

Arabic Localisation: key case studies for Translation Studies

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the practices of Arabic localisation as it presents a neglected area of localisation research, localising to a developing market. The thesis aims to establish a connection between localisation and Translation Studies, by exploring the ways in which this area can be theorised starting from the approaches developed by Lawrence Venuti (in particular the notions of foreignisation and domestication), and Christiane Nord (translation as interpersonal activity). Creating a theoretical framework which marries the cultural turn and functionalist approaches helps address the dynamics of Arabic localisation on both micro and macro levels. The thesis also aims to provide a holistic view of Arabic localisation, by considering translation processes and outcomes, and by attempting to understand how Arabic localisation is perceived by its target audience.

In order to achieve these goals, the thesis presents three case studies devoted, respectively, to the *FIFA 15* video game, the Knorr website and the educational platform Blackboard Learn. It follows a mixed method approach to answer about the unique nature of each case study. This includes text analysis which covers each medium's localisation literature, the Arabic translated content of the selected products and related business articles. In addition, relevant online materials, such as gaming fora and Youtube gaming channels, are analysed to assess the response of the *FIFA* and *Knorr* target audience to the translation they receive. Due to the privacy of *Blackboard Learn's* content and users, access to a student's and an instructor's accounts were sought from an Arabic university, and a questionnaire was developed to assess quantitatively and qualitatively the Arabic users' response to the platform's Arabic localisation.

The significance of this thesis lies in its methodology and findings. Employing strategies from a range of backgrounds, academic, professional and social, produces a novel methodology for translation research and for addressing the complexity of the discipline of localisation, as well as understanding the effect of its technical and commercial aspects on translation practices and outcomes. By approaching localisation from a Translation Studies perspective, the thesis contributes to both disciplines. The thesis highlights the ways in which localising to a developing market is different from many of the practices discussed in the localisation

literature. In addition, the context of Arabic localisation proves to be a fertile ground where Venuti's theory of foreignisation and domestication can be relocated, and the debate about it acquires new nuances.

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1 Introduction

1.1 General Overview

During my MA, in what was a multilingual business translation class, the lecturer asked us about the language in which we would read the manual of a newly-bought piece of technology. Whilst my German, Italian, Spanish, Russian and Mexican colleagues answered that they do that in their respective languages, my answer was that I read the manuals in English. To an extent, this PhD is an attempt to explore why Arabic localisation is different from localisation in other languages.

The dynamics of Arabic localisation is unique, due to the Arabic market's position in the international market scheme. In localisation projects moving from English to other languages, international markets are linguistically categorised into tiers based on the revenues they are expected to generate. Most localisation research focuses on the first tiers markets: major European and major Far Eastern languages. The Arabic market belongs to the third tier, growing markets (Brooks 2000), which is often overlooked in localisation research. The significance of Arabic localisation lies in it being an area where conflicting forces are at play. The high cost of localising to the Arabic market, due to the sophistication of its language and its various linguistic structures and sub cultures, is a risk to the profits companies are aiming to make. Fulfilling the goal of Arabic localisation, facilitating products linguistically and culturally to the Arabic audience, is an impediment to the companies' interest of tapping the potential of the Arabic market. This point will be explained in detail in the following chapter.

As an industry claiming to facilitate products linguistically and culturally to users, the target users' opinion on the translation they receive, despite its prime importance, is seldom discussed. Moreover, localisation research usually focuses on processes and outcomes and is rarely theorised in terms of Translation Studies. This thesis addresses both gaps by attempting to theorise a neglected part of localisation research: localising to a developing market, and to give an insight into the Arabic users' response to Arabic localisation. By doing so, the thesis contributes to both localisation research and Translation Studies. By examining and analysing the processes of Arabic localisation through the lens of translation theories, the research will help situate localisation within the theoretical context of Translation Studies. It will identify the key agents in the translation process of localisation, the source text and author, the target

text and audience. In return, the application of translation theories in the context of Arabic localisation allows them to be further illuminated and developed. This research will highlight the position of languages, in terms of dominance and marginality, in the business context in comparison with the languages' positions traditionally discussed in the literary context. The research will also highlight the effect of the languages' positions on translation, its processes, outcomes and reception. In other words, this thesis marries localisation research and Translation Studies, and allows both disciplines to communicate.

The research in hand is about localisation and translation, hence, the term 'Arabic market' is used instead of the 'MENA region' or the 'Middle East'. The latter are financial and political terms used to refer to a defined geographical area, which includes other languages beside Arabic, namely Farsi, Hebrew and Turkish. Therefore, I decided to use the term 'Arabic market' to refer specifically to the market targeted by Arabic localisation. By using the term 'Arabic market', the area's diglossic situation is acknowledged, which is unified by Modern Standard Arabic while each of its multiple locales is distinguished with a regional dialect. In the thesis chapters, when specific locales within the Arabic market are discussed, the term 'locale' will be defined by an Arabic region, Saudi locale, Egyptian locale... etc, and will replace the term 'Arabic market'.

Localisation presents a special type of translation, where technology and commerce govern the translation process. In the context of localisation, technical products, software, websites, video games, to name a few, are the subject of translation. The texts required for translation are not self-contained, but are embedded in the products' source code. Therefore, it is a common practice of localisation to move the translatable texts from the source code to separate files. The advantage of this is that translators can work on the textual files only, while the source code remains private and protected from breaking. However, this procedure destabilises the notion of text, since it no longer features defined boundaries or linearity; instead the text is fragmentedly presented. Accordingly, its translation process is not performed in a linear fashion. Texts are usually translated in a text editor or a localisation tool, or are arranged in spreadsheets. When the translation is completed, the textual files are recompiled, by localisation engineers, in the products' source code, and, hence, the localised versions of the products are created.

The goal of localisation is to offer target users an equivalent experience to the original

product. The size of the target experience is decided based on the return on localisation investment. According to the linguistic categorisation of localisation, each market tier receives fully localised, partially localised or merely enabled products (Brooks 2000). The Arabic market, which is the focus of this thesis and belongs to the third tier, usually receives partial localisation. This means that the Arabic experience of the localised products is not complete, but is a portion of the original. For the previous technical and commercial reasons, Arabic localisation is observed as a fluid translation process which does not move from a start point to an end.

Furthermore, localisation is a different type of translation in that technical products are multi-textual and multimodal. The scope of a single product often encompasses a variety of text types: general texts which present the product's subject matter, legal texts which present the company's terms and conditions, and, possibly, technical texts which present messages from the operating system. Moreover, advances in modern technology allow products to include textual elements in audio formats in addition to written texts. The textual and media complexities of the technical products require processes of collaborative work between localisation engineers and teams of translators, where each agent is responsible for a particular aspect of the product's localisation. Further processes of functional and localisation quality assurance (QA) are essential to ensure the product's functionality and to cover the traces of the collaborative work, before the localised product can reach its target audience as a unified content. Studying the localisation/translation of such products helps shed light on the interpersonal aspect of translation and identify the multiple agencies involved in the process. This allows us to observe the translation process dynamics taking place beneath the surface of the translated text.

The interpersonal aspect of localisation is featured in the product's consumption in addition to its production. Beside the collaborative work of translators and localisation engineers, users tend to have active roles in shaping their translated experience. Today, users are empowered by freedom of choice; they can choose the language in which they want to operate the product, and in some cases, their empowerment can reach as far as being able to alter the product's translation. Hence, localisation is observed as a process in continuous progress, which does not end with distributing and selling the product. In this respect, localisation presents a translation in motion, an unconventional process which probes the

boarders and boundaries of key notions such as those of the source text, the translator and the target audience.

1.2 Research Questions

This thesis sets out to examine Arabic translation practices under the influence of the technical and commercial dynamics of localisation. It aims to describe the phenomena of translation as it manifests itself in the context of Arabic localisation and in light of the technical and commercial processes explained in the localisation literature and digital media. By linking the phenomenon of localisation to translation theories, the thesis also seeks to establish general principles by means of which Arabic localisation can be explained and predicted. By studying translation as one component of the Arabic localisation's tripartite process, technology, commerce and translation, this thesis seeks to make methodological and theoretical contributions to Translation Studies research. The thesis applies the principles of Descriptive Translation Studies in a manner that acknowledges the three aspects of Arabic localisation, translation, technology and commerce.

The objective of this research is to examine translation practices and outcomes in the specific context of Arabic localisation, and to explore the target users' perceptions of these translations. In pursuing this goal, the thesis seeks to answer a number of questions: what is the connection between Arabic localisation and Translation Studies? In what way can theoretical modules which are usually applied to translation illuminate practices of Arabic localisation? How are the translations produced by Arabic localisation perceived and used by Arabic users?

1.3 Research Methodology

To achieve the research goals, I decided to undertake individual case studies each illuminating certain aspects of Arabic localisation and collectively drawing attention to its peculiarities. Therefore, the case studies had to be carefully selected with defined targets in mind. The case studies are to be selected from different media to offer a broad overview of the processes of Arabic localisation. In addition, the case studies are to demonstrate the ways in which localisation projects utilise the Arabic language diglossia. This is essential for highlighting the varying linguistic structures of the Arabic market. Finally, the case studies are to cover a range of cultural contexts in which localisation/translation is practiced, to offer a rich context for

probing translation theories and to facilitate examining the response of a variety of user demographics. According to these criteria, the research is designed to constitute three case studies, each presenting one of the most discussed medium in localisation research: a video game, a website and a software.

As the first case study, the video game was selected from the most popular titles which were nominated for the IGN (Imagine Games Network) 2014 best Arabic localisation award: *Call of Duty Advanced Warfare*, *Assassin's Creed Unity*, *PES 2015* and *FIFA 2015*. The Arabic localisation of the named titles vary between solely utilising Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), the first two titles, and mixing MSA with regional dialects, the latter two titles. Because the utilisation of regional dialects in video game localisation shows wider appeal to Arabic gamers, the sport titles were prioritised. Furthermore, according to the VGChartz statistics, *FIFA 15* achieved higher sales than *PES 15*, and, hence, the former was selected.

For the website case study, a number of brochure websites were considered, *Pampers*, *Oil of Olay*, *Gillette*, and *Knorr*, due to their culturally laden nature. The *Knorr* website was chosen because its Arabic localisation utilises both forms of the Arabic language, MSA and regional dialects, while specifically targeting three Arabic locales within the Arabic market, Saudi, Egyptian and Emirati. This contrasts with the Arabic localisation of the *FIFA 15* video game, which follows a similar linguistic approach for targeting the entire Arabic market.

For the software case study, the choice was made between two prominent software localised into Arabic, the *Microsoft Word* and the learning management system *Blackboard Learn*. The latter was chosen after reaching an agreement with an Arabic university for providing access to a demo *Blackboard Learn* account, which allowed viewing the localised content which is otherwise prevented by the exclusive nature of the software. The advantage of the *Blackboard Learn* as a case study is that the software targets a defined user demographic which balances those of the first case studies. The *FIFA 15* video game mainly targets a male audience, while the target audience of the *Knorr* website is mainly female, and in contrast, the audience of *Blackboard Learn* is not defined by gender, but by academic profession. In addition, the linguistic approach of the *Blackboard Learn* Arabic localisation, which solely relies on MSA in targeting the whole breadth of the Arabic market, complements the other case studies and establishes a strong thesis structure.

By selecting case studies from a range of media, user demographics and linguistic contexts,

the thesis is set out from the start as a heterogeneous study. While this design aims to provide an overview of the complex scene of Arabic localisation, it proves to be a major research challenge. Researching Arabic localisation based on a bottom-up approach requires a malleable methodology which addresses the technical, commercial, linguistic, cultural and theoretical aspects of each case study. Hence, the thesis adopts a mixed methods approach, which is distinguished from the multimethod research (mixing qualitative and quantitative methods) by the possibility of mixing at all phases of the research process. This includes methodologies, data, theories, logics of inquiry and integrating the results to provide a better understanding of the research problem (Lova Meister 2017). Accordingly, different localisation frames, translation theories, methods and data analysis procedures are integrated to unpick the different layers of Arabic localisation.

Situating localisation in a Translation Studies context entails understanding its technical and commercial dynamics and their effect on the translation process. Hence, referring to the literature on video game, website and software localisation is essential for identifying how translation practices are performed in these domains, and the different agents involved in their processes. The professional background of Heather Maxwell Chandler and Stephanie O'Malley Deming (2012) and Miguel Bernal-Merino (2015) helps explain the processes of video game localisation. Nevertheless, the translational approach of Minako O'Hagan and Carme Mangiron (2013) provides a framework for analysing the translated texts of the *FIFA 15* video game. The *Knorr* website case study makes use of John Yunker (2003) and Nitish Singh (2012), who explain the commercial and technical implications to website localisation, and Miguel Jimenez-Crespo (2013) who links the concept of text as understood in Translation Studies to the technicality of website localisation. Finally, the Blackboard Learn case study benefits from Bert Esselink (2000) who offers detailed explanation of the processes of software localisation, and a translation guide for its practitioners.

Interviewing individuals who work in the localisation industry can constitute an additional strategy for better understanding the processes of Arabic localisation. However, attempts to contact the selected products' companies and/or their distributors in the Middle East were fruitless. The lack of input from industry specialists is one of the present research's limitations, and, thus, alternative measures were sought. I emailed Red Entertainment Distribution, the company in charge of localising *FIFA 15* to Arabic, explaining my research and asking their

help in answering certain localisation questions, but did not receive a reply. Alternatively, I sought answers to some questions from recorded interviews with individuals from the named company and the localisation team, which are available on YouTube. In addition, I formally contacted individuals from Unilever, whom I personally know, inquiring about the Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website, but my request received no answer. Therefore, I searched business articles and blogs for market analysis and background information. Finally, I emailed Blackboard Master Distributor for the Middle East (BME) inquiring about the Arabic localisation of the software. Only general information was provided, such as the year when the first Arabic version was released and the functions available in Arabic. As a result, I followed a similar research approach to that of the *Knorr* case study.

Approaching Arabic localisation from a Translation Studies perspective entails creating a theoretical framework which addresses both the production and consumption aspects of the translation process, in order to provide a holistic view of Arabic localisation. Therefore, a theoretical framework is designed to address the dynamics of Arabic localisation on both micro and macro levels, by combining a functionalist approach and the cultural turn. Christiane Nord's theory of translation as interpersonal interaction (2007) is used to highlight the multiple agents involved in the Arabic localisation process, to identify the changes occurring to their roles in the localisation context, and to explain the ways in which they differ from their traditional definitions in Translation Studies. In addition, Lawrence Venuti's theory of the translator's invisibility and the strategies of foreignisation and domestication (2008) are used to underline the Anglophone hegemony in the business context, which complements his theorisation in the literary context. Applying both theories to the context of Arabic localisation allows them to be examined beyond their traditional boundaries, and allows this thesis to offer a theoretical contribution to the field of Translation Studies.

Venuti criticises the fluent translation tradition prevailing in contemporary British and American cultures, and describes it as 'trade imbalance':

British and American publishers... have reaped the financial benefits of successfully imposing English language cultural values on a vast foreign readership, while producing cultures in the United Kingdom and the United States that are aggressively monolingual, unreceptive to foreign literatures, accustomed to fluent translations that invisibly inscribe foreign texts with

British and American values and provide readers with the narcissistic experience of recognizing their own culture in a cultural other. (ibid, p. 12)

Therefore, Venuti rejects domesticating translation, which promotes a tendency of reading translations mainly for meaning, and highlights the latter's plurality and contingent relation. Alternatively, he calls for foreignising translation which aims to construct an image of the other by utilising marginal and nonstandard materials in the receiving situation. In that, Venuti views foreignisation as a way of resisting the Anglophone hegemony in the context of literary translation.

In the business context, the Anglophone hegemony is observed from a different perspective, which allows us to consider Venuti's theorisation from an opposite angle. English dominates the industry of technology, and, thus, the majority of the translation projects of the field move from English to other languages. British and American industries are reaping financial benefits of imposing their successful technological experiences on vast foreign markets, and in that, British and American cultures are being reconstituted in a cultural other. Accordingly, the English language's position in its relationship with the other is reversed, it is featured in the sending situation, while the other in the receiving situation. In addition, translations of localised products are mainly read for meaning, since they aim to facilitate the product's operation and to maximise its services. Hence, utilising marginal and nonstandard materials in the receiving situation forms linguistic/cultural obstacles which hinder the clarity of meaning and, thus, accessibility to the product's services. In view of Venuti's theorisation, the literary and the localisation contexts are observed as binary opposites. In localisation, foreignisation is not a resistance to the Anglophone hegemony, but a possible risk of spoiling the target users' experience, while domestication is not a concealment of the other's identity, but an indication of the Anglophone company's respect for the linguistic and cultural situation of the market from which it is making profits.

Arabic localisation is an interesting context for applying Venuti's theories of foreignisation and domestication (2008), due to the industrial imbalance of the languages/markets involved. In localisation, the logic of translation originates from the relation between languages based on the industrial position of each:

The general picture is of a hierarchy where some languages are central and

used for production, others are semi- central and impose strong constraints on consumption, and still others are virtually excluded from the relations of production, consumption, and translation... Within this hierarchy, translation tends to move from centralised production to semi- central consumption. This often means going from English to all the major languages of the world. (Pym 2014, p. 134)

When translation projects move between relatively equal centralised production languages, which are the focus of most localisation research, the dynamics of language power, discussed by Venuti in the literary context, are hardly witnessed. However, when translation projects move from English, a centralised production language, to Arabic, a semi-central consumption language, the hierarchy of languages and markets intensifies, and allows Venuti's theory to take on fascinating new resonances.

Nord's interpersonal interaction (2007) is highly relevant to the context of Arabic localisation. Although her theory was not established in consideration of the localisation industry, it nevertheless helps illuminate the dynamics of a commissioned translation project, and pinpoints the roles of the agents involved in it. Therefore, the theory of interpersonal interaction gives a clear description of the agents involved in Arabic localisation and their roles. In return, the dynamics of Arabic localisation support Nord's observation/perception that these roles do not always coexist, and adds to it by demonstrating that they occasionally overlap or a few of them become absent altogether.

