instruction should be provided on how to manage all these components during the translation process.

Mingxing (2012) proposed the idea of political parity in translation. In Nida's theory (1964), the similarity of language and style is considered, but the major emphasis is on the political repercussions of political equivalence (truth, loyalty, acceptability, and dynamicity). To achieve political equality, the translator must act as a tightrope walker, balancing the interaction between the SL/producer and the TL/audience. There are four guiding principles for political equality offered by Mingxing (2012) that are based on real-world examples of misquotations, misinterpretations, and translation issues:

- Accurately expressing the idea of time in the diplomatic source language, since the same phrase or literary allusions may have different meanings depending on the political situation, as word meanings and connotations evolve with time.
- Translating policy facts into that form and communicating political repercussions in a style that is clear to the target audience.
- Striving for dynamic political parity rather than just formal equal.
- Balancing of speaker/audience context, source language and target language (SL/TL), without favoring one over the other.

According to Mingxing, a translator should do discourse analysis when translating and look for political undertones. He provides several strategies and techniques for achieving political equivalency in political translation. Again, political translation techniques need not only be linguistic. Translations of political allusions, idioms, and other cultural references, according to the author who investigates idioms, allusions, myths, and fables, demand a mixed translation style. While translating from one language to another, one must be aware of the differences in the two languages' respective cultures. Political correctness and knowledge of international affairs make up the fourth and last criterion for a good translation.

Bánhegyi (2014:139-140) adds that political discourse has always piqued the interest of translation studies, and since politics is increasingly conducted in transnational settings, translation is inextricably linked to political power struggles, compromises, and games of hegemony. Therefore, in addition to monolingual communication, translation in bilingual and multilingual contexts is essential for acquiring, sustaining, and displaying political power as well as ideological content, and it is important to take into account the sociocultural and ideological context of the original text when translating political discourse (Schäffner, 1997:119).

Finally, the audience, context, purpose of the text in the TL community, and text type are only a few examples of characteristics that may have an influence on the translation into TT because translation is a mediating intercultural action. The roles that the ST and TT perform in their different cultures influence the translation techniques. For instance, the TT's function in the TL culture would be confined to imparting information if the ST's goal is to convince the audience in the source language (SL). According to this viewpoint, since the TL audience does not possess the same information as the SL audience, the necessary alterations in the TT must be made. In other words, from this viewpoint, the ST audience is more influential and powerful than the TT audience (Bayani, 2016:40).

BIAS

It is important to pay attention to other notions, notably "prejudice," while tracing the history of how the word "bias" first appeared in literature. Bias has a long history as a normal human propensity, as evidenced by the fact that cognitive scientists have researched it for more than 40 years. Bias has also been referred to as prejudice, partiality, and partisanship in the past since it invariably leads to irrational conclusions. The fact that there are over a hundred different forms of cognitive biases, including social, behavioral, memory-related, and a broad variety of others, supports this. Moreover, bias frequently results in a failure to consider the benefits of competing viewpoints and leads to

unreasonable conclusions. Bias is typically accompanied with reluctance to favorably examine the good parts of other people's opinions and a willingness to positively consider one's own viewpoint. To persuade the reader to have a certain view on a subject or to perform a particular action, it is done by omitting information or by changing the facts (http 2, 2023).

According to Wallet (2023), writers of propaganda and biased content may employ any one or more of the following typical tactics or techniques:
- Use of words for emotional effect or promotion of either a positive or a negative response in
    the reader; e.g. "racist," "liberal," etc.
- Reference to famous historical national men so as to promote their ideas.
- Flattery praising so as to get a positive reaction from the reader;
- Stacking the cards by abandoning objective description, supporting one side of an issue through
   evidences and intentionally deleting opposing ideas;
 - Bandwagon by suggesting readers doing the same as everyone is doing something or thinking
    in a certain way.
- Plain folks by presenting themselves as ordinary people and hence appealing to common people
   so as to make voters identify with them.
As far as the types of bias are concerned, Recasens et al. (2013:1653) categorize bias into the following types:
- **Framing bias** refers to the use of metaphors and language to promote the author's position on a hotly debated topic. Substantive intensifiers are adjectives or adverbs that heighten the emotional impact of a statement or proposition. Editorials employ subjective language less frequently, As a result, bias may be more subtly expressed in editorials, such as through subliminal framing, presuppositions, and implication, which are less frequent in other writing genres. The small bias indicators, which include factive verbs, implicatives and other entailments, hedges, and subjective intensifiers, are discovered through linguistic analysis.
- **Epistemic bias** outlines the propensity to assume, suggest, claim, or hedge a notion that is either universally recognized as true or largely acknowledged as incorrect. In other words, it shows that a claim's plausibility is emphasized when a notion that is largely accepted as true is

contested or when an idea that is widely accepted as false is hinted at or assumed. An implication exists when the truth of one word or phrase follows the truth of another. It is connected to language elements that emphasize the truth of the assertion (typically through assumption).
- **Cultural bias** which has grown as a result of globalization. When it comes to how they perceive others, most people see them as being fundamentally the same but not exactly the same and connected to unrelated organizations and nations.
- **Media bias** refers to the real or perceived bias that news producers and journalists exhibit in the stories they select to report on, the events they choose to cover, and the manner they present those stories (Steinbock, 1978). It grows from the media's inability to present viewers with objective reality. It has been suggested that these viewers may even consciously choose to show a certain built or subjective political reality and/or to present political reality in a way that is congruent with the political stances or worldviews of particular powerful organizations. It is stated that objective political reality is purposely portrayed as subjective or made-up reality using Mazzoleni's (2002) Theory of Bias as a guide. In other words, manipulation happens when a false or arbitrary reality is presented in order to forward an ideological objective.

The way a reporter, news organization, or TV show covers a political candidate or policy issue is generally referred to as media bias. It happens when political parties adopt a certain stance on problems and situations. Certain problems seem to be more common, and as a result, some ideas seem to be more crucial or vital. This encompasses political commentary and media coverage of the actual topics and programs they address in a political environment (Saez-Trumper, et al., 2013:1979-1980). Media coverage is susceptible to charges of political bias due to its perceived lack of neutrality in politics. Political considerations based on action or message may support or undermine certain ideologies depending on the context in which they are used (Kernaghan, 1986:640-641).

Limitations are in place in biased media to prevent the fabrication of facts. Politics may be spread through slanting how facts are portrayed in the media. Media bias may change public perception, which in turn impacts voter behaviour and decisions, due to the inaccurate depiction of facts. When utilized to influence

others' beliefs, such political bias may have long-lasting effects. As the media continues to be a prominent source of political information, political bias may be created in the informational representation of political players and policy concerns. Investigating how political leaders discuss political issues through the political slant of the media; using agenda determination, political bias can be identified; and finding the political bias in the way a given issue is presented form the objectives of agenda determination.

According to Wallett (2023), bias falls into the following even categories:
- **Confirmation bias** occurs when a writer either purposefully or unintentionally selects facts and data to reinforce pre-existing beliefs.
- **Anchoring bias** occurs when a writer focuses too much on one source of knowledge or opinion (e.g., only left-leaning media sources or only right-leaning media sources.)
- **Groupthink bias** entails giving someone, anything, etc. the benefit of the doubt because it belongs to or identifies with the same group.
- **Stereotype bias** occurs when sweeping generalizations about a certain group of individuals are made without accounting for individual distinctions.
- **Cultural bias** refers to the propensity of certain individuals to give particular cultural beliefs or standards more weight than others.
- **Assumptive bias** refers to making claims that are unsupported (and frequently false) hypotheses.
- **Generalization bias** occurs when a single, "catch-all" filter is used to categorize several individuals, organizations, professions, etc., considering them as a single unit while, in fact, each group member differs clearly from the others.

Finally, concision bias and confirmation bias are the two subordinate forms of bias when political bias both contravenes and undermines the desired political impartiality. Concision bias is a perspective on reporting that places a higher value on effectively presenting an idea than it does on delving further into more complex ideas. Confirmation bias refers to people's tendency to process information by looking for, or interpreting, information that is consistent with their existing beliefs (Hofstetter and Buss, 1978:518).

BIAS IN THE TRANSLATION OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE

According to Ghazala (2002:154), when talking about bias in translation, three things should be taken into account, namely what, how, and why the translators' bias is apparent in their translations. Instead than emphasizing the translation itself, the translator's own mental and psychological processes, which may act as some justifications or pretexts for their bias are highlighted. Working with languages that are fundamentally incompatible with one another presents a number of difficulties and hurdles for translators in terms of semantics, syntax, culture, pragmatics, etc. This is on one hand. On the other hand, because it may not always be needed or wanted, unbiased translation is viewed as a high ideal. This suggests that bias is inescapable and the translator becomes frequently accused of being dishonest in their translation when they are accused of altering, omitting, or euphemizing anything in the ST. When the translator interrupts inanely, recklessly, needlessly, or prematurely, this charge can be detrimental. If the intrusions are not reasonable, needed, logical, and justified, then it is unjust. The only thing that can be anticipated in the face of such endless, ever changing, and increasing complexity is a translation that is not biased.