An additional challenge arises from fulfilling the aim of understanding the Arabic users' perception of Arabic localisation. Addressing the breadth of the Arabic market and attempting to reach as broad an audience as that targeted by Arabic localisation makes it difficult to value accurately how the translation is perceived by its target audience. In an attempt to overcome this limitation, the research combines methodologies from humanities and social sciences. Commercial articles and media coverage of the selected products' performance in the Arabic market are considered. This type of text analysis is sought to offer a better understanding of the context for which these products are commissioned and the ways in which their localisations are used.

Additional methods are also used to fulfil the same aim, yet they differ according to the nature

of each product and the way in which its target users interact. For the *FIFA 15* case study, YouTube instruction videos and online fora for Arabic gamers are explored to understand the Arabic gamers' attitudes to the Arabic localisation of the game. For the *Knorr* website case study, the website's typed and taped recipes are analysed and compared with similar texts from equivalent local culinary websites, as a means for foregrounding the Arabic users' perception of the *Knorr* website Arabic localisation. Exploring Arabic universities' online fora is not an effective method for assessing the *Blackboard Learn* users' response to its Arabic localisation due to the academic nature of the fora's content, which does not address qualitative discussions of the software's localisation. Therefore, surveying Arabic users of the *Blackboard Learn* is the method which best suits the exclusive nature of the software and illuminates its users' opinion on its Arabic localisation. Such method was not necessary for the *FIFA* and the *Knorr* case studies due to public nature of the products' content and their users' qualitative discussions. For the *Blackboard Learn* case study, a questionnaire was designed in consideration of the target users' traits. Arabic participants are known to be demotivated by open-ended questions, which require reflection and elaboration. To ensure higher response rate, a quantitative approach is adopted by formulating closed-ended questions in light of the software's Arabic localisation analysis. By circulating the survey among Arabic universities and academics, the aim is to use quantitative data to reach qualitative results. Despite their different approaches, all used methods only provide general sense of how the products' Arabic translations are perceived, but lack accurate/specific figures due to the difficulty of encompassing as a broad an audience as the Arabic users.

1.4 Thesis Outline

The literature review chapter seeks to establish a context for Arabic localisation in the Arabic and English literature on localisation and Translation Studies. The chapter attempts to answer questions including: how are translation practices affected by technology and finance in the localisation industry? How is Arabic localisation acknowledged in the localisation literature? How is Arabic localisation acknowledged in the Arabic translation literature? What is the historical background for localisation in the Arabic translation literature? How can translation theories and the localisation literature on different media shape the structure of the selected case studies?

The first case study, the *FIFA 15* video game, seeks to introduce how translation is practiced in the context of video game localisation. The chapter aims to address the following questions: how do translation practices change according to each of the video game's modality/models? How stable is the role of the source text in the video game localisation? How do advancements in the medium of video games affect translation practices as we know them? How do domestication and foreignisation manifest themselves in the context of video game localisation? How are the different linguistic structures of the Arabic market utilised in video game localisation? How does the translators' visibility affect the Arabic experience of the *FIFA 15* video game? How do Arabic gamers respond to the translators' visibility?

The second case study, devoted to the *Knorr* website, further explains the connection between localisation and Translation Studies. The chapter seeks to answer questions such as: how does the context of website localisation destabilise the notion of text as it is frequently conceptualised in Translation Studies? And how does this affect its translation? How is partial website localisation to the Arabic market performed? What are the linguistic structures involved in the Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website and how do they interact with each other? How is Arabic diglossia utilised in website localisation, and how does it affect the Arabic users' perception of domestication and foreignisation? How do the roles of the author and the target audience overlap in the Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website? In which ways are domestication and foreignisation observed when localising a culinary website to a sub-culture market? How do domestication and foreignisation function differently in the context of localising to a third-tier market?

The third case study, *Blackboard Learn*, provides additional insight on the malleable practices of translation in the localisation industry. The chapter sets out to address questions such as: how does the localisation of *Blackboard Learn* destabilise the notion of the source text? How does the context of *Blackboard Learn* probe the notion of the target user as it is understood in Translation Studies? How are the primary users of *Blackboard Learn* affected by their position in the hierarchy of *Blackboard Learn* users? How does the Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn* allow the concept of foreignisation to be expanded beyond Venuti's discussions?

1.5 Conclusion

In the industry of localisation, translation practices are masked by the technical and commercial dynamics, and, thus, localisation is rarely appreciated as a context worthy of being theorised. This thesis highlights Arabic localisation as an important area of research, and applies Translation Studies theories to its micro and macro dynamics. By undertaking three distinctive case studies, the thesis is designed to be indicative, but not all encompassing, of the processes of Arabic localisation. It looks beyond the commercial and technical implications and identifies translation contexts where Arabic localisation and Translation Studies intersect. The thesis discusses the interpersonal aspect of the Arabic localisation process by investigating long-established notions of Translation Studies, such as the author, the source text, and the target audience, as they manifest in Arabic localisation. In addition, the thesis gives value to the international context in which Arabic localisation takes place and the ways in which the latter is influenced by the former. In view of the hegemonic relation of English with other languages in the literary context, a similar language hierarchy is identified in the business context where vastly different markets, such as Arabic and English, are at play

2 Contextualising Arabic Localisation

2.1 Introduction

Despite being an important subject for research, Arabic localisation is yet to receive the critical attention it deserves. Arabic localisation is practiced as a profession far more than it is academically researched. The scarcity of Arabic localisation research is potentially due to its unexplored academic value and its multifaceted nature, the multidisciplinary of localisation and the multiple layers of the Arabic language/culture. This chapter aims at setting the context for researching Arabic localisation, by exploring the existing localisation literature, underlining the significance of Arabic localisation, emphasising its value to Translation Studies and defining the relevant theories and contexts to this thesis.

The chapter starts by creating a theoretical frame explaining language relations in the localisation industry, translation directionality, the commercial plans for addressing international markets and the classification of languages/markets in such plans. Based on the suggested frame, the current localisation research is observed as being inclined to focus on certain languages/markets, indicating a niche for Arabic localisation research. The chapter then assesses the gap for Arabic localisation, by surveying the English and Arabic academic literature on localisation. The localisation literature which currently exists covers different aspects of the industry's commercial, technical, cultural and translational processes, but seems to address Arabic localisation only as a footnote. When surveying the Arabic translation literature, a bigger gap for Arabic localisation research can be identified. The Arabic literature lacks consensus on an equivalent term for localisation, and instead offers multiple Arabic terms, including Arabisation, regionalisation and domestication, which are interchangeably used to refer to the concept of localisation. The most common terms are explored in respect of their origin, definition, debate and connection to Translation Studies. In addition, the Arabic studies related to localisation are explored, revealing a fragmented approach by which a single aspect of Arabic localisation is addressed. From there, the chapter moves to explaining the commercial, technical and linguistic value of researching Arabic localisation and its significance to Translation Studies. Finally, the chapter explains the integrated theoretical framework this thesis adopts for reading its three

case studies.

2.2 Arabic Localisation: A Blind Spot

Localisation is generally understood to mean the process of making a product “linguistically and culturally appropriate to the target locale (country/region and language) where it will be used and sold” (Esselink 2000, p. 3). The globalisation of technical products allows localisation to highlight the position of languages in the “world language system” (de Swaan 2002), cited in Pym (2014, p. 134). Pym’s discussion of the translation directionality of localisation, which was presented in the introduction, is the starting point from which the niche for Arabic localisation research can be explained. Hence, the same quotation is restated here:

The general picture is of a hierarchy where some languages are central and used for production, others are semi- central and impose strong constraints on consumption, and still others are virtually excluded from the relations of production, consumption, and translation. (ibid, p. 134)

Localisation is viewed as a practice “marked by a strong directionality”, where translations move from languages of production to languages of consumption (ibid). Saying that, the possibility of languages occasionally trading places, where translation can move between almost equally production languages, such as English to German or German to English, is not excluded. Nevertheless, given that English dominates the production of technology, we find localisation projects moving from English to other languages, especially those discussed in academia, are larger in volume. Hence, the dominant directionality of localisation from English to other languages is the focus of this thesis.

Addressing international markets through localisation is a costly and a time-consuming task, thus, companies tend to follow a localisation plan to deliver their projects. As mentioned in the introduction, in localisation, international markets are defined linguistically rather than geographically:

The Spanish market is the aggregate of Spain, Mexico, Argentina, etc.—a total of 22 countries—not just Iberian Spain; “German” is similarly an aggregate of

Germany, Austria, and part of Switzerland.

The primary criterion for assigning markets to categories is revenue from localised products... We use four major categories ("tiers") in the planning process:

Tier 1. The largest international markets (Japanese, German, French) for which the majority of products are localised.

Tier 2. Markets large enough to justify substantial investment in localisation (Dutch, Korean, Brazilian Portuguese) but an order of magnitude smaller than Tier 1.

Tier 3. Small but growing markets (Portuguese, Arabic, Hungarian) for which a subset of products with broad appeal is localised.

Tier 4. Emerging markets of limited potential (Thai, Romanian, Vietnamese) for which only core products such as Windows are localised. (Brooks 2000, p. 48)

Most academic research focuses on localisation to languages of the first tiers' markets (Esselink 2000; O'Hagan 2005; Jimenez-Crespo 2008; Bernal-Merino 2015). This led some researchers, such as Schäler (2003), to realise the technical linguistic gap the localisation industry has created. Confining the technical content within the limits of equally industrial and wealthy languages seems to exclude "minority" languages from the digital world. Therefore, Schäler dedicates his work to mending the digital gap and finds the solution in crowdsourcing, due to its voluntary nature. Nevertheless, with localisation to the third-tier languages, developing markets, being overlooked, the gap in localisation research is still present.

2.3 A Gap in Localisation Research

Since its beginning in the late 1990s through to today, localisation research has not given the Arabic market the attention it deserves. Throughout the years, a large number of scholars have contributed to localisation research from different perspectives. Esselink (2000) is mainly concerned with the technical aspect of localisation. Bass (2006) and Dunne (2006) provide

professional readings on the subject, while DePalma (2006) and DiFranco (2006) discuss the commercial implication of localisation. Schäler (2003) shows interest in the cultural dimension of localisation. With increasing interest in localisation, its research developed a clearer structure. Chandler and Deming (2012), O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013) and Bernal-Merino (2015) contributed to video game localisation. Sandrini (2005), Bortoli and Ortiz-Sotomayor (2009) (2009) and Jimenez-Crespo (2009) focused on website localisation. Despite the growing literature, discussions on Arabic localisation remain scarce. Arabic has mostly featured as a footnote in the international localisation theory. Arabic merely appears among a list of targeted languages either in order to explain their divergent nature which makes the localisation process more challenging or to express the scope of a localisation project in which a number of languages are included. Examples of these brief references are:

languages which are written from right to left such as Arabic and Hebrew, must be taken into account and not be ignored. (Anastasiou and Schäler 2010, p. 18)

The project was localised into German, French....Hungarian, Arabic... (DiFranco 2006, p. 53)

According to Microsoft's locale registry, there are currently 20 Spanish locales, followed by 18 English ones, 16 Arabic and 15 French. (Jimenez-Crespo 2010, p. 18)

In the United Nations meetings, for example, speeches in Chinese or Arabic may be rendered into English and then interpreted into the remaining official languages from that intermediary version. (Pym 2014, p. 126)

Yunker (2003) is among the limited number of writers who addresses Arabic more completely in his research. His short chapter on Arabic (ibid, p.390-401) overviews the linguistic and technical challenges of localising a website into the Arabic language. The issues he tapped into are Arabic language bi-directionality, cursive script, characters changing shape according to their position in a word and the obstacle of some software lacking Arabic language support. Gross (2016) also talks about localising to the Arabic language and culture in the field of website localisation.

However, her discussions superficially tap the cultural aspects of the Arabic market and the technical aspects of its language, which concludes in the localisation of logos and images and respecting the Arabic language directionality. Such references aside, Arabic is rarely the subject of localisation research properly investigating the complexity of the language and its market.

2.4 A Gap in Arabic Research

Studies of translation are deeply embedded in the history of the Arabic language offering rich resources for translation researchers. However, localisation is still a novel subject in Arabic translation research, and, thus, it lacks a comprehensive study covering the tripartite process of Arabic localisation, technology, commerce and translation. The immaturity of localisation research in Arabic is observed in the multiplicity of the Arabic terms expressing the concept of localisation, and in the fragmented approach of its studies, discussing a single aspect of Arabic localisation. This section explores in depth the common Arabic terms for localisation, and provides an overview of the Arabic literature on Arabic localisation, whether written in Arabic or English.

2.4.1 Multiplicity of Terms

Despite the high volume of localised products sold and used in the Arabic market, there seems to be a lack of consensus on the Arabic term expressing the concept of localisation. This section presents the three main lexica used by academics and/or professionals to refer to the concept of Arabic localisation. Each of these terms is discussed in respect of their origin, definition, debate and connection to the theory of translation.

2.4.1.1 Arabisation

The most common term for localisation is (تعريب) Ta'reeb, which means Arabisation. Arabisation is mainly used by academics to refer to translating the technical content into Arabic. Arabisation holds a historical reference, as it was first coined by Caliph Omar Bin Alkhat'tab during the 7th century (Sabrah and Elhinnawi 2003). In his time, the Islamic state had extended its boundaries encompassing the territory of what had previously been parts of the Roman Empire. The strategies used for managing the once simple Islamic state were no longer sufficient. Therefore, Caliph Omar ordered that the Roman managerial systems be Arabised (ibid). In a way, these

systems resembled the core notion of today's ministries. Arabic officials were assigned to oversee the practices of these ministries in order to learn and Arabise them. This was the first instance of Arabisation, which later developed into translation practices transferring the massive volume of knowledge from ancient civilisations into Arabic. While the Arabic term for translation (ترجمة *tarjamah*) generally refers to the linguistic transfer from any one language to the other, Arabisation refers to transferring content from different languages to Arabic. Hence, Arabisation is defined as "accommodating a foreign term in Modern Standard Arabic in accordance with the Arabic language grammatical and phonetic rules and in respect of the Arabic system of creating derivatives from roots, otherwise the term will remain foreign and un-Arabised" (Alnamlah 1992, p. 10).

The previous definition shows a tendency to domestication, as translated words need to follow the mainstream of Arabic morphology, in order for them to be judged as Arabised. The connection of Arabisation to domestication is further implied in the Arabisation literature, yet the connection of Arabisation to Arabic localisation, as an intersection of commerce, technology and translation, is rarely indicated. The following sections will explore the Arabic literature on translation and Arabisation, emphasising the role of domestication in Arabic translation and the gap for Arabic localisation research in the Arabic translation literature.

Aldidawy (2002) and Alnamlah (1992) have different views of how translation and Arabisation are related. While the first views translation as a general activity and Arabisation as being one of its practices, the latter perceives the relation otherwise:

The linguistic transfer of translation into Arabic is governed by the Arabisor's (the person who performs Arabisation) adjustment in means of paraphrasing, summarising or adding to the translated concept. In a way, the general idea of the source remains content, yet not necessarily preserved in its original linguistic form. Thus, it is considered Arabisation not translation. The respect an Arabisor receives is far greater than that received by a translator... the linguistic transfer to the Arabic language is considered Arabisation and not merely translation. Hence, Arabisation is more general than translation, whereas

translation is one of its levels or a single part of the general activity. (ibid, p.37-38)

The difference of opinion is due to the position from which each scholar stands. Alnamlah stresses the translator's role and the level of his/her intervention in the source text to make it read like an Arabic text. Therefore, he perceives Arabisation as a high-profile task and places translation, which lacks adaptation and abiding by the Arabic rules, on the periphery. On the other hand, Aldidawi (2002) emphasises the role of translation as an international activity, which facilitates interactions between different languages, and, hence, observes Arabisation as one of many interactions. By differentiating between two types of Arabisation, a strategy and a method, Alkhuri (1992) seems to offer a middle ground opinion. He explains the Arabisation strategy as transliterating a foreign term and articulating it according to the Arabic phonemes; the foreign term becomes a loanword. The Arabisation method, on the other hand, is transferring texts from any language to Modern Standard Arabic (ibid).

Much of the Arabic translation literature on Arabisation pays attention to terminology, providing guidelines and setting criteria for translating scientific and technical content into Modern Standard Arabic. In this particular aspect, Arabisation shows relevance to the concept of Arabic localisation. Aldidawi (2002) identifies the linguistic gap between the eloquence for which the Arabic language is known and the poor Arabic language used today for Arabising technical and computing content. He compares the current situation of utilising Arabisation to accommodate large volumes of technical lexica and content into Arabic with the Arabic translation movement that took place in the 8th century. At that time, when the Arab came into contact with other civilisations, the conceptual and lexical boundaries of the Arabic language were extended to accommodate the breadth of the newly encountered sciences. Back then, as is the case now, some translated texts were poorly Arabised. A famous Arabic writer from Baghdad named Aljahith (776-868) acted as a gatekeeper for the floods of texts being constantly Arabised. He rejected many of the Arabic translations for their poor language, and approved those which were fully Arabised. Aljahith also set criteria for qualified translators stating they should master both the source and the target languages, and that they should be eloquent and have good writing skills. Moreover, translators, in Aljahith's view, should be knowledgeable of the subject of

translation, and have translation experience (ibid, p.223-224).

Aldidawi relates the historical discussion to the problem facing Arabisation in modern times, which is the lack of terminological unification. This problem, he argues, stems from translating the same concept into different Arabic terms by a number of translators who tend to neglect the guidelines for coining Arabic terms and the Arabic language in use. As a result, some translations are being conveyed in obscure Arabic, instead of unlocking the meaning of foreign texts (ibid). The problem intensifies, he adds, when these translations become widely accepted, due to the uncontrolled linguistic freedom of the world wide web, which permits the spread of poor Arabic translations before they receive approval for accuracy. Aldidawi concludes by explaining the negative effect of the current situation of Arabisation on the Arabic language (ibid).