According to Hofstetter and Buss (1978:518-520), bias is the ideological inclusion or omission of news. This occurs when attention shifts to politicians and how they choose to present and cover their favoured policy topics and debates. In this way, agenda bias is comparable. If a reporter favours one political party over another, it is assumed that they are biased in their reporting. Political neutrality guarantees that public servants may carry out their official tasks impartially regardless of their political beliefs, which is the cure for bias.

To be more precise, although it may be true that people's bias is influenced by their personalities and thought processes, it is unclear if some political viewpoints are more distorted than others (Vyse, 2016). Political bias in the context of politics refers to the practice of shaping the truth to support a certain political viewpoint. It emerges when people find it challenging or unwilling to comprehend the viewpoints of those on the other side. How politicians are depicted in the news media and how political problems are reported reveals media bias. There is a potential that a reporter

may present biased information in favour of their own or their audience's political beliefs if they stress certain points of view and convey chosen facts (Haselmayer, et al., 2017:371-372).

Political bias concentrates on the readings and conversations that individuals regularly engage in rather than just the voicing of beliefs that support a certain political party or leader. There is proof that political bias affects political results over the long run (Gentzkow, et al., 2015:625-627).

The framing principle is largely responsible for political bias. The two types of framing are positive framing and negative framing (Scheufele, 1999:103-105). Here, we are tackling the way political figures and political parties use information to highlight issues and provide fixes for those issues. Their reputation is enhanced as a consequence, and their policies become accepted as the norm. When people are only given two options—one of which is portrayed negatively and the other positively—the framing effect examines such circumstances. This bias can be considerably diminished if enough information that is truthful and trustworthy is provided. Moreover, framing looks at how bias in political campaigns impacts how political power is distributed in a biased political environment. It is important to be aware that framing is a typical analytical strategy used to connect different aspects of reality and express a potentially biased perspective (Entman, 2010:55).

Political translation is a very difficult field of translation. Recent years have seen a substantial increase in interest in political language (Ghazala, 2002:151). According to Alvarez et al. (1996:5), the translation process is wholly biased. To understand the original text, one must be aware of the translator's contributions, omissions, word choices, and placement of certain terms. The reason for this is that each of their choices was made with the intention of reflecting both their personal histories and the socio-political context in which he presently lives. In addition, Newmark correctly points out that politics dominates us and that the very word "political" carries a demeaning, demeaning connotation (Alvarez et al., 1996).

On her part, Mahmudova (2022) states that translation of political discourse is quite similar to writing fiction. In addition to parallels, idioms, metaphors, and hilarious and sarcastic components, it also has an emotional component. The information's political slant, the number of specialized phrases relating to politics and public life, as well as the names of various groups, institutions, projects, and political parties, are its main selling points. Socio-political translation should make sure that the political orientation of information is preserved, that content is accurately transmitted, and that emotional components are included.

Mahmudova (2022) adds that on translating political discourse, it is important to employ the right socio-political jargon in the TL and have a thorough understanding of the cultural quirks, demographic preferences, and governmental systems of the target nation. knowing the fundamentals of international affairs; and understanding of a specific nation's cultural customs.

Political translations might be about a person's pride in their country, their home country, or their national problems. As long as the original source and/or author can be recognized and a specific goal is fulfilled, the translation of such information in its entirety is free of bias. If not, it would be thrown out (Ghazala, 2002).

Political discourse, which are represented by the speeches of statesmen and politicians, frequently contain neologisms, quotes, impersonal phrases, speech stamps, colloquial phrases, and aphorisms. The translator must deliver them succinctly and accurately, capture the core of the remarks in the appropriate setting, and do it in a way that is politically proper. So, in order to make a socio-political translation, the translator has to be knowledgeable about law and political science as well as the culture and history of the nation whose language it is necessary (Mahmudova, 2022).

Because of the globalization of politics, Translation Studies has highlighted the professional responsibilities and ambivalent allegiances of translators. Palmer (2007 cited in Banhegyi, 2014) highlights the many roles played by Iraqis who serve as translators for Western media, as well as the conflicting allegiances that result from these translators' political commitments. Palmer uses Wadensjö's (1998) Conduit Theory to examine the roles of media reporters and translators in the dissemination of information on the crisis in Iraq. He concludes that even if such translators are trusted by Western media professionals working in the region, misinformation may happen because of the following reasons:

- Provision of summaries rather than word-for-word translations;
- Omissions of textual material considered irrelevant by the translator;
- Inability to communicate linguistically with the local community and the resulting inability to understand the local culture; and
- Failure to understand the local community's culture.

Political discourse is particularly challenging to comprehend since they require a quick, clear, and brief conveyance of the original ideas. Political material is typically evaluative in character, which means it is frequently biased and reflects the viewpoint of the source. In contrast, the translator should dissociate himself from his own interpretation of the situation and provide an accurate translation devoid of emotion. A translator can only translate socio-political material to a passable standard by adhering to political correctness, impartiality, and objectivity. Yet, the original text's uniqueness and aesthetic elements should be kept, and the translation should not deviate from it (Mahmudova, 2022).

With reference to translators' bias which reflects the bias of the political party in the media, Blumler and Gurevitch (1990) categorize bias into the following four types:

- **High level bias**: When parties exert no direct control over communication outlets, but there is an indirect influence through political-ideological collaboration with media professionals;
- **Medium level bias**: When a political party or position is supported by the media, but this support is contingent upon a critical assessment of a politician's actions or the substance of a particular political stance;
- **Low level bias**: When political parties' media support is erratic and unexpected because the media is not reliant on political events. This entails that political events that occur in a given nation do not always make headlines, and that no party or organization has the authority to influence how newsworthy events are covered by the media;
- **No bias**: full political and editorial autonomy.

REASONS BEHIND BIAS IN TRANSLATING POLITICAL DISCOURSE

In their introduction to the edited volume Translation, Power, Subversion, (Alvarez et al., 1996) state that "Translation is one of the most prominent models for cultural disputes". They consider how "knowledge is produced in one culture and then transmitted, relocated, and reinterpreted in the target culture" is a crucial issue since both the source and target cultures may have an effect on the process of translation. Politics is no exception in this regard. It affects translation in a number of ways, including how political materials are translated as well as how translation is used to make political statements. The present section endeavours to put forward the reasons behind translators' manipulation of political discourse.

Bánhegyi (2013) points out that translation conceals from the audience the person who actually performs the work and who has the power to modify the text—the translator, or the journalist, as the case may be. In this regard, translation can covertly and unnoticeably be used to advance, preserve, or even abuse political power in the benefit of particular political groupings. This is most likely the driving force behind the growing interest in political discourde translation in the field of translation studies.

Mazzoleni (2002) lists the following factors as potential causes for the phenomena of rising party bias in the press. First, due to its thorough coverage of events, the press has always had the ability to think more deeply on various political perspectives throughout history. Second, historically, certain publications were created to serve as the vehicles for particular groups of people (such as parties) in order to further their economic and political objectives. A third possible factor is the fact that, for political and ideological reasons, some wealthy individuals would contribute money to publications that promote particular ideologies, even if doing so does not result in (immediate) financial gains. If such is the case, it should be obvious that such publication will only reflect the political and ideological tendency of its owner.

Mazzoleni comments on the relationship between the press and the political elite stating that a quality press has always sought a privileged position and relationships with the political elite in order to represent their views and ideas and benefit from them. In terms of bias, this demonstrates that a reputable newspaper connected to the social, political, and cultural elite that feeds it will direct, or display bias, in its favour.

As for relationships between the media and political parties, Semetko et al., (1991) point out

that political parties and the media have a strong relationship because the media has historically acted as an ideological force in society and is consequently deferential to political parties and their leaders. In terms of bias, this means that the publications will express that party's attitude, will represent its interests in topics that are publicized, and will perpetuate its ideology depending on the political party with which the supplied newspapers are linked—either explicitly or implicitly. As a logical extension of this, it may be said that newspapers affiliated with ruling parties would typically practice advocacy journalism, whereas publications affiliated with the opposition are more likely to practice watchdog journalism. Although watchdog journalism critiques and opposes the government, advocacy journalism offers and defends the government's point of view.