Other publications show a similar interest in Arabisation, with specific consideration to setting modern criteria for coining Arabic terminology. In his book, Alkhuri (1992) provides a translation guide based on four methods. The first is adding a new contextual meaning to an existing Arabic word. The second method is deriving a new word from an Arabic root in accordance with the Arabic morphology. The third is finding an Arabic equivalence for the foreign word. The fourth is Arabising a foreign word and accepting it as a loanword (ibid). Alhashash (2009) dedicates his work to computing translation and provides more detailed syntactical guidelines. He argues Arabic translation should be presented in a sound Arabic structure without the influence of the English syntax. He stresses some rules, such as adjusting the source passive voice to an active voice in Arabic, and starting the Arabic sentence with the verb instead of following the English order. Alhashash also recommends avoiding the English repetitive use of commas between elements in series and complying with the alternative Arabic conjunctions, and using the Arabic structural equivalent of the word “only” rather than providing a literal translation (ibid, p.59-60). For translating instructions in sequence, Alhashash suggests avoiding literal translation, using simple language and deciphering acronyms to translate them in full words (ibid).

In addition, although a large body of Arabic translation literature has investigated the role of Arabisation in the academic context, only a number of publications are discussed to highlight its orientation. In a general view on the value of Arabisation in the Arabic world, Al-Tay'yeb (1997) highlights the role of Arabisation in preserving the Arabic identity. The Arabisation of academic

curricula of all school levels; primary, middle and high school, sciences and scientific terminology and media are, from his perspective, important for preserving the Arabic identity by means of language. In a more focused direction, other researchers discuss the efforts of Arabic academies established in some Arabic countries in Arabising the academic courses and scientific terminology of higher education. Khaleefah (1987) stresses the efforts of the Jordan Academy in Arabising the scientific literature of both the University of Jordan and the University of Yarmouk. In respect of methodology, he recommends avoiding literal translation and relying on linguistic and cultural adaptation. Following his lead, Dosuqi (1999) and Abdul-Aziz (1999) focus on the Arabisation of scientific terminology of higher education in the Egyptian context. While the first talks about his personal contribution to Arabising terminology in the field of psychology within the Department of Philosophy at the University of Cairo, the second discusses the collaborative effort at the Arabic Language Academy in Cairo in the Arabisation of scientific terms.

The main body of Arabisation research highlights domestication as a core principle for Arabic translation, which can be traced from the beginning of Arabic translation until its recent days. Aljahith's concern with the fluency of Arabic translation in the 8th century is advocacy for domestication. Today, this advocacy is still practiced, as different aspects of linguistic and cultural domestication are stressed as criteria for successful Arabic translation. Alkhuri (1992) discusses the morphological aspect of domestication (at the word level), and Alhashash (2009) discusses the syntactical aspect (at the sentence level), while Khaleefah (1987) recommends both linguistic and cultural domestication. In addition, Al-Tay'yeb (1997) stresses the connection of domesticating translation to preserving the Arabic identity. The discussed literature underlines the historical and linguistic implications of Arabisation, yet it seems to overlook the commercial and the technical aspects which are fundamental to Arabic localisation.

2.4.1.2 Regionalisation

The second most common Arabic term for localisation is (أقلمة) Acklamah, which can be translated as regionalisation. The term regionalisation is prevalent among professional translators and localisers, while it is rarely used by academics. Arabic professionals use regionalisation to refer to translating a product's content into the language of the target region, whether it is Modern

Standard Arabic or a regional dialect. Therefore, the term regionalisation is more inclusive than the term Arabisation, which only refers to translating into Modern Standard Arabic. In its commercial sense, regionalisation is not given an approved Arabic definition, but instead, the English definition of localisation is usually translated and presented as the Arabic definition (Omar 2013).

Similar to Arabisation, the roots of regionalisation go back in history, yet not as far as that of Arabisation. Before being used in the localisation industry, regionalisation was first coined to refer to a type of literary translation, and was mainly discussed as a specific form of literary adaptation. Sboul defines regionalisation as:

Replacing a cultural sociological reality in the source text with its equivalent in the target language culture, while considering the meaning in case the situation described in the source text is alien to the target language. Regionalisation is concerned with situational equivalence, the situation described, not equivalence of structure nor lexicon. (2005)

In the 20th century, regionalisation was widely practiced in the Arab world. A piece of, most commonly, French literature was adapted into the norms of the Arabic society and culture. Some authors/translators were known for this type of adaptation, the most prominent among them is Al-Manfaluti (1876-1924). He adapted/regionalised a number of French novels into Arabic; such as Edmond Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac* into *Alsha'er* (the poet) and Alphonse Karr's *Sous les Tilleuls* into *Majdoleen* to name a few.

Al-Manfaluti's *Majdoleen* provides many examples of regionalisation, but one situational equivalence is demonstrated in this section to give a sense of regionalisation. In a conversation between a house owner and a young tenant, the former is complaining about a certain matter and is not willing to end the conversation quickly. The tenant describes him in the following words: (he went on, growling like a camel who has a thorn in its nose).¹ This Arabic expression is used to describe someone who is self-absorbed in his/her annoyance to the extent that s/he does

¹ This is an exegesis translation since the Arabic adjective has no equivalent in English.

not pay attention to what people around him/her might think or feel. While eating from the desert's plants, a camel could commonly get a thorn trapped in its nose. This would make the camel continuously growl in annoyance and lose awareness of the herd's whereabouts. Replacing the French text with an Arabic expression that is culturally laden is considered regionalisation.

Given that, as the Arabic equivalent for localisation, regionalisation is a term used mostly by professionals and not academics, the literature on regionalisation is limited to literary translation discussions. This emphasises an even bigger niche for Arabic localisation research exploring the commercial, technical and translation aspects of its process. Nevertheless, the literature on regionalisation, similar in that to the literature on Arabisation, emphasises the presence of domestication, particularly in terms of cultural adaptation, in the Arabic translation tradition.

2.4.1.3 Domestication

The third Arabic term for localisation is (توطين) *Taw'teen*, in English, domestication. Although it is occasionally used as an Arabic equivalent for localisation, domestication raises controversy among translation professionals. The eligibility of domestication as an Arabic equivalent for localisation is discussed on the Arabic version of the professional translators' community *Proz* (Omar 2013). Some professionals supported using the term domestication, but many others disapproved of it for two reasons. The first reason is that the term domestication is not as commonly used in this context as its counterparts, Arabisation and regionalisation. The second reason is the Arabic term for domestication is, in fact, a creation of Ibn Khaldun, whose translation theory anticipates the work of Venuti. In the 14th century, Ibn Khaldun, in his book *Al-Muqaddimah*, reflected on the method of Arabic translation practised over the centuries, which allowed the Arabic language to alter the identity of the other, by means of translation, to match its own, simply for being a dominant language (Asfoor 2009). When Venuti's theory of domestication and foreignisation (2008), is discussed in Arabic, Ibn Khaldun's terms for Venuti's equivalent concepts are used. Hence, using the Arabic term for domestication allows the concepts of localisation and Venuti's domestication to be confused.

Given that only a few professionals prefer domestication (توطين), as an Arabic equivalent for localisation, the literature on domestication does not offer discussions on its relevance to the

localisation context. Arabic academic research on domestication mostly discusses the term in its relation to Translation Studies, with Ibn Khaldun's take on the concept of domestication in parallel with Venuti's modern stance. In the 8th century, when the Arabic nation came into contact with other civilisations, much of the encountered Greek, Roman and Indian knowledge expressed polytheist religious beliefs. These beliefs were in conflict with the monotheism of Islam. Hence, Arabic translations covered traces of the contradicting faiths by means of domestication, with the aim of protecting the people's faith who were not seen as intellectually ready for reading about such beliefs (Madkur 1997; Asfoor 2009). In the 14th century, Ibn Khaldun commented on the tradition of Arabic translation that has been practiced over centuries. By presenting foreign texts as original Arabic writings, Arabic translation offers an opaque image of the other. The domesticating Arabic translation, Ibn Khaldun explains, is a result of the political power of the Arabic language. Accordingly, domestication is defined as "*translating foreign terms and phrases so they appear as original parts of the (Arabic) language despite being alien*" (Asfoor 2009, p. 38).

Arabic scholars (Madkur 1997; Asfoor 2009) talk about the parallel they find in Ibn Khaldun's and Venuti's theories. Venuti defines domestication as "*the reconstitution of the foreign text in accordance with values, beliefs and presentations that pre-exist it in the target language, always configured in hierarchies of dominance and marginality*" (2010, p. 68). Saying that, Venuti (ibid) views domesticating translation as a sign of the English language's hegemony over other languages. For Anglo-American interests, he observes, foreign cultures are being pressured in translation into being placed in parallel with the English culture's values. In this sense, Venuti and Ibn Khaldun, despite the time difference between them, agree that domestication is the political translation practice of an established linguistic power. Ibn Khaldun relates domestication to Arabic translation during the time of the Islamic reign, while Venuti connects it to English translation in modern times.

Although the Arabic literature on domestication (توطيين) does not contribute to localisation research, it allows us to draw an important conclusion about Venuti's theory of the translator's invisibility, and the of strategies domestication and foreignisation. Despite discussing two different languages, Ibn Khaldun and Venuti are in agreement that a politically powerful

language, due to its economic and scientific supremacy, tends to control its users' perception of the world through domesticating translation. However, their political rationalisation is observed via a snapshot of a language's prime time; neither theorist mentions what becomes of translation practice when the political, economic, or scientific power of the language destabilises. After all, Ibn Khaldun did not live to witness the fall of the Islamic Empire, nor does a decline of the dominance of the English language seem imminent. The political theories of Ibn Khaldun and Venuti are descriptions of a relationship at its peak that does not offer a prediction of the future of this relationship in case the power changes. The effect of the inconsistent political, economic, or scientific position of a language on translation has not yet been acknowledged in translation theory.

The previous exploration shows that the multiplicity of the Arabic equivalents for localisation generates from the variety of linguistic structures utilised in Arabic localisation. This highlights the plurality of Arabic localisation approaches, as opposed to the singular approach known worldwide. In this thesis, the term Arabisation will be used to refer to localisation/translation projects utilising Modern Standard Arabic, while regionalisation will refer to those utilising any of the Arabic regional dialects. Furthermore, the term domestication will be used to describe translations facilitated to the language and culture of the target audience. The multiplicity of the Arabic terms for localisation marks the linguistic wealth of Arabic translation, yet, simultaneously, it underlines the scarcity of Arabic localisation research.

2.4.2 Fragmented Research

As a result of its significance as a technical and commercial activity, Arabic localisation is much more developed as a profession than it is researched as an academic discipline. Therefore, localisation-related studies presented by academics are different in nature from those presented by professionals. Arabic academic research on translation, in its relation to localisation, is mainly concerned with machine translation and its effect on the linguistic quality of the Arabic translation. Conversely, Arabic professional research tends to address subjects closely connected to Arabic localisation, such as the challenges of Arabic localisation, search engine optimisation, and localisation tools supporting the Arabic language. However, such studies are generally

presented in blogs, in a form that answers to the nature of the industry, which is fast and constantly updating. However, these blogs lack the depth academic research requires. Therefore, when assessing the gap for comprehensive Arabic localisation research covering the technical, commercial and linguistic/cultural aspects of the process, only academic research is considered in this thesis.

Gamal (2013a) highlights the gap separating translation as a profession from academia in the Arab World, a gap that continues to widen as the profession keeps pace with the technological advances, while academia remains print-based text focused. Although Gamal's observation explains the immaturity of Arabic localisation research, his research does not address the subject directly. His research is rather dedicated to audiovisual translation, which he defines as:

screen translation (subtitling and dubbing) is only one aspect of the overall field of Audiovisual Translation that looks at other contexts such as audio-description, subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing, same language subtitling, games localisation, translation of the news bar on television, the rising specialisation of documentary translation in addition to a long list of other applications varying from the translation of corporate DVDs to digital culture and the online content industry. (ibid, p.366).

The types of media proposed in Gamal's definition clearly imply the subject of localisation. However, Gamal (2013b,2014) mainly focuses on the sociological factors that lead to the immaturity of audiovisual translation in the Arab World, and the cultural and sociological ways in which audiovisual translation is professionally practiced in each Arabic region. Despite its maturity and concern with the modern type of translation, Gamal's research does not discuss Arabic localisation, or address its technical and commercial aspects.

As indicated by Gamal (2013a), most Arabic academic research is text oriented, and seems to tap into aspects related to Arabic localisation without delving into its technical, commercial or cultural/linguistic implications. Abufardeh and Magel (2008) offer a qualitative study of the linguistic quality of the Arabic technical content. They discuss some challenges facing the Arabic localisation of software, and qualify the outcomes of most localisation projects as linguistically

poor. As a corrective measure, they set standards for Arabic terminology and provide a thorough exploration of the Arabic language; its formal and informal forms, morphological, phonological and calligraphic systems and in-text bidirectionality of its alphabets and numerals. Yassin (2004) follows the same approach by providing a study qualitatively assessing Arabic technical content, discussing its difficulties and suggesting linguistic solutions.

Other studies show special interest in machine translation and use empirical approaches for qualitatively assessing its outcomes. El-Nady (2000) pinpoints the key role of machine translation in light of the increasing volume of information awaiting translation. Consequently, he discusses the advantages and disadvantages of utilising machine translation in the social context. For verification, El-Nady undertakes a case study by employing An-Nakel Al-Arabi software for translating a selection of articles from Arabic and English magazines. The translations produced are, then, revised by 10 collaborative native speakers. A consensus is reached on the translations which are inadequate articles for reading or are unacceptable for first draft translations. This result, El-Nady concludes, is due to the linguistic and cultural peculiarities of the translated articles.

Alqarzae (2004) follows a different empirical approach in relation to website localisation. She studies the advantage of including a translation facility in e-commerce websites as a means of engaging more non-English customers and increasing international sales. Alqarzae views the English dominance over e-commerce as a barrier for a wider spectrum of customers. She suggests a number of solutions and discusses the advantages and disadvantages of each. She chooses the addition of a free translation facility to a website as the most practical and cost-efficient option. In demonstration, Alqarzae discusses *AlMisbar* website's translation facility and verifies in figures its positive effect on increasing sales and customers' trust.

The latter study seems to contradict the previous ones in its endorsement of machine translation, because sales transactions are considered the index of quality and not the translation outcome. Despite its commercial orientation, the study only partially discusses aspects of Arabic localisation without full acknowledgment of its scope. This brief exploration of Arabic academic research shows a clear inclination to textual/linguistic analysis with fragmented attempts to extend the traditional boundaries of Arabic translation research. This indicates a gap for Arabic

localisation research addressing the technical, commercial and translational aspects of the process.

2.5 The Value-Added for Researching Arabic Localisation

Today, many major companies from different fields of technology, such as Microsoft (software), Electronic Arts (video games) and Blackboard (web-based software), localise their products into Arabic. However, Arabic localisation is rarely researched in a comprehensive study acknowledging its commercial, technical and linguistic factors. The significance of Arabic localisation lies in the commercial status of the Arabic market and the sophistication of its language, which strongly influence the localisation/translation process, and its long history of translation and debate on the concepts therein.

2.5.1 Commercial Factors

The importance of the Arabic language for the localisation industry stems from the large number of Arabic speakers and the state of the market it presents. Arabic ranks fourth on the list of the world's most spoken languages (315m speakers Ethnologue 2018), and fourth on the list of the top ten languages on the internet (according to Internet World Stats 2017, <https://www.internetworldstats.com/stats7.htm>). Furthermore, the Arabic market consists of locales with high per capita income levels, such as Qatar, UAE and Kuwait, and others who have low GDP in both aggregate and per capita terms, such as Djibouti, Mauritania and Somalia (Arab-Irish Chamber of Commerce 2012). Despite this dichotomy, the commercial status of the Arabic language remains relatively high, given that the richer locales restore the wealth of the Arabic market by evening out locales with lower economies. In addition, due to its position as a developing market, the technical industry of the Arabic market is premature. Hence, the Arabic market tends to rely on imported (hardware and software) technologies, mostly from Anglophone businesses, which face limited or no local competition. Therefore, the Arabic market is viewed as a potential localisation target for companies aspiring to increase their international revenues.

The commercial situation of the Arabic market configures a bilateral hierarchy of dominance and marginality, making Arabic localisation an interesting case for Translation Studies. One hierarchy

is observed in the relation between the sending and the receiving situations, production and consumption languages/markets (English and Arabic), and the other in the relations within the receiving situation, Arabic locales with strong and weaker economies. These hierarchies of economic power offer a context where Venuti's theory of invisibility (2008) can be probed. As mentioned in the introduction, Venuti discusses the Anglophone relation with other cultures in the literary context. In contrast, Arabic localisation presents a commercial context which demonstrates the relation of Anglophone businesses with a developing market, a market with multiple economic and linguistic structures where some locales/dialects can be used in the service of others. Applying Venuti's theory of invisibility to Arabic localisation is an opportunity for investigating the English language hegemony in the business context and the effect of which on the linguistic choices made in the commercial Arabic translation.

2.5.2 Technical Factors

The potential profits from the Arabic market are jeopardised by the peculiarity of the Arabic language, which makes the technical aspect of its localisation a costly process. Arabic is categorised as one of the bidirectional languages; alphabets are read from right to left while numerals from left to right. In addition, Arabic does not use the Roman alphabet, and its script is written in cursive. The characteristics of the Arabic language impose a number of localisation challenges, which raise the cost of Arabic localisation, which, if not addressed, can negatively affect the presentation of Arabic texts on the product's user interface (UI). The challenges discussed below apply to most product types, to name a few, website, video game, mobile applications. For such challenges, the preventive measures are usually similar, and if not, it will be stated.

As per localising to Asian languages, Arabic localisation requires Unicode enabled environment to avoid texts appearing as empty boxes (Zaki 2012). Moreover, if the localisation environment lacks bidirectional engine support with supported font (ibid), Arabic texts will appear inverted (left to right) and in print (as opposed to cursive) (Figure 1). To address this problem in website localisation, it is suggested to control the text directionality via the HTML tag `<dir="rtl">` (Yunker 2003). Ignoring such presentation issues will result in completely hindering the Arabic text

readability, irrespective of the quality of its translation. Another common Arabic localisation challenge is the location of the punctuation marks in the Arabic texts. Instead of having the full stop, the question and the exclamation marks at the end of the sentence on the left side, they appear on the right side of the sentence (Figure 2). This problem arises when the Unicode right-to-left marker, which provides “invisible formatting codes to set the base direction for... the bidirectional algorithm in plain text”, is not used (Zaki 2012, p. 36). In coordination with the inverted nature of the Arabic directionality, the entire UI should be inverted as well, to offer a complete Arabic localised experience. Mirroring is “the process of creating LTR (left to right) graphics, text, content and user interface for RTL (right to left) or BiDi (bi-directional) languages” (Sarver 2015). Unlike the former issues, punctuation and mirroring do not hinder text readability, but addressing them results in adhering to the Arabic text orientation and enhancing the Arabic experience. Such localisation challenges are supposed to be detected in quality assurance (QA) processes; hence, they are essential for successfully producing Arabic localised UIs (ibid). Addressing the stated technical challenges and performing OA for linguistic testing raise the cost of Arabic localisation.