According to Mazzoleni (2002), the depiction of political reality by those who generate political materials, including translators, is also influenced by the active audience. The translator's relationship to the political issues currently on the political agenda can be characterized as active audience. Translators may observe differences in stance between the various parties and may well sympathise with the party that best represents their views, and consequently express their sympathy in texts through their presentation of constructed reality. Similar to this, when exposed to the effects of political texts, translators may want to support their own opinions on any given topic in any setting. As a result, it is possible that translators will translate texts that reflect their own political views through the presentation of constructed reality.

With reference to the possible reasons behind translators' intentional bias, Blumler and Gurevitch (1990) point out that translators are able to translate texts that reveal their political sympathies or show the textual effects of their affiliations because they are associated with members of a party or a government. In their target texts, translators might also reveal personal political bias. This effectively implies that translators repeat their own political beliefs in their translations.

Mazzoleni (2002) also emphasizes that a major factor in the existence of bias in political discourse is the professional norms and standards and/or by the particular media a certain translator works for. According to Mazzoleni's (2002) Theory of Bias, if a translator follows certain professional norms and standards, the final writing will exhibit structural bias. News articles will, therefore, represent the professional norms and standards of the media outlet that will publish them. These norms and standards may dictate a portrayal of political reality that is more or less objective, the creation of argumentative texts or sensational pieces, depending on the kind and character of the actual medium, and other things. This means that certain media outlets produce news articles that display left- or right-wing political bias, are contentious or sensational in character, etc. as required by their professional norms and standards. These characteristics define these articles' systemic bias.

It can be concluded that bias is a crucial phenomenon that is believed to be present in translation, the act of converting an ST into a TT, in one way or another. Bias is the propensity to have a favourable or negative perspective on people, objects, occurrences, etc. Positive bias refers to the perception or presentation of someone or something as having positive features and attributes, whereas negative bias refers to the attribution of undesirable or negative aspects to that person or thing. Based on this, bias seems to be defined and properly classified by the environment in which it exists and/or the cause that gave rise to it. Additionally, it seems that in the field of political discourse, bias and how reality is presented are tied to society, context, power, and ideology. In other words, bias does correlate with ideology in its political sense, identity in its social sense and attitude in its personal sense; all of which entail that political, social and personal factors play a paramount role in translators' bias when translating political discourse.

MINIMIZING BIAS IN TRANSLATING POLITICAL DISCOURSE

Based on the circumstances and goals it has been set for, bias takes on many shapes and forms. Yet, in many contexts, the great majority

of individuals disapprove political bias and even bias in favour of the individual's own group and consider it as undesirable and problematic issue. As such, to decrease bias and make the rendered content more acceptable by the readers who will have faith in it as a trustworthy and true source of information, the people concerned should avoid bias as much as possible by utilizing the objective terminology in textbooks and other reference works like encyclopaedias. Also, it should not be surprising that claims of bias frequently involve a demand for a corrective action or at the very least a return to fair and impartial behaviour. This latter statement is in line with the views of several academics in the literature that "concern about bias has been a core motivation of media control" (Gentzkow, et al., 2015:2) since, according to several studies, those who think that the media is biased against their own group, particularly when it comes to political bias in the media, have less faith in the media and democratic institutions and also feel more estranged from society (Tsfati and Cohen, 2012).

Therefore, how people react to political bias has important social and political repercussions. Although proof of bias may only be as effective as the emotions it produces, these reactions are the first step towards rectifying the situation and eliminating biased behaviours in the future. When a person or institution is accused of having political bias, the word refers to an act that goes against accepted social mores. A political organization or ideology is damaged by an action or statement that concurrently benefits its opponents or advances a competing theory (http 4, 2021).

Setting from the preceding lines, it is evident that bias takes place by the translator in a personal attempt to reflect their ideologies or beliefs or to stick to the ideology, belief, attitude, etc. of the group/party they belong to. In both cases, it is the translator who makes bias come into existence and hence the translation loses objectivity to some certain extent. Accordingly, the query posed at the beginning of this section should be reiterated but reformulated as follows: How can a translator become objective and hence minimize bias in their rendering of texts from the SL into the TL?

According to Wallett (2023), to avoid bias or keep it to a minimum, the translator should start by striving towards neutrality throughout the writing process and should be aware of how their language choices may affect how readers interpret what they are stating. To do this properly, all facts should be double checked. Additionally, translators can minimize the use of overly dramatic words such as "always," "never," etc. When describing a subject, they should try to steer clear from using absolutes such as "the best," "the most," "the number 1…," etc. Finally, striving for transparency in their written communications is supposed to the translators' prime aim.

METHODOLOGY

The main aim of this research is to uncover the reasons behind translators' bias and to specify the procedures to minimize bias in the translation of political texts. On this basis, this section attends to the procedure of collecting the relevant and required data for analysis. It is worth mentioning that one research tool, namely the interview has been used to gather the data from the sample of translators. As such, there is reference to the procedures and steps adopted to prove the validity and reliability of the interview especially its piloting so as to check the suitability of the questions of the interview based on the modifications made to the interview questions to make them align with the purpose and context of the current study and the adopted sampling strategy. This section additionally highlights the population and sample of the research represented by a number of translators, and statistical means to analyse the collected data. Finally, this section is set to bring together the theoretical and practical parts of the current research.

PROCEDURE AND DATA COLLECTION

The methodology adopted in the current research is two-fold. First, theoretical in the sense that a set of topics and subtopics that are pertinent to political discourse at large and the concept of bias and its use in the translation of such discourse has been deeply and closely researched. Second, practical as interviews were held with a number of translators to elicit their views and responses so as to pinpoint and duly

probe the reasons behind the use of bias in the translation of political discourse and the means to minimize such bias.

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The population of this research comprises the translators who are translating for media channels within the borders of Duhok Governorate. 10 translators out of the population already referred to have been randomly selected and interviewed. The choice of this limited number formed one of the limitations and challenges that the researcher encountered in conducting the practical part of the current research. The interview and its contents are demonstrated in the following section.

- Research Instrument

In this research, a single research tool, namely the interview was utilized to collect the data required for analysis. Accordingly, the selected sample of translators were requested to give answers to 5 questions comprising (2 Yes-No questions (quantitative data)) and (3 open-ended questions (qualitative data)) that were generally elicited from the related theoretical literature, with focus on gathering the required data concerning the reasons behind using bias in the translation of political discourse and the procedures to minimize such bias. In addition, the demographic information was requested to be given by the interviewees. Following are the questions posed during the interview sessions:

Yes – No Questions (2 Questions):
1. Do you receive instruction from your agency with regard to how to reflect their ideology in your translation?
2. If you do not receive instructions from your agency, do you feel aware of your agency's ideology?

- **Open-Ended Questions (3 Questions):**
3. Based on your experience, what is the role of ideology in altering translators' neutrality and guiding them to turn biased?
4. What in your opinion are the reasons behind translators' bias when translating political texts?

5. What in your opinion are the procedures that translators can use to minimize/avoid bias when translating political texts?

The initial construction of the interview questions in their draft version was followed by their submission to a panel of juries represented by experienced teachers in the field of translation so as to pass judgement on them in terms of their suitability as a means to elicit data on the topic under investigation. In the light of the modifications, mainly rewording and reformulation, addition, deletion and reformulation, and comments provided by the panel of juries, the questions were reformulated and put in their final version. Hence, the interview, through its 5 questions, was proved valid and ready to be held since no reliability was required due to the nature of the sample's responses that came in the way of text or essay free of figures, i.e., numbers, that are usually treated to find out the reliability of a research instrument.

ANALYSING QUALITATIVE DATA

Based on Malo (2018:90-91), Content Analysis is adopted to analyse the qualitative data collected by means of the interviews held with the translators. According to Denscombe (2010) cited in Malo (2018), content analysis can be utilized for the analysis of qualitative data that comes in the form of text, sounds or pictures. In the current research, the researchers have used the content analysis approach for quantifying the responses of the interviewed translators. As such, the responses have been categorized into statements on the basis of a number of themes pertinent to the reasons behind translators' bias in translating political texts and the techniques and strategies that are thought to minimize such bias. The data were categorized and presented in tables. The following figure demonstrates the steps of analysing the qualitative data that is adhered in the form of text.
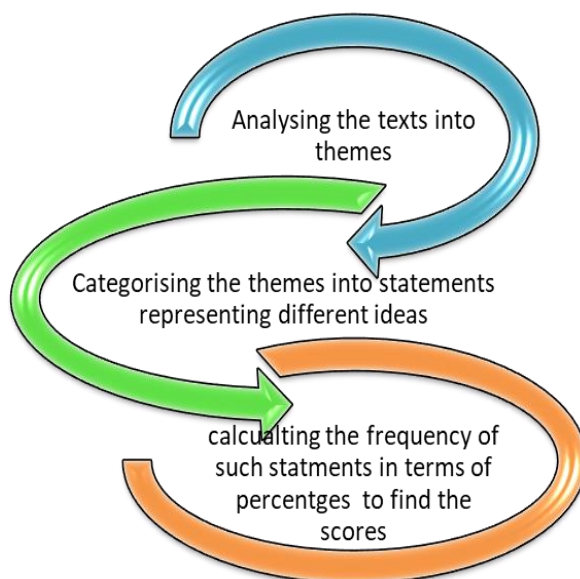
- Data Analysis and Discussion of Results