Figure 1 Arabic text inverted and in print

تسببت موجة البرد التي انطلقت من سيبيريا باتجاه أوروبا الجنوبية في الأسبوع الأخير من شهر فبراير-شباط عام 2018 في انخفاض معدل درجات الحرارة في بعض المناطق الفرنسية بنسبة تتراوح بين 8 درجات و12 درجة مئوية.

وُترجم هذا التغير المفاجئ في أحوال الطقس في جنوب فرنسا من خلال نزول كميات من الثلوج كست شواطئ الساحل اللازوردي وسواحل جزيرة كورسيكا الملقبة بـ"جزيرة الجمال" نسبة أساساً إلى طقسها المعتدل على امتداد فصول السنة.

Figure 2 Punctuations on the opposite side

Linguistic quality assurance is essential for Arabic localisation not only for detecting technical issues affecting Arabic text presentation but for detecting potential translation errors as well. In localisation, translation is usually practiced under the constraints of translation and localisation tools. Translators rarely receive a text as a coherent whole, but "more commonly a list of isolated sentences and phrases... one on top of the other, as a set of vertically arranged items" (Pym 2014, p. 124). In the absence of the "co- text (other neighbouring words in the text) or context (situation of future use)" (ibid. p.126), translation becomes an error-prone practice. However, the return on Arabic localisation investment does not always permit performing such processes, which are likely to be overlooked when localising for locales insisting "less on perfection, finding satisfaction in sincere, albeit sometimes mediocre, efforts" (DePalma 2006, p. 31). The technical aspect of Arabic localisation is governed by its commercial implication. Hence, addressing/overlooking translation or presentation related issues in Arabic localised products is an index of the Anglophone business' relation with the Arabic market.

2.5.3 Linguistic Factors

The cultural aspect of the Arabic language adds to the complexity of Arabic localisation and the value of its research. Arabic is known for its diglossic nature, which benefits from a Modern Standard form and a variety of dialects. The first form is used for official communications, with which all Arabic speakers can be equally addressed, while each dialect, the colloquial Arabic for

every day purposes, distinguishes an Arabic region/country. To a certain extent, the variety of Arabic dialects can be compared to that of the Spanish and the English, yet, Arabic surpasses other multi-locale languages by its unifying Modern Standard form. A form solely communicating to the breadth of the Arabic market presents a cost cutting solution for penetrating the Arabic market without the burden of localising specifically to each of its locales.

Nevertheless, the formality of the Modern Standard form is not always preferred, especially in cases where cultural contexts or specific locales within the Arabic market are addressed. Hence, further domestication is required, and utilisation of the regional dialects becomes essential. Localising a product to a variety of Arabic dialects may seem an expensive solution that cannot be justified by the return on Arabic localisation investment. However, some regional dialects tend to gain popularity in particular contexts where they can simultaneously serve micro and macro levels of Arabic localisation. For instance, while the Egyptian dialect is expected to serve localisation projects addressing the Egyptian locale, it is occasionally used in localisation projects addressing the entire Arabic market. For many years, the Egyptian dialect dominated the Arabic localisation of the Walt Disney Company movies, which were addressed to the wide spectrum of Arabic audiences across the Arabic market and not just to the Egyptian locale. The reason for selecting the Egyptian dialect as the “*lingua franca*” of the Arab World in the film sector is possibly because “Egypt has long dominated the Arab film industry, its movies distributed and watched throughout the region” (Tutton 2011). The same can be said about the Tunisian dialect in relation to football, and the Lebanese dialect in the context of beauty and cosmetics. The diglossic nature of the Arabic language offers multiple linguistic choices for each Arabic localisation project, and, thus, makes Arabic an original case study.

Approaching Arabic localisation based on product-oriented research allows us to observe translation through its process, outcome and reception. Analysis of a selection of Arabic localised products provides a full demonstration of the translation with which Arabic users interact, instances of language transfer, technical presentation of the Arabic text, and utilisation of the Arabic linguistic structures. Based on the textual analysis, questions are raised about the processes of translation, the commercial imperatives behind selecting the utilised Arabic forms, the audiences targeted by these forms and the agents involved in the translation process. Further

questions are raised about how the Arabic audience perceives these translations and the linguistic background of the Arabic audience. Nord's theory of translation as an interpersonal interaction is applied to address the personal questions of Arabic localisation.

2.6 Marrying Arabic Localisation and Translation Studies

To address the multifaceted nature of Arabic localisation, I had to build an integrated theoretical framework based on the multiple relevant disciplines and the contexts of the selected case studies. This thesis draws on theories from Translation Studies, localisation research, marketing, and case studies-related subjects, football and higher education.

2.6.1 Applying Venuti to Arabic Localisation Research

Venuti's theory of the translator's invisibility (2008) forms the backbone of this thesis. Its description of the Anglophone relation with other cultures in the literary context is borrowed to describe the relation of Anglophone businesses with the Arabic (developing) market. Therefore, the concepts of domestication and foreignisation are adjusted according to the context of Arabic localisation where they will be probed. Localisation adopts a functionalist approach to translation, which entails linguistically and culturally facilitating a product to the target locale. Thus, domesticating translation is aimed to serve foreign markets (the cultural other), while foreignising translation is viewed as a sign of disrespect to those markets. In this respect, the contexts of literary translation and localisation show contradicting positions to Venuti's conceptualisation.

Furthermore, in localisation, source texts are multimodal in nature and address technical as well as social contexts. Hence, domestication and foreignisation are not restricted to their textual definitions. Technical foreignisation occurs when the design of the UI is not inverted with respect to the Arabic text directionality (RTL). The mirroring process (Sarver 2015) is important for aligning the UI with the Arabic text orientation and enhancing its readability. Addressing such an aspect of Arabic localisation is considered a technical domestication. The same can be said about respecting the diglossic nature of the Arabic language. Utilising Modern Standard Arabic for written texts and regional dialects for revoicing is viewed as diglossic domestication. Finally, showing awareness of the Arabic market's culture is an act of cultural domestication. O'Hagan

and Mangiron (2013) address cultural adaptation in video game localisation and refer to it by culturalisation. However, I prefer using and modifying Venuti's terms given that the case studies are probing his theory.

As we have seen in the introduction, I have selected a number of case studies to examine the processes, outcomes and reception of Arabic localisation. In the case studies which constitute the central part of this thesis, domestication and foreignisation, in their textual, technical, diglossic and cultural terms, will be explored. The *FIFA 15* video game case study examines the linguistic transfer taking place in the game's printed, on screen and audio elements. Through that, the chapter will introduce the ways in which domestication and foreignisation are featured in Arabic localisation, and will set the ground work for the next chapters' findings. The *Knorr* website case study investigates the translation process, while the *Blackboard Learn* case study assesses the reception of the product's translation by the Arabic audience. In light of their analysis, the *Knorr* and *Blackboard Learn* chapters will propose novel conceptualisations of domestication and foreignisation. Applying the translator's invisibility to the context of Arabic localisation requires good understanding of the translation practices in the context of localisation, and the contexts which relate to the selected products' services.

2.6.2 Translation in the *FIFA 15* Video Game Case Study

In respect of the target-oriented nature of video game localisation, O'Hagan and Mangiron (ibid) take a functionalist approach to their research. Conversely, Chandler and Deming (2012) provide an industrial overview of the processes and practices of video game localisation. Their discussion is not translation focused, but determines the game's elements that require translation. In addition, they explain the commercial and technical aspects, which influence practices of video game translation. Bernal-Merino (2015) occupies a middle ground by providing a professional perspective with translation insights. Due to the functionalist direction of this thesis, O'Hagan and Mangiron's theoretical framework is set as the basis for the *FIFA 15* chapter analysis. In addition, Bernal-Merino's translational perspective is considered, while his professional views as well as that of Chandler and Deming are essential for explaining the technical and commercial aspects of the game's localisation.

Through its multiple communication channels, printed, on screen and voiced, video games feature texts from different types. Because game localisation requires retaining the function of the original game texts, O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013) classify video game texts according to Reiss and Vermeer's text typology. Their classification is applied when analysing the main channels of the *FIFA 15* video game, packaging, in-game text and audio files. Each channel's analysis is examined based on the linguistic transfer of each text type in respect of the context to which the text belongs.

The *FIFA 15* packaging is approached from a marketing perspective and theories of advertising translation are set as a general frame for this section's analysis. Bernal-Merino (2015) provides detailed discussions on video game packaging, and introduces the notion of glocalisation, "the incorporation of creative elements from target countries in product development" (2016b, p. 203), to video game localisation. This section also benefits from Percy and Elliott's marketing insight on packaging (2012), and Adab's views on glocalisation (2000). Retaining the game's English name in the Arabic localisation is discussed in relation to theories of brand name translation (Smith and Klein-Braley 1997; Mooij 2004; Torresi 2010; Liu 2015). In addition, analysis of the legal text in the game's packaging draws on theories of nontechnical legal translation, which address facilitating legal information to the public (Bhatia 1997).

For video game translation, O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013) adopt Nord's translation approach of "documentary translation" where the source text is reproduced as such, and "instrumental translation", where the source text is adapted to a new communicative situation in the target text (ibid, p.172). O'Hagan and Mangiron suggest the first type of translation for messages/terminology belonging to the game platform, and the latter for messages/terminology belonging to the game world. The *FIFA 15* chapter assesses the Arabic translation of the in-game text based on O'Hagan and Mangiron suggested translation strategies. In addition, discussions of the technical and commercial implications of the process benefit from the input of Chandler and Deming (2012), O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013) and Bernal-Merino (2015).

For revoicing audio files, Bernal-Merino (2008) discusses the creative translation strategies practiced by the industry for adding audio files to sports video games. He identifies the addition of human voices to video games as a means for increasing the gamers' enjoyment and the game's

immersion (ibid). Moreover, O'Hagan and Mangiron explain the technique by which video game audio files are created, stitching (2013). Analysis of the revoicing of the *FIFA 15* audio files draws on the previous scholar's views in addition to Humpolík's (2014) contribution to sport announcer talk. Humpolík explores types of sport commentary, compares the audiences of TV and video games and describes the unique process of creating video games commentary. The analysis is supported with interviews of the commentators recruited for creating the Arabic and the English *FIFA 15* video game commentary (El-Sha'waly 2011; Tayler and Smith 2015).

2.6.3 Translation in the *Knorr* Website Case Study

Websites feature online presentations and potential incarnations in different markets/locales. Therefore, website localisation presents a unique case for Translation Studies. Jimenez-Crespo (2013) describes the boundaries of website text as blurred, since the textual elements of a web page do not constitute separate texts, but the entire website, in his view, forms the minimal textual unit. Yunker (2003), Singh (2012) and Jimenez-Crespo (2013) explain the centralised and the decentralised models that companies tend to follow when localising their websites. The centralised model is based on localising an internationalised version of the website to the number of targeted languages/locales, and managing them from a central location. For the decentralised model, the international versions of the website adopt a global template to be consistent with the original website, and combine localised content with content created in the target locales. Yunker (2003) also explains the strategies deployed for website localisation based on the target market's cyber maturity and the level of the company's awareness of that market. When companies penetrate a new market, they avoid large initial investments by partially localising their websites (ibid). Alternatively, companies might decide not to include the entire content of their websites, but to offer an equivalent experience of them via comprehensive localisation (ibid).

Applying the previous models and strategies to the *Knorr* case study is supported by investigations of the Arabic market's current state, the commercial performance of the *Knorr* company and its technical handling of its Arabic localised websites. This type of background information is essential for the chapter's analysis and helps reveal an unconventional translation

practice, one that conveys an experience instead of a rigid text and involves a network of agents, authors, translators and audiences. Based on its initial analysis, the chapter questions the existence of key concepts to Translation Studies or the nature of their existence, namely the source text, the source author, the translator and the target audience. Answers to such questions are sought in the application and discussion of Nord's theory of interpersonal interaction (2007). Nord's theory shifts the chapter's focus to the agents involved in the translation process, to the role of the source text in these processes, and to the varying linguistic quality of the translation outcomes.

2.6.4 Translation in the *Blackboard Learn* Case Study

Esselink (2000) provides a complete guide explaining the technicalities of software localisation and offers comprehensive translation guidelines. He discusses translation in light of the technical constraints of software localisation, by tapping into aspects of space restriction and linguistic testing. Furthermore, Esselink addresses the subjects of terminology standards and terminology setup, and highlights the difference between project terminology and operating environment terminology (ibid). Controlled language is an essential part of today's technical communication. Mogensen (2010) explains the value of standardising vocabulary, grammar and style as a way for reducing ambiguity, overcoming the weaknesses of automated translation and facilitating human-machine interaction.

Analysis of *Blackboard Learn* in the third case study draws on the previous literature while considering the collective nature of the software. *Blackboard Learn* is a product addressing an array of users, university stakeholders, system administrators, lecturers and students. This hierarchy of users makes identifying the source text and the target user a difficult task. To overcome this difficulty, the chapter applies Nord's distinction between the target-text receiver, to whom the translation is addressed, and the target-text user, who puts the target text to use (2007).

In light of the academic context of *Blackboard Learn*, the translation analysis takes into account the globalisation of higher education. Maringe (2010) and Vardhan (2015) discuss the act of recognising education as a service by the General Agreement in Trade and Services (GATS) as a

means of engaging developing economies in international trade. In addition, Maringe (2010), Altbach (2004) and Lumby and Foskett (2015) explain the political and linguistic effects of this act on the global academic community. World universities are classified into leading universities, mostly Anglophone, and universities aspiring to improve their status, while English is dictated as the language uniting the academic community (ibid). The globalisation of higher education influences the academic and linguistic practices of Arabic universities, and in turn affects the reception of the Arabic translation of *Blackboard Learn* in the Arabic educational market. While this observation signals clear reference to Venuti's theory (2008), it highlights the importance of considering the target situation in which the Arabic translation of *Blackboard Learn* is received.

In her theory of translation as a purposeful activity, Nord (2007) introduces two types of coherence which contribute to the translation's success. She uses intertextual coherence to refer to the translation's corresponding relationship with the source text. In addition, she argues the translation "should make sense in the communicative situation and culture in which it is received", and describes this relation as intratextual coherence (ibid, p.32). This classification is applied to the chapter's analysis to provide full assessment of *Blackboard Learn's* Arabic translation, in textual terms and in terms of its receivers' view.

2.7 Conclusion

The previous literature review highlights the blind spot of Arabic localisation which this thesis sets out to rectify. The scarcity of Arabic localisation research in both localisation literature and Arabic translation literature dictates adopting a mixed methods approach. As mentioned in the introduction, such a method will answer to the interdisciplinary nature of Arabic localisation and the sophistication of the Arabic language. Analysis of the case studies will integrate theories from the field of Translation Studies, in addition to related disciplines, while considering relevant commercial and technical conceptualisations. The case studies will also benefit from the different approaches, Arabisation and regionalisation, discussed in the Arabic translation literature in addressing the forms of Arabic utilised in Arabic localisation. Moreover, the thesis will draw on the historical discussion on Arabic translation to offer an insight into the relation between a language's political, economic and scientific power and domestication. In addressing the multi-

layered aspects of Arabic localisation, this thesis aims to raise awareness of the context and acknowledge its value to localisation and Translation Studies research.

3 Introduction to Foreignisation and Domestication in Arabic

Localisation: The *FIFA 15* Case Study

3.1 Introduction

Video games are multimodal products, which establish a number of communication channels with gamers; printed, electronic and voiced. Due to the various processes through which it goes, video game localisation is considered the most sophisticated among other technical products, including software and websites. The *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game is chosen as case study because, unlike other triple A video game² titles, its Arabic localisation employs multiple forms of Arabic, i.e., Modern Standard Arabic as well as regional dialects. This provides a rich environment for exploring the Arabic language structures and the ways in which they are utilised in localisation. In addition, the Arabic localisation of the *FIFA 15* video game offers a good overview of the technical and commercial implications of the localisation process, which promotes different types of domestication and foreignisation, including linguistic, cultural and technical domestication and foreignisation.

This chapter approaches the Arabic localisation of the *FIFA 15* video game from a user's perspective, starting the analysis from the game's packaging, then moving to the in-game text and finally the audio files. The packaging section will examine the front, back and inner covers. Discussions of the front cover will focus on the business strategies of translating brand names and the procedures and implications of registering them as trademarks. The discussion will also focus on the video game rating systems and the possible reasons for applying the European system (PEGI) to the Arabic market. Analysis of the back cover will tap into the technicalities of its design and layout, but will give prime importance to the translation of the promotional texts and the semiotics of the information box/iconography. The inner cover mainly offers legal/medical texts which will be discussed from a legal translation perspective, that of facilitating the communication of legal content to a non-specialised audience. The in-game text section starts with an explanation of the challenges of translating the video game user interface (UI) and the functionalist translation method proposed by O'Hagan and

² Games with high production budgets, usually referring to flagship titles involving substantial resources. (O'Hagan and Mangiron 2013, p.5)

Mangiron (2013), which draws on Nord's instrumental and documentary translation. Analysis of the Arabic translation of the *FIFA 15* UI will adopt O'Hagan and Mangiron's method, by providing examples when instrumental and documentary translations fulfil or disrupt the communicative function. In addition, this section will provide examples of inconsistent, partial and no translation which influence the domestication or foreignisation of the UI messages. This section will also draw on the technical presentation of the *FIFA 15* Arabic UI in terms of mirroring the bi-directionality of the Arabic text. The audio files section is concerned with analysing the Arabic localisation of the *FIFA 15* video game commentary. The section starts by offering an overview of the types of football commentary, play-by-play and colour commentaries, and the difference between TV and video game commentary. Then the procedures of creating the *FIFA 15* video game commentary are discussed in light of academic and non-academic sources. The previous discussions raise a question about the nature of the source text in the Arabic localisation of the commentary and a number of possible answers are explored. This section proceeds to analysing the *FIFA 15* Arabic commentary by comparing the Arabic and English styles of football commentary, exploring the use of dialects in the Arabic commentary and linguistically and culturally comparing the Arabic and English commentaries. The chapter concludes by recapping the types of domestication and foreignisation explored throughout the analysis.