It is worthwhile that the data analysis and discussion of the results will be orderly presented in the light of the questions posed in the interviews held with the sample of translators. As such, since Questions 1 and 2 are of the Yes-No type, the sample of translators' responses will be put forward based on the frequency and percentage of Yes and No answers. Consider Table 1:

Table (1): Frequency and Percentage of Yes and No Answers to Questions 1 and 2

	Questions	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
1	Have you received any instruction from your agency with regard to how to reflect their ideology in your translation?	Yes	7	70%
		No	3	30%
2	If you have not received any instruction from your agency, are you still aware of your agency's ideology?	Yes	8	80%
		No	2	20%

It is evident from table 1 that a noticeable portion of the sample of translators comes under the influence of their agencies in terms of reflecting the latter's ideology in their translations. This is evident from their answers to Question no.1 with the frequency 7 and the percentage 70%. As for Question no.2 which states "If you have not received any instruction from your agency, are you still aware of your agency's ideology?", again a high number 80 and percentage of the sample of selected translators 80%, percentage of translators stated that they are familiar with their agencies' ideologies in spite of the fact that they do not receive instructions their agencies in this respect.

Accordingly, hypothesis no.1 (1) bias occurs in the translations of political discourse.

Concerning the data collected by means of Questions 3, 4 and 5, it is crucial to highlight that the qualitative data cannot be analysed unless they come under content analysis in the first place. Such analysis requires categorizing the data into main themes that were shared by the sample of selected translators as they were giving answers to questions 3, 4 and 5 during the interview.

Table 2 demonstrates the themes derived from the sample of translators' answers to question no.3 which states: "Based on your experience, what is the role of ideology in altering translators' neutrality and guiding them to turn biased?".

Table (2): The Themes related to Ideology in Shaping Translators Bias

	Categories
Category Statement	The influencing role of ideology.
	Ideology as a main element in politics.
	The ideology of the agencies.
	The Role of different types of ideology.
	The policy of the media agency and the ideology of their receivers.
	Adopting a certain ideology due to affiliation to a media group.

It is evident from table 2 the role of ideology in affecting translators' neutrality and turning them to be biased. The 10 interviewed translators referred to the effective role of ideology as a main element in the political domain and highlighted its impact on their neutrality when translating political discourse for the agencies and media means they are working for. Again, hypothesis no.2 which states: ideology plays a paramount role in turning translators of political discourse into biased is accepted.

With regard to the reasons behind the sample of translators' bias, the data collected by means of Q4, namely "What in your opinion are the reasons behind translators' bias when they translate political texts?" have also been subjected to content analysis and duly categorized into three main themes, namely political, social and personal as demonstrated in Table 3:

Table (3): Themes of the Reasons behind Translators Bias

	Themes	Reasons
Category Statement	**Political**	- The policy of media agency.
		- Political beliefs.
		- The ideology and policies of the agency.
		- Political background
		- Media agency instructions.
		- Compliance with the agency.
		- Political affiliation of the translator.
		-The common cause of a specific nation and the persecution endured by them.
		-The aggression and tyranny exercised by the rivalling parties or countries.
		- Allegiance to a certain ideology, party or way of thinking.
	Personal	- The ideology of the translator.
		- Moral and ethical responsibility based on backgrounds and respecting the place of living and the place of work which is the source of income.
		- Gaining a point in ideological rhetoric.
		- Getting better job opportunities.
		- Economic reasons.
		- Avoiding political ramifications.
		- Well paid if biased.
		- Lack of security.
		- Fear of the consequences if the task is misrepresented and misunderstood
	Social	- The traditions and values.
		-The region where translator lives.
		- Following the community beliefs.