3.2 Packaging

The *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game packaging and the information leaflet included are perhaps the most tangible part of the video game. Texts on packaging and information leaflet range from short to relatively long; companies' names and game title (trademarks), game features presented in persuasive language to encourage game sales (promotional/operative), end user agreement and information on gaming safe practices (legal/informative). The packaging section provides detailed exploration of business, advertising and legal translation relevant to the Arabic translation of the texts presented on the front, back and inner covers.

In today's business world, the important role of packaging is increasingly recognised. Packaging is viewed as an important channel for companies to communicate with potential and current customers. Percy and Elliott underline the critical part played by packaging in a product's marketing campaign:

There are several key emotional and psychological benefits linked to packages. They have the ability to attract attention, enhance brand awareness, and they have the ability to express the brand's image, reinforcing brand attitude. (2012, pp. 345-346)

Since global video game companies aspire to establish a successful brand image, they pay close attention to their games' packaging and its design.

International customers are increasingly aware of their locale's distinct identity and, hence, expect to be addressed accordingly. Therefore, treating international markets indifferently by addressing them with a single message, initially designed for the local market, is no longer a valid approach. At the same time, developing multiple marketing messages for each target market is an expensive approach that challenges the goal of globalisation, which includes generating international revenues. With the aim of reaching the middle ground, the concept of Glocalisation (Adab 2000) was developed in fulfilment of the slogan "think globally, act locally". In other words, companies with cross-border markets maintain a single global marketing message while perform multiple adjustments according to each target locale's requirements (Smith and Klein-Braley 1997). Bernal-Merino explains an additional benefit for glocalisation, "applying a glocalisation strategy... can grow game IP (intellectual property) with locale-relevant content that can, in turn, revert back to the other markets, boosting global penetration and brand permanence" (Bernal-Merino 2016b, p. 203).

The glocalisation strategy of *EA sports* is clearly demonstrated in the Arabic localised *FIFA 15* video game packaging. It balances the global and the local in both pictorial and textual elements. Analysis of the Arabic localisation of the game's packaging will focus on the textual elements.

3.2.1 Front Cover

Like other international versions, the front cover of the Arabic localised *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game packaging shows limited reliance on textual elements (Figure 3). Available texts are restricted to brand names and logos; the game console, *PlayStation4*, and its logo, the video game company logo, *EA Sports*, the game title, *FIFA 15*, the licensed brands, *FIFA* and *Abdul Latif Jameel League*, and *PEGI* rating label. Apart from the Arabic league, the brand names are presented in English. The rationale behind this linguistic decision is discussed in

light of brand name translation strategies, which are far more developed in the business literature than they are in video game localisation. Therefore, the following section focuses on the former and refers to the latter when applicable.

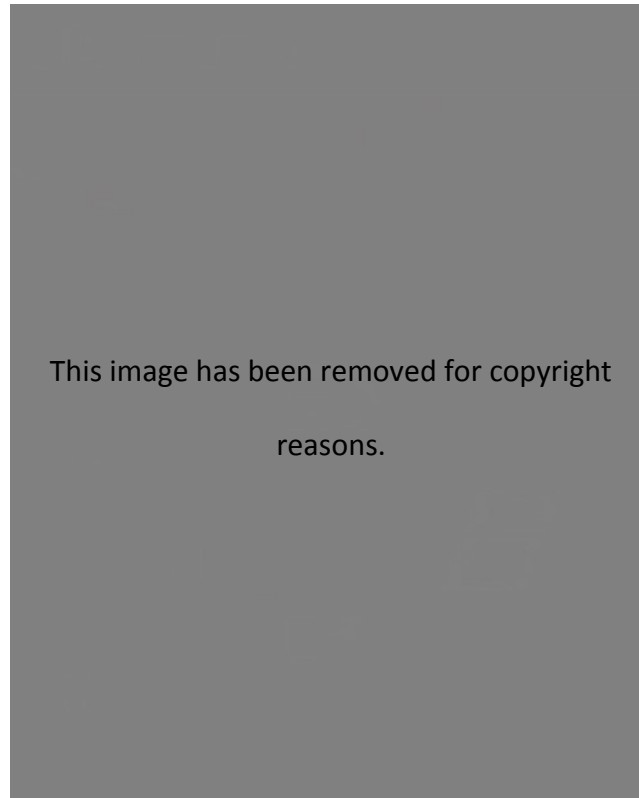


Figure 3 The front cover of the Arabic localised FIFA 15 packaging

3.2.1.1 Brand names

Business literature offers a variety of brand name translation strategies, which differ based on the international power of the brand name, the brand name's semantic reference to the brand's core value and the target consumers' background of the source language. The standardisation strategy is built upon the brand's strong image that benefits from consistency across target markets in maintaining international brand recognition (Smith and Klein-Braley 1997; Mooij 2004). This means that brand names are not translated and remain in their original form (Torresi 2010). On the other hand, the adaptation strategy entails linguistically adjusting the brand name according to the target market's linguistic requirements and/or to the brand's need to localise its marketing communication. Brand name adaptation can be achieved on different levels, semantic, phonetic or graphic.

Sematic adaptation is utilised by brands whose original names hold semantic value, which will

be lost in a case where standardisation is practiced. Semantic adaptation aims at repositioning the brand culture when the meaning it conveys holds positive cultural value for target consumers (Liu 2015). One example of semantic adaptation is the Chinese translation of the brand *Nestle*:

The brand name “Nestle” was originally the name of the founder of the company, and it shares the same root of the English word “Nest”. That is why a nest image is used as its trademark, meaning its cultural connotation is positioned in “comfort” and “snuggery”. (ibid, p.190)

The Chinese translation, • 巢 , represents the image of a nest, which signifies the cultural connotations of the brand name (ibid).

Phonetic adaptation aims at translating the brand name into a positive connotation in the target language and culture that is not necessarily equivalent to the source. The strategy is to create a balance by retaining the pronunciation of the original brand name, with a slight phonetic adjustment being possible, while attaining a local connotation (Mooij 2004). The Chinese translation of the brand name *Coca-Cola* is a good example for phonetic adaptation. Although the English brand name has no specific meaning, its Chinese translation “ 乐 乐 kekou kele” is built upon the unique charm of the brand culture and conveys the meaning of tasty and happy (ibid). Graphic adaptation usually occurs between languages of different alphabets, where the original brand name is simply presented in the target language’s alphabets (Torresi 2010). Transliteration is a safe strategy for brands to ensure recognition among target customers who have limited or no background of the source language (Hong et al. 2002).

With specific reference to video game localisation, Costales (2012) proposes a no translation strategy for video games titles. The strategy entails keeping the title in English across different locales to ensure international recognition (ibid). In other words, the no translation strategy is similar in purpose and function to the standardisation strategy. Costales (ibid) discusses more translation strategies which are not confined to games’ titles but are utilised for localising the video game assets. Domestication and foreignisation, which Costales proposes as a single strategy, show relevance to the translation of brand names. He suggests applying the foreignisation strategy for keeping the “look and feel of the original game”, while applying

domestication for bringing the game closer to the target culture (ibid, p.395). When considering domestication and foreignisation as strategies for translating brand names, they seem similar to the standardisation and the adaptation strategies.

Based on the previous exploration, the brand names *FIFA*, *EA Sports*, *FIFA 15* and *PlayStation4* are clearly standardised. A possible reason for adopting this strategy is that the core values of each of these brands are performance-based, in other words, the brands' services strongly communicate their values³, which creates a strong "brand culture" (Liu 2015, p. 189). When a brand culture is more representative of the brand's values than its name, aspiration to relate to the brand culture becomes more important than understanding the semantic connotation of its name. As Francis, Lam and Walls explain:

In markets where consumers purchase brands to reinforce their relationship in a certain global segment or to appear cosmopolitan, brands with global image will fare better than brands with local or provincial image. (Francis et al. 2002, p. 103)

The brand cultures of *FIFA*, *EA Sports*, *FIFA 15* and *PlayStation4* make customers from around the world aspire to belong to them, and, hence, international recognition is a matter of prime importance.

Given that Arabic and English have different alphabets, the addition of graphic adaptation/transliteration could be argued to be a good strategy for ensuring brand recognition. However, the target customers' background of the English language is presented as a counter argument. In a general understanding of Arabic gamers linguistic position, Arabic fans of international football are exposed to the world of *FIFA* and its associated leagues and players on different media channels, where they are likely to encounter foreign names' inscribed in both languages, Arabic and English. Hence, simple English words presented as brand names such as *FIFA* and *FIFA 15* are not considered a language barrier which hinder brand recognition and urge graphic adaptation. Similarly, in the field of video games, Arabic

³ As stated on each brand's official website, the core values of FIFA are: develop the game, touch the world and build a better future. The core values of EA sports are: putting players first, driving a digital transformation and holding many licenses. The value of PlayStation 4 value is: 'we are for gamers'.

gamers are forced to experience a certain level of technicality in creating *PlayStation* accounts, installing game's software and/or accessing online features, all of which require at least basic knowledge of the English language. Therefore, identifying a brand name in its English form such as *PlayStation4* is not considered a difficult task. Most importantly, video game companies are targeting a specific segment in the Arabic market; those who are able to contribute to the industry's revenues. This segment is very likely to have an English educational background, and, therefore, has no problem recognising any of the related brand names in their English forms. As this could sound like a general assumption, lack of academic evidence proposes a research gap that can potentially be filled with further quantitative research relating Arabic gamers' levels of English educational background to their tolerance of elements of foreignness in the gameplay experience.

3.2.1.2 Trademarks

Another reason why international brands tend to standardise their names is because brand names and logos are part of a companies' trademark. In order for companies to protect their products legally, they have to register their names as trademarks at intellectual property organisations. As companies expand internationally, they need to register the trademark in an international intellectual property organisation, such as the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO). In cases where companies find the need to localise their names for certain target locales, they need to register each of their localised names as a separate trademark. Consequently, the trademark will lose the brand's consistent image as well as its international recognition. Mueller (2004) explains the advantage of maintaining the same trademark internationally from a consumer's perspective: "With increasing international travel, a single trademark will ensure that consumers recognise a firm's product, thereby eliminating brand confusion" (ibid, p.35). This raises an important point in the video game context. The Arabic market to which *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game is localised and the console *PlayStation4* is shipped does not comprise solely of Arabic gamers. Gamers from other nationalities, not necessarily English, who could be children of parents working in the Middle East or individuals seeking job opportunities in the vibrant Arabic market are an essential part of the Arabic locale. Therefore, it is important for video game companies to retain a consistent trademark across different locales, the Arabic market included, in order to facilitate international recognition by gamers in their local market or abroad. In addition, modern

online gaming allows gamers from different parts of the world to play together and share the same gameplay experience. In order for the cosmopolitan gaming practice to take place, each of the international gamers should have clear and comparable identification of the game or console trademark.

In light of what has been discussed thus far, it is concluded that the strong international power of *EA Sports* and *PlayStation* stems from the strength of their brand culture. Therefore, retaining the same brand name across all markets, national and international, as part of a single trademark promotes brand recognition and eliminates brand confusion. Hence, standardisation is a business translation strategy that caters for target Arabic gamers of at least basic English educational background, non-Arabic gamers within the Arabic market to whom English is a single means of communication and the online international gaming community.

3.2.1.3 Rating system

The final trademark remaining in its original form is the *PEGI* rating system label. Pan-European Game Information (PEGI) is a single video game rating system that assists parents across most European countries, excluding Germany⁴, in making an informed decision on buying video games. PEGI is a relatively moderate rating system; while it is not as strict as the German (USK), it still pays careful attention to younger audiences by subdividing them into three categories, which Australian (ACB) and Japanese (CERO) ratings identify as a general category (O'Hagan and Mangiron 2013, pp. 219-221). Interestingly, maintaining the label in its original language is not the only act of foreignisation, since applying European rating standards to the Arabic context is an act of foreignisation as well. This raises the question of why *PEGI* has been chosen as a rating system for the Arabic localised version of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game.

A possible reason for using a European rating system for Arabic localised video games is the absence of an Arabic rating system recognised by all or most Arabic countries. Since recent advancement in video games has led to the sophistication and complexity of their storyline, and, simultaneously, increased awareness of the need to monitor and rate their content, most

⁴ Germany has developed its own rating system (USK) that is known to be stricter than European (PEGI) and North American (ESRB) rating systems.

international video game rating systems are considered relatively modern. Both ESRB (North American) and USK were the first to start in 1994. PEGI was established in 2003, while CERO started a year earlier in 2002. ACB officially took video game rating onto its board in 2006. In parallel, the recent realisation of the Arabic region as a potential video game target market encouraged its addition to the simultaneous shipment (sim-ship) list of major video game companies. Now that consoles and video games are available in the Arabic market, the demand for video games is on the increase. In light of the considerable novel trend of video games in the region, video game standards and distribution supervision are still in their infancy. However, with greater flows of video games entering the Arabic market, the situation is unlikely to remain the same for long.

In response to the evolving market of video games in the Middle East, recent attempts have been made by Iran and Saudi Arabia to establish rating criteria according to the region's Islamic values. Although the focus of this research is the Arabic market and not the Middle East, the latter is addressed, in this instance only, due to a number of reasons. The Entertainment Software Rating Association (ESRA) established by Iran is internationally recognised in the video game industry, and, hence, it has to be taken into account like other international rating systems. In addition, despite the fact that ESRA is not an Arabic rating system, its religious consideration and intention to service Islamic countries, most of which are Arabic speaking, distinguishes its regional value. In this sense, including ESRA in the discussion of the Arabic video game localisation infers a Middle Eastern context rather than an Arabic one. Moreover, ESRA and EGRDC (Electronic Game Rating and Development Centre, Saudi Arabia's rating system) have mutual religious interests, which puts them in the same category (the Middle East) in spite of their linguistic differences. Finally, ESRA and EGRDC are the only video game rating systems specially designed for addressing the Arabic market's cultural needs. Therefore, it is necessary for the current research, in respect of the video game rating systems only, to extend the Arabic market's boundaries to include the Middle East.

In 2007⁵, Iran realised the need for setting Islamic criteria for video games distribution, and announced the establishment of the first Islamic video game rating system in the Middle East at the Dubai World Game Expo in 2010. This initiative was acknowledged by Emirati and Saudi

⁵ There seem to be a conflict about the year in which ESRA was established. O'Hagan and other online sources state 2010. However, the date included above appears on ESRA's official website, and, therefore, it is prioritised.

newspapers (Alshammary 2010) as well as international media and academic sources (O'Hagan and Mangiron 2013). ESRA was officially effective in January 2011, providing four categories of young audiences, one for single adults and another for married adults. These ratings are offered on a website base rather than labels on packaging. Following in its footsteps in 2013, a study for launching an Electronic Game Rating and Development Centre (EGRDC) was presented in Saudi Arabia, which came into being in 2015. Due to its recent development, only a number of online sources are aware of EGRDC's existence, while it is yet to be referenced in international academic and professional sources. In a similar categorisation to ESRA, EGRDC classify young audiences into 4 categories, in addition to adults and a category for banned video games. EGRDC's ratings are also restricted to an online presentation instead of appearing in printed form. However, the website offers a link for users to comment on the game or its rating. In summary, the web presentation of both systems dictates international video game rating systems to be used for Arabic localised video games. The absence of a well-developed Arabic/Islamic rating system explains the foreignisation of using an international rating system for the Arabic localised *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game. However, it still does not explain why PEGI is chosen over other international video game ratings. Close geographical location, multiplicity of similar cultures and technical requirements of the PAL system could be argued to be reasons for using the European rating system for the Arabic market. Nevertheless, they are merely assumptions with no evidence in their support. On the other hand, what is known for sure is that both the European and the Arabic markets are classified as region 2 in the video game industry:

DVD distributors divide international territories into six distinct number regions. For example, Region 1 includes the United States and Canada, Region 2 includes Europe, the Middle East and Japan... The discs produced in one region are not compatible with the DVD players produced in another region, establishing distribution walls between the zones. (Davis et al. 2015, p. 308)

Although the previous quotation discusses international markets classification for the film industry, the same categorisation is applied to the video game context since games are distributed in DVD/discs. Moreover, the back cover packaging of the Arabic localised *FIFA 15* video game displays the region 2 icon, in support of film and video game contexts being in

parallel. As the only valid piece of information in this regard, region 2 is possibly the reason why PEGI is accounted as the rating system for the Middle East. It could be argued that Japan also belongs to region 2 and, hence, questions about why the Japanese rating, CERO, is not applied to the Arabic localised video games are valid. The potential answer is PEGI is a stricter rating than CERO and is, therefore, more suitable for the Middle East.

3.2.2 Back Cover

The back cover of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game packaging (Figure 4) shows more balance between textual and visual elements. Textual elements include the game's slogan; "Feel the Game", two promotional texts, the information box, logos of included licensed leagues, brief technical information assisting iconography, a small font paragraph on the end user agreement and a brief about video game copyright. The Arabic translation of the back cover is partial, only the promotional texts and the information box are provided in Arabic. This section will explore the variety of text types translated into Arabic, promotional texts (operative) and information box (informative), and the domains under which they were translated. In addition, it will discuss the technical aspects of the back cover's presentation and layout, in respect of text directionality and its effect on readability.

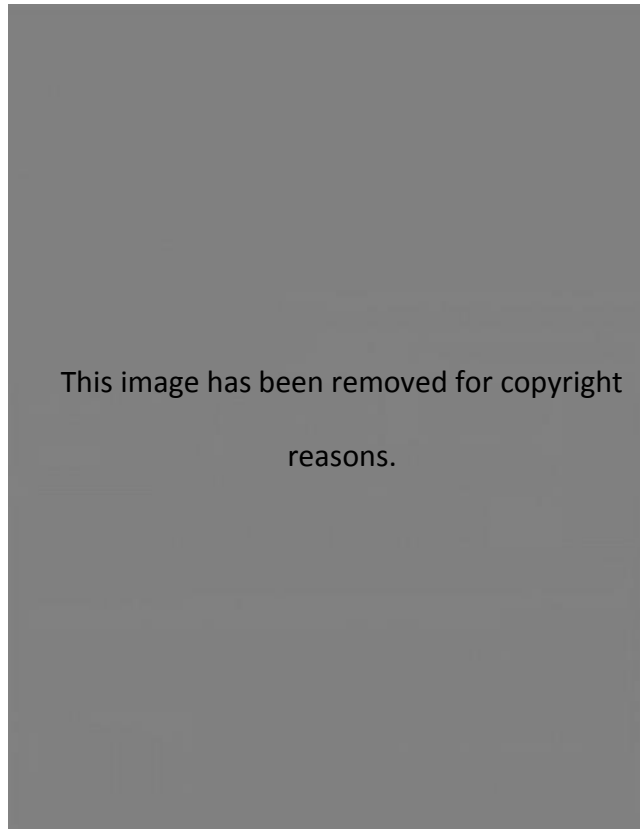


Figure 4 The back cover of the Arabic localised FIFA 15 packaging

3.2.2.1 Promotional texts

Promotional texts are included to promote the game appeal by presenting the game's significant features and communicating the brand core messages. The brand message, which is clear in the game slogan *Feel the Game*⁶, is comprised of two elements; replication of real games and engaging gaming experience. Both elements are communicated in the promotional texts, which read:

FIFA 15 brings football to life in stunning detail so you can experience the emotion of the sport like never before.

Feel the emotion and control of Athletic and Authentic Players.

For further emphasis, each promotional text is accompanied by an in-game image that illustrates the same brand message. The choice of images indicates a marketing decision of consistent brand message delivery through different pieces of communication (Shaw 2012). Promotional texts, especially those presented on packaging, tend to have similar linguistic

⁶ The *FIF EA Sports* slogan always remains in English across all localised versions of the game.

features, as they aim to be compelling in terms of presenting information in short, clear and catchy language (ibid).

The Arabic translations of the promotional texts mirror these features by communicating the brand message in familiar Arabic lexicon and syntax, which facilitates natural readability and results in immediate comprehension. This is a level of domestication recommended for brand communication, which aims to “carry out its dialogue with the customers in their own language” (Ortiz-Sotomayor 2005, p. 32). In a further level of domestication, the Arabic translations are presented in the Modern Standard form, which fits the texts’ printed mode and the required level of formality for representing the brand message. By communicating the brand message and being positioned under the English texts, the Arabic translation also appear to be supported by the images. In respect of advertising translation, the Arabic promotional texts may have started life as translation, but they managed to pass as original advertisement (Smith and Klein-Braley 1997).

In the main text, the English phrase *brings football to life* is a potentially controversial phrase in the Arabic context, due to religious reasons. However, its translation successfully addressed this point. The Arabic translation is presented as *تضيف لمسة نابضة بالحياة على لعبة كرة القدم*, which is back translated as *adds a vivid touch of life to football*. The translation is culturally adapted, indicating deep awareness of the Arabic language and culture. The English phrase, the source, is an idiomatic expression that, according to Cambridge dictionary, means *to make something more real or exciting* (2016). While the English language easily expresses the creation of life in something by someone, the Arabic language is more cautious with this concept due to a religious consideration. The notion of life creation, even metaphorically, is a denotation of a restricted act of divinity. Therefore, the Arabic Islamic equivalent for such idiomatic expression is *the addition of vivid touch of life*, conveying an upgrade from a regular to an extraordinary state in an expression denoting human limitations. It is worth mentioning that in Christian Arabic and less restricted Islamic contexts, a formal equivalence of the English expression is commonly used as well, *يبعث الحياة في (كرة القدم)* which is back translated as *resurrect life into (football)*. Although some find the latter more aesthetic, others still believe it holds strong divine reference. As a result, copywriters, including translators, tend to avoid the formal equivalence of the English expression when targeting broad Arabic audiences, which could potentially consist of different religious backgrounds, to avoid controversy and ensure

general appeal. Paying attention to such a simple phrase within the main promotional text signifies its cultural domestication.

Within the Arabic translation of the main promotional text, the game's title, *FIFA 15*, breaks the Arabic text flow by being presented in English. Maintaining the title in English is part of reinforcing the trademark and is essential for consistent brand recognition and eliminating consumers' confusion. Since the title appears on the front cover in its original language, attempting to translate it will break consistency, at least graphically, and could possibly lead to brand confusion. Arabic gamers will find it difficult to understand why the game's title appears on the front cover in one language, while is presented on the back cover in another. In this sense, the Arabic translation of the main promotional text mixes domestication and foreignisation in a way that does not necessarily strike Arabic gamers as being foreign.

3.2.2.2 Information box

The information box is included on multilingual versions of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game back cover, and is absent from unilingual versions. The purpose of including the information box is to facilitate instant recognition of the languages in which the game's features are available. This information is delivered in two forms; textual and pictorial. The texts present features of the game, while country flags present the languages in which these features are available. As information is provided in a brief and direct language, without any aesthetic organisation or persuasive device (Reiss and Vermeer 2013), the text is informative. The Arabic text is also presented in the Modern Standard form, using concise and accurate lexicon.

In terms of presentation, the box comprises three cells, each relying on a brief text and a language symbol; two of which simply contain a single word (*audio*, *text*), while the third contains a phrase (*information booklet available in the game and online*). The combination of textual and pictorial elements leads to the assumption that the information box is a type of iconography.⁷ In this sense, the Arabic text is not supposed to be a translation of the English, but an original statement of the game's features available in Arabic. The first two cells seem to agree with this proposition, as the textual and the pictorial elements jointly convey the availability of Arabic audio and Arabic text in the game. While the third cell suggests the availability of in-game and online Arabic manuals, the reality is the Arabic manual is only

⁷ Iconography is the use of icon to bridge recognition when verbal language cannot.

available in-game. In other words, the third cell appears to be a translation of the English, and is not a true presentation of the features available in Arabic.

3.2.2.3 Technical Observations: Bi-directionality

The back cover packaging of most previous releases of the *FIFA EA Sports* video games have a similar layout, where texts, images and logo icons are arranged in a template (Bernal-Merino 2016c). This template is maintained across all international versions of the game packaging. For the *FIFA 15* Arabic release, texts on the back cover packaging are provided in both Arabic and English languages to cater for potential cosmopolitan gamers in the Arabic market (Mueller 2004). Accommodating such different languages as Arabic and English on one packaging is a challenging task that requires tackling technical layout issues such as bi-directionality and font size.

When dealing with a language that reads from right to left (RTF), Arabic in this instance, Sarver (2015) underlines the importance of mirroring, which is “the process of creating LTR (left to right) graphics, text, content and user interface for RTF or BiDi (bi-directional) languages” (ibid). This requires reversing textual and non-textual elements of translated contents as an additional level of domestication for RTF and bi-directional audience. Nevertheless, the back cover of the Arabic localised *FIFA 15* video game packaging does not apply the mirroring approach, as its layout is consistent with other LTR versions and is not reversed. Each Arabic translated text is aligned below the English text in an attempt to compensate for the Arabic text diverted directionality. However, where British flags, language indicators, are positioned on the left side preceding each English text, Arabic language symbols are aligned below on the same side succeeding Arabic texts, and, thus, highlighting disorientation of Arabic script directionality. This is an indication of a potential technical foreignisation. However, by providing Arabic and English texts on the same cover, disorientation of any of which is inevitable whether mirroring is implemented or not. Therefore, the back cover layout creates a balanced design, where the promotional texts alternate on each side, while the accompanying images are either preceding or succeeding (Figure 4). This lessens disorientation of the Arabic texts, and although readability is slightly affected, it is not completely hindered.

3.2.3 Inner Cover

The inner cover of the Arabic localised *FIFA 15* video game packaging displays texts in both languages, with Arabic and English on opposite sides. This allows both texts to be aligned to the margins that respect their language directionality, RTL for Arabic and LTR for English, showing technical domestication. The purpose of these texts is to convey legal responsibilities of the console company PlayStation4 such as region-specific technical standards, user's health and online safety, copyright and gamers support. Modern Standard Arabic is the form selected for this translation, which complies with both formal content and the printed mode, revealing diglossic domestication. This section will address instances of non-translation, ambiguity and omission in the Arabic translation of the legal content.

3.2.3.1 No translation

Throughout the Arabic translated text, instances of non-translation are recurrent in the following examples; the console company trademark PS4™, the email address anti-piracy@eu.playstation.com and the URLs; eu.playstation.com. In addition to its marketing purpose, maintaining the trademark in its original language has a legal purpose. "Accuracy and precision are considered fundamental characteristics of legal language. This essentially results from the requirement for legal protection and legal certainty" (Mattila 2006, p. 65). In this sense, a trademark is an accurate and precise presentation of the company's distinct identity, which is valued in the legal context for certainty. By retaining the trademark in its original language, the company declares authority over the content provided (Bhatia 1997). Hence, users are certain that the subject of the legal text is precisely the trademark visible on the front and back cover packaging and is the source of the legal information provided. Therefore, users are aware that their rights are protected by the trademark, and in return the trademark's rights are protected by law.

Nonetheless, the foreignisation of the email address and the URLs is intended for a rather straightforward purpose. In order for Arabic users to receive the protection and support they are promised, they simply have to be directed to the exact contacts that will offer them these services. Interestingly, all provided contacts are a English/Europe version, in support of what has previously been discussed about the Arabic release of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game belonging to region 2.

3.2.3.2 Misleading translation

Part of the legal text is concerned with assisting gamers to practise healthier gaming habits. The health guide explains the best environment for playing, good gaming habits and the potential negative effects of some game features and/or bad gaming habits for those with certain medical conditions. Although medical translation theory could appear to be the most relevant framework for analysing the health guide translation, the main legal context in which the medical conditions are discussed is given higher consideration. Hence, the Arabic translation of the health guide is mainly analysed under a legal translation framework. This type of legal translation opts for nontechnical legal translation theories, which are concerned with facilitating legal information to the public. In this respect, the target readership is perceived as a determiner for the translation approach:

Translation process, whether intra-lingual or inter-lingual, must take into account the relative accessibility of the target text for a specific audience, which makes the notion of easification particularly relevant to the process of translation. Easification ... is a process of making a text-genre more accessible to an intended readership without sacrificing its generic integrity.
(Bhatia 1997, pp. 208-209)

In a later note, Bhatia identifies two types of easification according to the target readership; easification for a specialised audience and simplification for the lay audience (ibid).

Since the legal text, including the health guide, is aimed at average gamers who are not expected to be familiar with technical terminology, its language is simplified. During the course of the Arabic translated health guide, a number of medical conditions are discussed, two of which can be shown to be particularly problematic. These terms are back translated as: حساسية تجاه الوميض أو الأضواء التي تومض (sensitive to flash and flashing lights) and توتر العين (eye tension). The corresponding terms in the English health guide are *sensitivity to flashing or flickering lights* and *eye strain*. These terms are simplified versions of the technical terms *Photosensitivity epilepsy* and *Asthenopia* respectively. Since both source and target texts are aimed at similar target audiences, the level of the technical terms accessibility must be paralleled. Hence, the Arabic translation of the medical conditions concerned is generated from the simplified names rather than the technical terms. The fact that highly technical

terms have gone through intra-lingual shift before being translated into Arabic suggests strong likelihood of meaning loss.

Although the Arabic translation of the medical conditions concerned is expected to express nontechnical names familiar to non-specialists, the translation fails to fulfil the communicative function. For the Arabic term *sensitive to flashing or flickering lights*, the difference between flashing and flickering is not clear as a result of poor Arabic lexical choice, and, hence, their reference to an identifiable medical condition in Arabic is lost. Due to the increased awareness of the effect of video games on young gamers, this condition has been discussed in a number of Arabic newspapers by using inconsistent derivatives of the Arabic root flash (الحساسية تجاه الضوء، الحساسية الضوئية، حساسية من الومضات الضوئية). However, Arabic medical websites use the condition's technical term which holds a clearer denotation that can be easily understood by the lay audience.

On the other hand, the Arabic translation of the second condition, *Asthenopia/eye strain*, shows a more serious translation problem. *Asthenopia* or *eye strain* is an impermanent condition which causes blurred vision due to extended hours of driving or computer work (Dahl 2015a). The Arabic translation, توتر العين (eye tension), does not refer to the same mild condition, but instead refers to a more serious condition. وهن البصر (back translated as eye fatigue) is the Arabic equivalent, technical term, for *eye strain*. However, توتر العين (back translated as eye tension) is a symptom associated with *glaucoma*; a serious condition which affects vision and eventually lead to blindness if not treated (Dahl 2015b). The mild condition communicated in the English text is entirely different from the serious disease expressed in the Arabic text. In summary, the Arabic translation of *sensitivity to flash and flashing lights* is meaningless while that of *eye tension* is misleading. The latter is more dangerous, especially in legal translation (Mattila 2006).

3.2.3.3 Omission

The legal text in both languages is divided into a number of entries, each explaining an aspect of the console company's or the gamers' rights and duties. The Arabic translation provides six entries, whereas the English provides seven. A whole entry/paragraph is omitted from the Arabic translation despite available space on the Arabic side of the cover. In legal translation, omitting or amending parts of the text is acceptable if they prove to be objectionable to the target audience (Bhatia 1997). The missing entry in the Arabic translation is concerned with

information on reporting bullying in online gaming whether online or in-game. Since both modes of this feature, online and in-game, are not available in Arabic, including an Arabic translation of this entry is not sensible.

Realising the need for omission to produce a successful translation that answers to the rest of the Arabic translated aspects of the game draws a comparison with the Arabic localisation of the information box on the packaging back cover (2.1.2.2). A similar need for omission is identified in the third cell to highlight its iconographical function and the features it presents, however, this need was not met. This contrast in identifying the need for omission indicates that the legal translation received more attention than the translation of the other parts of the game's packaging.

3.3 In-game Text/ User Interface (UI)

Given that "game translation is primarily driven by its purpose (skopos), which is ultimately to entertain the end user of the translated product", O'Hagan and Mangiron follow a functional approach to video game localisation (2013, p. 150). Accordingly, they classify all types of in-game texts, including menus, descriptive passages, game messages and tutorials, as elements of the UI (ibid). On the other hand, Bernal-Merino (2015) limits UI elements to menus, and classifies game messages as a distinct category, while briefly mentioning tutorials. Due to their purely technical content, game messages are treated separately in localisation projects (Bernal-Merino 2016a). Therefore, Bernal-Merino does not count game messages as part of the gaming experience or the UI. The research in hand is approaching the Arabic localisation of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game from a functionalist perspective. Hence, the chapter will adopt O'Hagan and Mangiron's classification.

Although O'Hagan and Mangiron and Bernal-Merino have different views on what comprises a UI, they seem to agree on its general characteristics. A main feature of a video game's UI is its being user-friendly, in terms of design and language, to fulfil its function of facilitating game navigation. This entails the UI content being accessible for a wide range of gamers, experts as well as newcomers, to acquaint them with the game's world (Bernal-Merino 2015). Therefore, the language of the UI is recommended to show clarity and to avoid ambiguity. Abbreviations and vague terminology are considered inappropriate; due to their potential interruption of clear communication with the game's software. The aim of UI is to direct,

explain, instruct and train gamers through smooth interactive communication, without disrupting the gaming experience or breaking immersion (O'Hagan and Mangiron 2013; Bernal-Merino 2015). A common means of delivering this level of clarity is occasional use of icons in replacement or in assistance of verbal communication. Being universally understood, icons can easily convey messages, fully or partially, as well as maintain consistency across original and localised versions of the game (Bernal-Merino 2015). In this sense, utilisation of icons is expected to cut down on localisation/translation time and cost (Chandler and Deming 2012). Where verbal communications are necessary, translation has to adhere to the number of characters each UI element is originally designed to accommodate (Bernal-Merino 2015). Creative translation is often required to balance between the functional meaning of the UI content and the space for which it is assigned (O'Hagan and Mangiron 2013). Therefore, designing flexible UI spaces to accommodate for potentially variable translations lengths is recommended (Chandler and Deming 2012). On the other hand, official terminologies established by the game consoles do not permit for variation or errors, but they must adhere to the platforms' term base (TB) and translation memories (TM) (Bernal-Merino 2015).

The following sections start by exploring the challenges of the UI localisation, and the translation methods recommended by O'Hagan and Mangiron. In light of the discussed methodology, the chapter will move to analysing the Arabic translation of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* UI.

3.3.1 Challenges of Translating UI

Translating video games UI elements is a process governed by strict technical conventions, and usually follows one of two methods. The first is utilising one of the visual localisation tools (Chandler and Deming 2012) which allow translators to view text assets in their natural environment within the game context. These tools permit what is known as "what you see is what you get" (shortened to WYSIWYG); giving translators the advantage of viewing textual elements in the exact positions where they will appear in the game's UI as well as the visual elements in company (Dunne 2006; Bernal-Merino 2015). However, the biggest drawback of these tools is that they were originally designed for software coding and file formatting standards and are, hence, incompatible with video games engines (Chandler and Deming 2012; Bernal-Merino 2015). If the latter situation is the case, an alternative, less technical, method is utilised. After extracting text assets from the game's code, the development team

organises them in text files ready for translation. If the translation team is technically skilful, translations can be directly integrated into those files by using a text editor (Chandler and Deming 2012). However, if translators lack this level of technicality, text assets will instead be organised in spreadsheets, where translation instructions are also included (ibid). Despite providing some assistive information, both cases lack the level of contextual clarity visual localisation tools tend to offer.