It is evident from Table 3 that a bulk of reasons stands behind translators' adoption of bias in the translation of political discourse. The content analysis of the translators answers to question no.4, and duly the themes that are derived from such analysis have highlighted that three types of reasons, namely political, personal and social play a vital role in bringing about bias in the translation of political discourse. First, 10 reasons that can be labelled

as political have been identified. They cover the domain of politics at large, followed by the impact of the media means that the translators are working for and finally the political background of the translator; though this final reason overlaps with the personal reasons that are our next point of discussion. Second, 9 personal reasons that are related to the interviewed translators in terms of the different issues related to their personal lives could be drawn upon as the related themes based on the content analysis of their answers to Q 4. Third, 3 social reasons have also been deduced as relevant themes derived from the answers by

the interviewed translators to question 4. The 3 reasons highlight the influence of the community in terms of the dominant beliefs, traditions and values on translators' use of bias. On this basis, hypothesis no.3 which reads: There are different reasons behind the occurrence of bias in the translation of political discourse is accepted.

Finally, Table 4 demonstrates the procedures suggested by the interviewed translators to minimize bias in translating political texts categorized according to the themes derived from the data collected by means of Question 5 which   reads:

Table (4): Themes of the Procedures for Minimizing Bias in Translating Political Discourse

	Themes
Category Statement	- Working professionally.
	- Ignoring community beliefs, traditions and values.
	- Absence of opposite forces unaccepting of each other, disrespect and inconsideration to each other's rights and rightful ambitions
	- Permission to translate freely and less censorship by parties.
	- Working for Semi-neutral agencies.
	- Non affiliation to any political party.
	- Sticking to morals and ethics.
	- Guaranteeing translators both protection and security.

Table 4 demonstrates the interviewed translators' knowledge and awareness of a set of procedures that can minimize bias in their political translation products. Professionalism has been referred to by most of the interviewed translators who also stated that granting them freedom, protection and security can make them unbiased. Sticking to morals and ethics of the job and ignoring community prevalent traditions and beliefs are further procedures that can put translators on the bath of neutrality so as to come out with unbiased political translation products. Accordingly, hypothesis no.4 which reads: There are remedial procedure that translators are aware of to keep their translations of political discourse unbiased is accepted.

FINDINGS

Following are the findings arrived at in light of the analysis of data collected by means of the interview:

- Bias heavily occurs in the translation of political discourse.
- Ideology forms a main reason behind bias in the translation of political discourse.
- Translators working for the agencies in charge of the different mass media come under the influence of these agencies.
- Three sets of reasons, mainly political, personal and social impact the translation of political discourse and turn them into biased,
- Political and personal reasons form almost all the reasons behind bias in the translations of political discourse.
- The biased translators are aware of the procedures to minimize bias in their translation.
- Granting translators freedom and protection is a main procedure that enables translators to

minimize bias in their translations.

CONCLUSION

Theoretically speaking, in the current research, two main topics, namely discourse and

bias with reference to many other related subtopics have been heavily attended to. That is followed by approaching the two topics adjacently under the title "Bias in the Translation of Political Discourse" with focus of the causing factors; i.e., reasons and the procedures that may lead to minimizing bias in the translation of political discourse. Practically speaking, to shed more light on the topics under study, the research adopted "interview" as the research tool to gather information from a selected sample of translators working for different agencies in charge of the mass media in KR. The interviews also aim at validating the set of hypotheses stated at the beginning of the research which read**:** Bias occurs in the translations of political discourse; Ideology plays a paramount role in turning translators of political discourse into biased; There are different reasons behind the occurrence of bias in the translation of political discourse; and there are remedial procedures that translators are aware of to keep their translations of political discourse unbiased. The answers given by the sample of the selected translators have validated and duly proved the acceptability of the four preceding hypotheses.

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Appendix (I)

Yes – No Questions (2 Questions):

1- Do you receive instruction from your agency with regard to how to reflect their ideology in your translation?

2- If you do not receive instructions from your agency, do you feel aware of your agency's ideology?

Open-Ended Questions (3 Questions):

3- Based on your experience, what is the role of ideology in altering translators' neutrality and guiding them to turn biased?

4- What in your opinion are the reasons behind translators' bias when translating political texts? (Reasons are supposed to be personal, political and social).

5- What in your opinion are the procedures that translators can use to minimize/avoid bias when translating political texts?