Since most visual localisation tools are incompatible with video games software, the less technical method is usually used for translating video games UI elements. Translating text assets in isolation from the game's environment creates additional challenge in the process. Presenting text assets in the formats of spreadsheets entails non-linear readability of the source text. This places translators in a doubly blinded position where they lack context and co-text, turning a "simple translation task into an error-prone guesswork exercise" (Bernal-Merino 2015, pp. 81, 111). Using Computer Assisted Translation software (CAT tools) in such cases does not make the situation any better:

In general, the various technologies allow language to be processed in a paradigmatic way. That is, they show the alternatives available at particular points in a text, interrupting the syntagmatic of linear dimension of language... The technology imposes the paradigmatic on the syntagmatic. All translation technology does this to a certain extent. (Pym 2014, p. 124)

Given that context-free linguistic items have a semiotic tendency, fragmented presentation of the source text negatively affects the communicative function of its translation (Bernal-Merino 2015) even in cases when translation technologies are utilised. In this respect, menus are the most problematic among video games UI elements. Menu items feature persistent non-linearity, starting from their creation (as source text) and ending with their translation (as target text). In both situations they have to show high levels of clarity in order to achieve better communication with their respective audiences of translators and gamers. It is the responsibility of the development team to contextualise menu items for the translator, therefore translation instructions are provided in the spreadsheets. In return, it is the responsibility of translators to make menu items as clearly referential as possible, to avoid breaking the game's immersion (ibid). Due to its complex stages and the number of individuals involved in the process, translating menu items is a rich environment for promoting

foreignising translation. On the other hand, descriptive passages, game messages and tutorials are likely to provide more co-text than menu items, due to their linear nature, which compensates for the lack of context.

Despite the isolation imposed by the industry's practices, communicative translation of UI elements can be achieved by taking certain measures. According to Bernal-Merino's classification for video games in respect of the freedom given to translators (Bernal-Merino 2007,2008), the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game belongs to the research type. Research video games are based on an existing universe, whether a novel or a historical era, with which translators must be acquainted because translation freedom, or creativity, is limited:

Translators are constrained by pre-existing common knowledge and a body of fans that has very specific expectations for the game universe. Betraying those expectations with a localisation that disregards [...] that universe will probably reflect on a poor game experience, fan discontent, and low sales.
(Bernal-Merino 2008, p. 65)

In light of the previous suggestion, translators become more prepared for contextual isolation, and are, thus, able to identify denotations of fragmented phrases.

3.3.2 Translation method

O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013) highlight the wide range of text types, which vary from literary to technical, that can be present within one game. Therefore, they emphasise the need for knowing the game's text taxonomies to facilitate selecting appropriate translation strategies (ibid). Despite their functionalist perspective, O'Hagan and Mangiron find relevance in Reiss's text typology⁸, which is source text-oriented, because video game localisation "is required to largely retain the function of the original game assets" (ibid, p. 154). However, they do not focus on language functions but they consider translation priorities and strategies, by drawing on Nord's refinement of Reiss's work, which moves the focus to the function of the target text from a Skopos Theory perspective (ibid). In this way, O'Hagan and Mangiron contribute to Translation Studies by adopting a functionalist methodology for applying Reiss's typology.

⁸ Bernal-Merino also offers a classification of video game text assets (2006, p.30; 2007, p.4; 2015b, p.110). However, his classification does not show complete relevance to this chapter's analysis, because it is based on genre types; narrative, technical promotional and legal.

O'Hagan and Mangiron highlight the informative function of the UI elements, which assist gamers in understanding the game's world, characters, rules and techniques. Nevertheless, they differentiate between UI elements requiring functional translation, namely menus, descriptive passages and tutorials, and those requiring adherence to official terminology, namely system messages. Therefore, O'Hagan and Mangiron find that video game localisation:

mainly fits what Nord terms "instrumental translation", which calls for preserving the function of the ST [source text] but is produced as an independent text adjusted to the new communicative situation of the TT [target text]. However,... certain assets may be translated in a way which is oriented towards documentary translation. For example,... system messages. (ibid, p.172)

3.3.3 Analysis of the Arabic UI

O'Hagan and Mangiron's functional translation framework is adopted for analysing the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* UI elements. The analysis aims to assess fulfilling the communicative function of the Arabic UI elements in terms of delivering a clear message and, thus, retaining the informative function of the English UI. Nord's suggested strategies of instrumental and documentary translations are used as measures for assessment. The following sections will demonstrate examples of instrumental and documentary translations, where the communicative and informative functions of the Arabic UI are not always fulfilled, creating instances of domestication and foreignisation. Furthermore, potential explanations for such instances are discussed. In addition, the effect of inconsistent translation, and partial translation on the communicative/informative function of the Arabic UI is also explored, as well as their foreignisation effects on the Arabic ludic experience.

3.3.3.1 Instrumental Translation

As has been previously discussed, instrumental translation is recommended, by O'Hagan and Mangiron, for translating most of the UI elements, except those comprising the platform terminology. The Arabic localisation of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game displays many instances of instrumental translation where it fulfils the communicative function. In other instances, application of instrumental translation seems to disrupt the communicative

function.

The *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game presents gamers with detailed options to customise different aspects of their gameplay experience. These options are organised in the form of menus ranging from general to specific. Each general menu is labelled by a name that reflects the game's aspect with which it is concerned; *Home*, *Play*, *Online*, and *Customise* to name a few. While most labels of general menus clearly denote a specific reference to the game's world, the label *Home* is too general and is, from a translation point of view, potentially ambiguous. Translating the label *Home* requires communicating the denotation *main page*, and not mistaking it for that of a *house*. The Arabic translation الشاشة الرئيسية (alshashah alra'i'siah; the main screen) delivers the correct denotation, in spite its extended length. The original 4-character word is replaced with two Arabic words in 15 characters, including the space separating them (Figure 5).

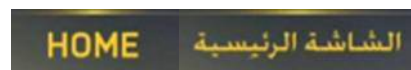


Figure 5 Home label

This indicates the programming of a scalable spacing as recommended by the industry's specialists (Chandler and Deming 2012).

Another example of fulfilling both the communicative and the informative functions of the Arabic translation of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game UI is demonstrated in some specific menus. The *User Gameplay Customisation* menu, for example, lists detailed options of the players' performance on the pitch as controlled by gamers (Figure 6).




Figure 6 Instrumental translation

Each item is clearly communicated in Arabic in accordance with the football terminology commonly articulated across the Arabic world in both forms of the Arabic language; the Modern Standard form and the regional dialects. *Sprint Speed* is translated to سرعة الجري (sur'at aljari; speed of running) which delivers the communicative meaning, and at the same time adhere to the space limit. The English phrase is 12 characters long while the Arabic is 10⁹, being within the same range. The second item on the list, *Acceleration*, is translated into تسارع (tasa'ruo) delivering the intended denotation in 6 characters less; the original is 11 whereas the translation is only 5 characters long.


Application of instrumental translation does not always deliver clear messages, as other aspects of the Arabic UI are incommunicative. *Gameplay* is one of the general menus in the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game, offering gamers a multitude of football items to purchase with points collected from achieving higher game levels. Football items vary between four main

⁹ Total characters count includes the space separating the words.

categories; football kits, shoes, balls and goal celebrations. The box in which each football item is presented contains verbal elements (the item's name and a short descriptive passage explaining its function) and a visual element (iconic presentation of the item). The Arabic translation of the *Football League 1 Historic Kit Bundle* item (Figure 7) is one of a number of instance in the Arabic UI, which fails to be communicative. Despite the various translation discussions this example promotes, specific attention is given to the phrase *Historic Kit*. The latter phrase refers to a number of kits which have been worn by Football League 1 players in certain periods of its history. Because this phrase belongs to the game's world its Arabic translation should respect the pre-existing knowledge of football and adapt the source text to the new communicative situation in the target text via instrumental translation. However, the Arabic text delivers what seems to be a documentary translation for the first word and a version of an instrumental translation, which does not consider the football context, for the second. The simultaneous implementation of both strategies results in a contextually irrelevant phrase. الأزياء التاريخية (al'azyaa altarikhaiyah, historical fashion) is a foreignised translation of a text that was aimed to be domesticated. The Arabic phrase of *Historical Fashion* has no relation to the football world, and, hence, it lacks the informative and communicative functions. The fact that this menu item is assisted by a visual element compensates for its incommunicative translation, as Arabic gamers are able to identify the item from the image/icon instead of the text.



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This image has been removed for copyright reasons.

Figure 7 Example (1) for the 'Historical Kit' Arabic translation

In other instances, the same English phrase 'historical kit' shows a different Arabic translation which reads *اللبسة تاريخية* (Albisah Tari'khiyah, which back translates to historical clothes) (Figure 8). Although the second translation is not the common Arabic phraseology for such a concept, it is less foreignised than the first one. Having two different Arabic translations for the same phrase indicates the work of a team of translators who may have been assigned to translate the same game release, or who may have been assigned to different releases and what

gamers view on the *FIFA 15* UI is a conflation of recent and previous translations.

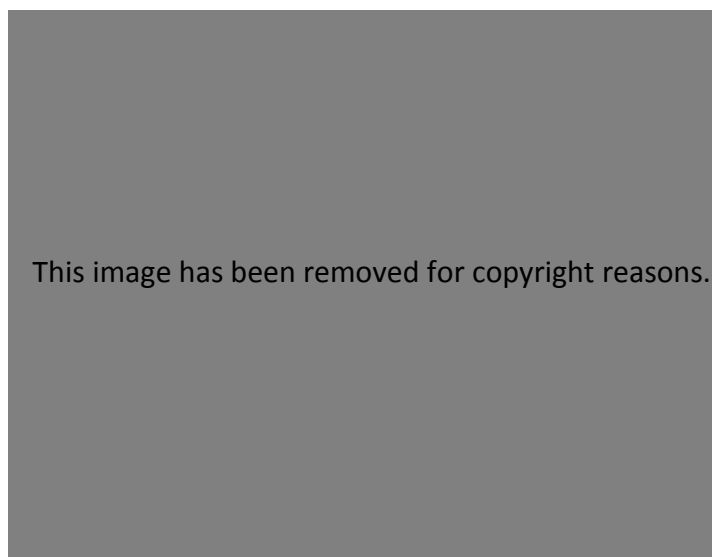


Figure 8 Example (2) for 'Historical Kit' Arabic translation

In summary, some instances of the Arabic translation of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game's UI show good implementation of instrumental translation, resulting in the level of domestication required for video game localisation. Despite its relative length, domesticated translation is made viable by designing flexible spacing, which accommodated the Arabic script in a variant number of characters.

3.3.3.2 Documentary Translation

As previously explained, documentary translation is utilised for translating UI elements which must adhere to the platform's terminology and phraseology (O'Hagan and Mangiron 2013); mainly system messages. Analysis of the Arabic translation of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game UI shows inconsistent implementation of documentary translation. It is occasionally implemented for translating texts informing gamers about the game's world, leading to incommunicative translation. Examples of both implementations are explained below.

When gamers first log on to the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game, a number of messages appear on the screen. The function of these messages is to inform gamers that the game's engine is in the process of connecting to the *EA Sports* server. This allows registered gamers to access their accounts and play online if they wish. One of these messages (Figure 9) states *Hospitality Settings Synchronising*. While the latter two words are commonly associated with technology,

Hospitality, in this context, is used outside its dictionary definition.¹⁰ As a result, documentary translation is sought to capture the technical reference of the term by emphasising the phraseology in which it is presented. The Arabic translation *يا'tim tazamun e'dadat alestidhafah* (يتم تزامن إعدادات الاستضافة) delivers the technical terminology through formal equivalence, and reflects its phraseology through the passive voice. Both aspects, formal equivalence and passive voice, are common features of the Arabic technical genre. Hence, the Arabic translation of the concerned system message reflects the original's informative function and respects the platform's terminology.

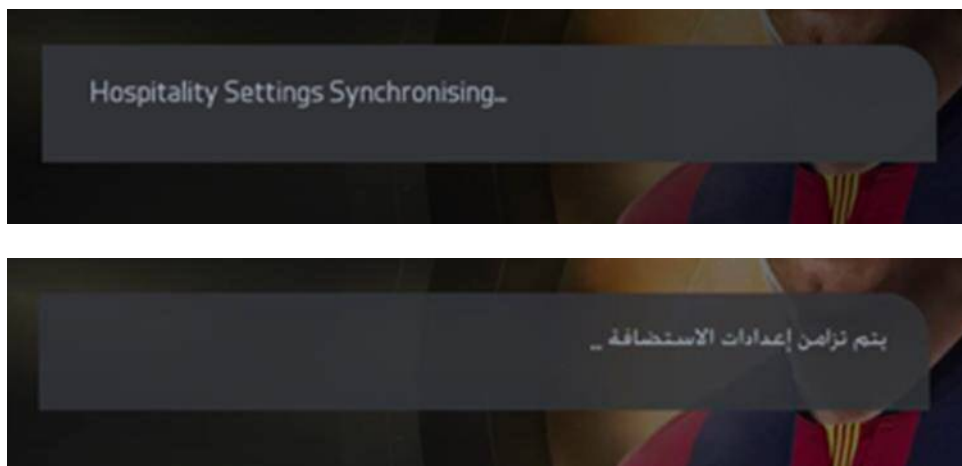


Figure 9 Documentary translation: game message

In light of the previous example, documentary translation proved to be a tool for fulfilling the communicative function. However, its application in other UI elements, where instrumental translation is required, shows opposite results. The audio menu in the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game lists the various audial options present in the game's matches, upon gamers' choice (Figure 10). Among the list, two different types of commentators seem to attract attention; *sideline commentator*, and *public announcer*. The role of the first is to give live updates on injuries and breaking news, while the role of the latter is to announce station program and to moderate discussions, more likely in a channel's studio. The Arabic equivalence for the first is *المذيع الداخلي* (*almuthie aldakhili*, interior announcer), while that of the second is referred to by either *مذيع* or *معلق* (*mu'aleque* or *muthie*, commentator or announcer) without being modified by the adjective (public). For this type of terminology, concerned with the game's

¹⁰ According to the Merriam Webster dictionary, hospitality is the generous and friendly treatment of visitors, or the activity of providing food, drinks.

world, instrumental translation is supposed to establish clear communication by complying with the game's universe. However, their Arabic translation utilises documentary translation, which negatively affects the informative and communicative functions of the Arabic texts. The Arabic translation of *sideline commentator*, and *public announcer* presents the formal equivalence of each resulting in a foreignised translation.



Figure 10 Misuse of documentary translation

3.3.3.3 Inconsistent Translation

Across the Arabic translation of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game UI elements, inconsistency is occasionally detected in instances of instrumental and documentary translations. However, the nature of inconsistent translation varies among both methods. In demonstration of inconsistent documentary translation, the following examples (Figures 11 and 12) are among the system messages appearing on screen when gamers first log in to the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game. The focus here is neither content nor phraseology, but the term *Server*. In the first example (Figure 11), the term is used in its plural form, while its singular form is used in the second example (Figure 11). The Arabic translation of both forms seeks different translation strategies. For the plural form *Servers*, the term is transliterated سيرفرات , appearing in the form of loan word. However, for the singular form *Server*, it is translated into خادم (khadem, servant) using formal equivalence.

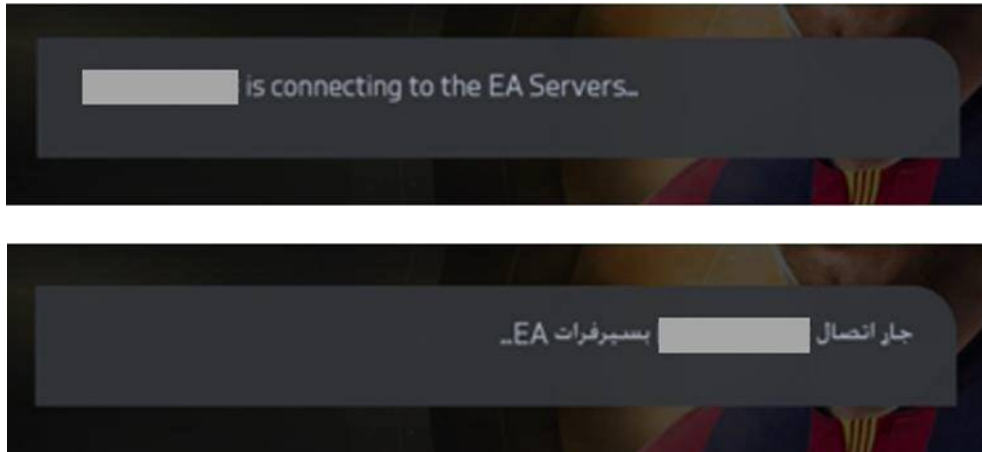


Figure 11 Arabic translation of the plural form of 'Server'

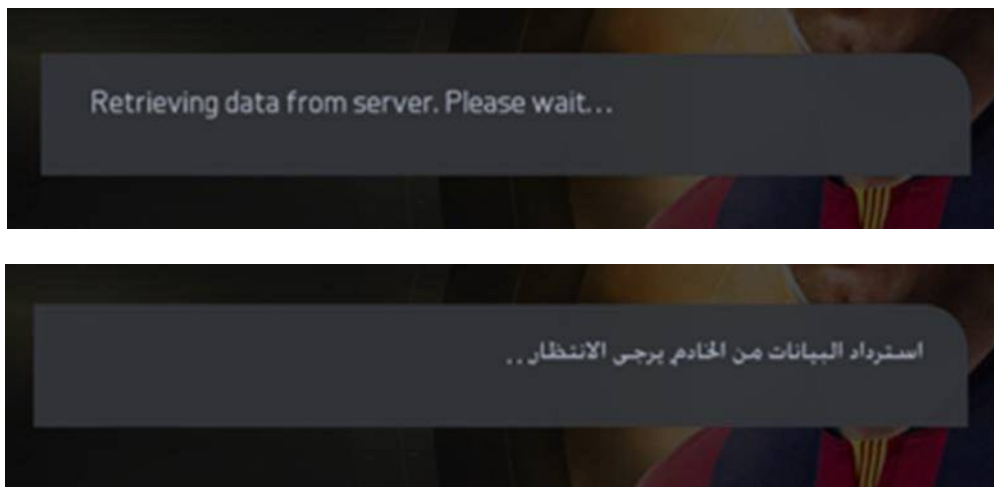


Figure 12 Arabic translation of the singular form of 'Server'

Given that both texts belong to system messages, they fall under documentary translation; “the [...] wording of these messages have to follow [...] terminology guidelines within each language” (Bernal-Merino 2015, p. 113). Application of documentary translation, as seen in the first example of 3.2.2, is expected to deliver the informative and communicative functions of the system messages. However, in these instances, the informative function is fulfilled as both translations reflect the intended denotation, in spite of utilising different strategies, yet the communicative function is disturbed due to their inconsistency. By reading each translated text in isolation, gamers may understand the messages delivered, but when perceived jointly, a confusion about the concept referred to is likely to occur. Since the translation of the system messages must adhere to the platform’s terminology, an inference is made that inconsistent translation is not a fault on the translators’ account. Instead, the problem is most probably caused by the inconsistent terminology of the game company’s translation memory. Despite being advisable, linguistic quality checks are rarely performed,

especially under time and cost constraints. The *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game is the fourth¹¹ Arabic localised version of the series, yet such inconsistency still exists. "The linguistic quality of the TM is equally important, but is often much more difficult and costly to check. Nevertheless, if quality is not maintained in a project TM, the effect of this poor linguistic quality may follow the product from version to version" (DiFranco 2006, pp. 57-58).

Further inconsistencies are detected in other UI elements of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game where instrumental translation is implemented. A clear example is illustrated in the translation of the *Visual* menu and the descriptive passages accompanying each of its items (Figure 13). On its list, the *HUD* (heads up display) item is linked to a horizontal submenu which provides gamers with multiple displaying options. *Player Name Bar* is among these options, which when selected, opens a descriptive passage below the menu to explain its function. The term *Bar* appears in both the horizontal submenu and the descriptive passage, and, in this context, refers to the horizontal stripe on which players' names are presented in certain points during the game's match. However, the Arabic translations of the term *Bar* does not consistently reflect this meaning. On the Arabic horizontal submenu, the term *Bar* is translated into عمود (a'mood, vertical bar), while it is translated into شريط (shareet, horizontal stripe) in the descriptive passage.

¹¹ The Arabic localisation of the FIFA EA Sports video game was first released for the *FIFA 12* of the series.



Figure 13 Inconsistent instrumental translation

Although instrumental translation was implemented in both, the Arabic translations present different connotation of the term *Bar*. A monolingual English dictionary provides multiple entries for the word *bar*; among those referring to the meaning of *band* or *stripe*, one emphasises a horizontal layout while the other emphasises a vertical. In other words, the English term *bar* potentially carries connotations of both layouts, each is determined by the context in which the word is used. Both instances of the term *Bar* in this context are intended for the horizontal denotation. However, the Arabic translation indicates both denotations by using a different word in each instance. In the submenu, the Arabic word *a'mood* refers to a vertical solid bar; metal, wooden or concrete, which in the context of multimedia presentation of football matches, is irrelevant. In football matches broadcast, players' names are rarely, if not never, presented on vertical solid bars on TV let alone video games. In such cases, Bernal-Merino notes:

Having to translate text without taking into consideration the semiotic context of the product risks affecting the act of communication adversely (Cutting 2002:1-14) because isolated linguistic items tend to have multiple possible meanings and, hence, give rise to an unnecessary ambiguity. (2015, p. 141)

Therefore, the Arabic translation, in this instance, delivers neither the informative nor the communicative functions, and is, thus, foreignised. On the other hand, the Arabic translation of the term *Bar* in the descriptive passage uses a relevant word, *shareet*, which denotes a horizontal stripe. Hence, the Arabic translation, in this instance, fulfils both the informative and communicative functions by presenting domesticated translation. Since the descriptive passage is associated with the menu item to explain its function in the game, they contribute to delivering a single general message. Translation inconsistency, in such communicative situation, will prevent gamers from finding the connection between the two sides of the message. Although the translation of the descriptive passage is informative, communicative and domesticated, the incommunicative translation of the menu item disturbs the communicative function of the general message and its domestication.

Unlike inconsistency in documentary translation which was due to errors in the translation memories and lack of quality checks, inconsistent instrumental translation is a result of other technical implications. The first part of the problem; mistranslating the word *Bar* in the submenu, is most probably due to the translators' isolation challenge (ibid) previously discussed in 3.1.2. Lack of context imposed by text fragmentation; due to text organisation in spreadsheets or machine translation tools, prevents translators from identifying the correct denotation, although a small amount of research on their part would have shed light on the problem. In contrast, the communicative translation of the descriptive passage is due to its relative contextual clarity. The second part of the problem, translation inconsistency between the submenu item and the descriptive passage despite their association, is potentially caused by organising different UI elements into separate text files or spreadsheets. As mentioned earlier (in 3.1), the reason Bernal-Merino does not classify system messages under UI, since he only considers menus as such, is because menus and system messages are treated differently in the localisation industry (ibid). A similar distinction is expected to apply to descriptive passages. Given their organisation and translation in separate files or spreadsheets, translators lose sight of the connection between submenu items and descriptive passages, let alone reflect it in translation.

3.3.3.4 Partial Translation

Partial translation refers to Arabic translated texts containing English words or phrases. With the exception of the goal celebration category, all football items displayed on the *Gameplay* menu (discussed in 3.2.1.) are partially translated. For example, the Arabic translation of the *Adidas Nitrocharge- White/ Bahia Glow* item (Figure 14) presents a bilingual text. While the name of the shoes remains in English, its colour statement is translated into Arabic. Moreover, explicitation (or addition) (Klaudy 2009) is used, the Arabic word *shoes* precedes the English name while the word *new* succeeds, in an attempt to give context to the foreign word in the Arabic phrase.

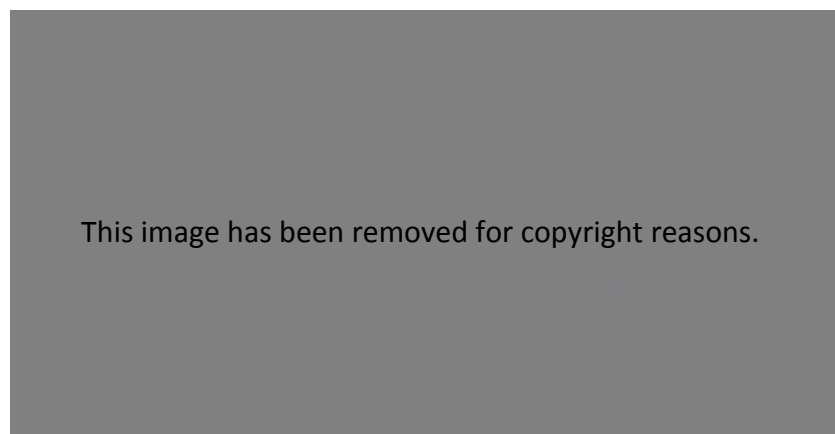
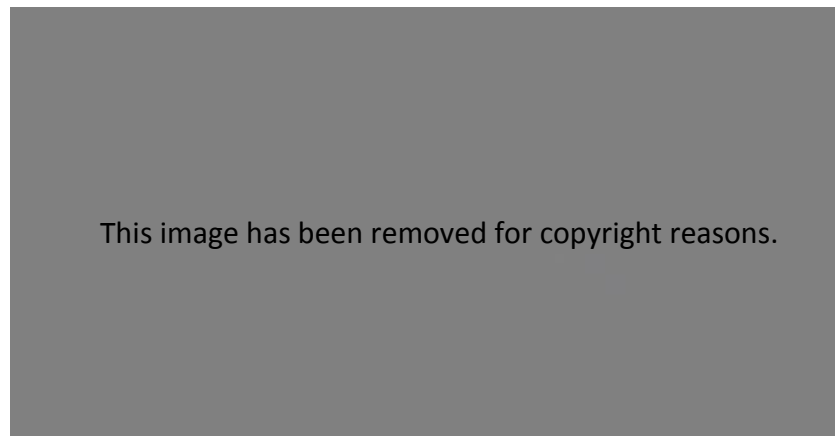


Figure 14 Partial translation: bilingual message

Most of the untranslated words on the *Gameplay* menu, including the example above, are either trademarks or brand names. These items include, but are not restricted to, *Allsvenskan League*, *Premier League* (football kits), *Puma evoSPEED*, *Nike Tiempo* (shoes), *hummel Blade*, and *Nike Ordem- Serie A Hi Vis* (balls). As per earlier discussion of the Packaging section,

trademarks and brand names usually follow the standardisation approach to retain a consistent image across different languages. For trademarks and brand names on the *Gameplay* menu, graphic adaptation is not necessary because they are assisted by images/icons (pictorial display of the item), which clearly communicates the message irrespectively of the language utilised. In this respect, having a visual presentation assist the verbal message is a way of overcoming the foreignness of having untranslated text in the *Gameplay* menu items. While the verbal side of the message disturbs the informative and communicative functions, the visual side restores them.

3.3.3.5 No translation

The Arabic version of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game features fully and partially translated UI elements, and rarely does it present texts with no translation. One of the limited instances of complete non translation, if not the only, is the *End User License Agreement*. This part of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game UI resembles the legal document defining the rights and responsibilities of gamers and the video game company; Electronic Arts (EA), alike (figure 15). There are potentially two reasons for including an electronic version of the user agreement in the game. Firstly, the fact that gamers need to create accounts registered at Electronic Art's servers in order to enjoy the game requires confirming their acceptance of the user agreement regulations. An electronic version of such agreement facilitates immediate connectivity to *EA* servers and delivery of gamers' acceptance. Secondly, in respect of manuals, publishers are inclined to replace printed manuals with electronic ones, on the grounds of cutting printing costs (Chandler and Deming 2012). With special consideration to Electronic Arts, O'Hagan and Mangiron explain this modern trend in video games:

Electronic Arts [...] announced that EA Sports game titles will no longer accompany print manuals, which would be replaced by a version of instructions within the game... Not only is it more environmentally-friendly, but it also helps publishers reduce printing cost considerably. (2013, p. 126)

Accordingly, it could be inferred that the electronic treatment includes *the End User License Agreement* as well.

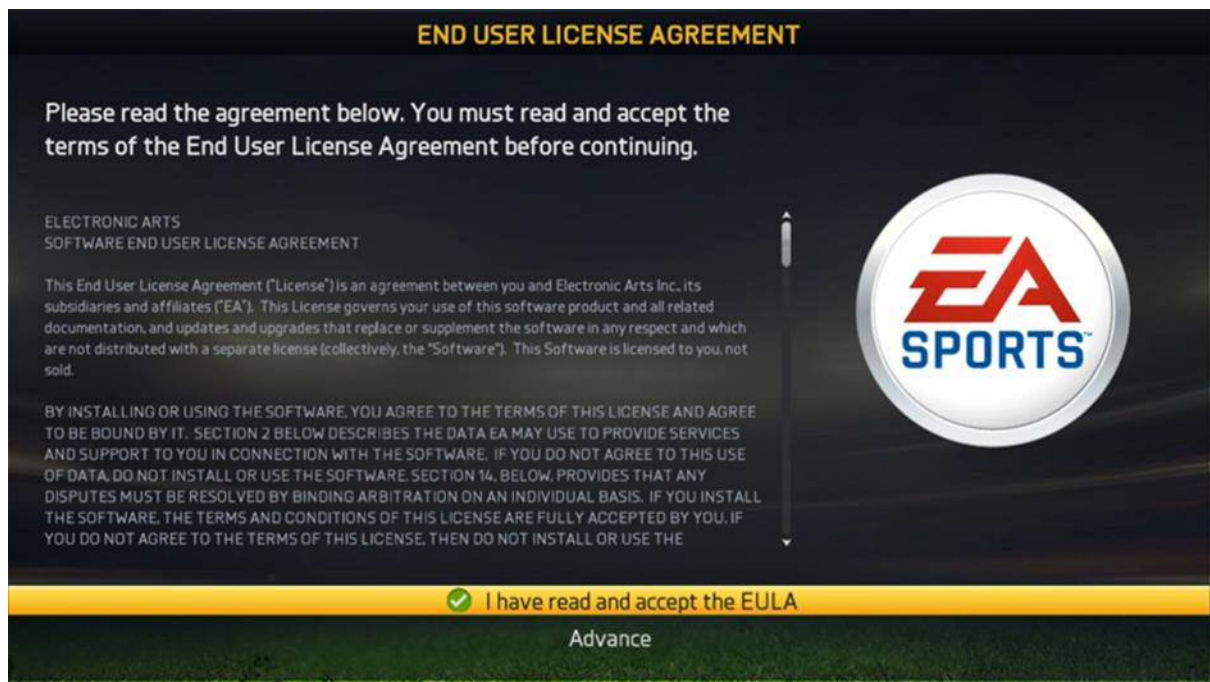


Figure 15 Untranslated text

The Arabic translation of this legal document is not provided electronically, but a simplified and summarised version is included in print on an information leaflet inside the game's packaging. The Arabic printed version of the *End User Licence Agreement* offers a summary of the original electronic version, yet, of course, without facilitating delivering Arabic gamers' acceptance. Therefore, Arabic gamers have to do so through the untranslated electronic version included in the game. Although the new trend of electronic documents is adapted for environmental and financial reasons, the method of non-electronic translation and its print substitution is more cost-efficient for the Arabic localisation of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game. This implies that Arabic gamers of moderate or limited English language acquisition are accepting the electronic version's regulations without fully understanding them in detail.

3.3.3.6 Technical observations

The Arabic translation of the *FIFA 15 EA Sport* video game UI does not constantly respect the Arabic language directionality. Some UI elements appear from right to left (RTL), achieving technical domestication, while others disorient Arabic text presentation, creating technical foreignisation. Similarly, when texts are presented in both Arabic and English simultaneously, as demonstrated above in the partial translation section, technical foreignisation is also detected. The level of this type of foreignisation further extends when these bilingual texts appear in a layout that disrespects the Arabic language directionality, causing complete

disorientation of the Arabic text. This section explores a number of example creating different levels of technical foreignisation.

3.3.3.6.1 Mirroring

As explained in the packaging section, mirroring is the process of creating an inverted UI design in order for RTL texts to display naturally, starting from the right margin (Sarver 2015). It is an essential part of localising products to the Arabic language to ensure technical domestication. Unfortunately, mirroring is not applied in most UI elements of the Arabic version of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game (Figures 10 and 13). This forces Arabic texts to start from the centre of their assigned boxes and end at the left margin. Although this does not hinder readability, it disorients Arabic texts and, in turn, negatively affects tracking line/text beginnings especially in multiple-column menus. However, in most system messages and descriptive passages, Arabic text inversion is noticed irrespective of their lack of mirroring (Figures 8, 10 and 11 show inverted Arabic texts in game messages, and Figures 9 and 12 show inverted Arabic text in descriptive passages). Despite being a replica of the original, most boxes of system messages and descriptive passages display Arabic texts from the right margin. Given that system messages appear independently from other UI elements, Arabic text inversion surely improves tracking lines' beginnings. In contrast, descriptive passages usually appear in the company of menus, hence, their Arabic text inversion does not reduce line tracking confusion. Finally, the way in which tutorial boxes are designed makes their text presentation easier for technical domestication (Figure 16).



Figure 16 Natural Layout proper RTL display

Tutorial boxes generally have sharp edges which does not signify any of their sides as a starting margin, unlike the boxes of system messages appearing at the start of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game (Figures 8, 10 and 11). In addition, tutorial headlines are centered (Figure 16), unlike those of descriptive passages and menu labels and items aligned to the left (Figures 6, 7, 9 and 12), which allows Arabic texts to be presented correctly just by inverting them. The design of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game UI elements and their influence on the Arabic texts' layout leads to a presentational level of technical domestication and foreignisation.

3.3.3.6.2 Bi-directionality

Under lack of mirroring, the Arabic texts layout on the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game UI elements is disoriented, which negatively affects tracking lines beginnings yet does not hinder readability. The situation only becomes worse with partially translated texts. When the layout of bilingual texts, those presenting Arabic and English simultaneously, is disoriented, Arabic readability is occasionally hindered (Figure 17). The Arabic translation of the *FUT 99 Match Player Contract* menu item presents most wordings in Arabic, yet retains the abbreviation *FUT* in its original language.



Figure 17 Bilingual text lacking inversion and mirroring

The problem is that lack of mirroring and Arabic text inversion force the Arabic text to start from the centre with an Arabic word, and ends at the left margin with an English word. While expert Arabic FIFA gamers might be accustomed to this, new comers cannot immediately realise the text's starting point and its directionality, contradicting the previously explained UI characteristic in 3.1. (Bernal-Merino 2015). However, the use of icons compensates for the disrupted clarity. Despite the difficulty new comers will find in reading such bilingual disoriented texts, the visual displaying a contract clearly refers to the message intended. It is worth noting that not all partially translated texts are difficult to read, as this problem was not faced in 3.2.4. for example (Figure 13), where the English phrase was centred in the Arabic text. Similarly, partially translated texts represented in descriptive passages, which are usually inverted, do not affect Arabic readability (Figure 7).

3.4 Audio Files

As seen in the audio menus of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game (second example in 3.2.2.), there are four types of voiced presentations involved in each played match; sideline commentator, career mode radio announcer, commentary and public announcer. While career mode radio announcer is part of the game's creation, the remaining three are imitations of professional voices existing in broadcasted football matches. In the Arabic version of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game, only the commentary is re-voiced in Arabic. In the English version, Jeff Stelling, *Sky Sports* presenter, is the voice of the public announcer. When the commentary is set on Arabic, no Arabic presenter re-voices Stelling and the function is entirely deleted from the Arabic localisation of the game. Furthermore, gamers have no control over the language which the sideline commentator speaks, since it corresponds to the language of the country in which the stadium selected for hosting the virtual match exists. If a match is selected to be played in *Al-Etihad* Stadium in Manchester, UK, the English language is spoken, and if it is played on *Santiago Bernabéu* Stadium, the Spanish language is spoken. Hence, Arabic gamers can only select their language of choice for the commentary, which is the only Arabic localised audio asset in the game.

Analysis of the Arabic localisation of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* commentary is incomplete without discussing relevant aspects of sports, video game localisation, translation and linguistics. This section starts with a review of sport announcer talk (SAT), its language levels and features (Humpolík 2014). Then, the function of sport video games' commentary in relation to that of TV commentary is explored, leading to the peculiar linguistic situation of video game commentary and the creation of its dialogue. Some facts related to the Arabic localisation of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* commentary are presented before highlighting some key sport translation strategies.

In order to put theories discussed into practice, a comparison between the Arabic and English commentaries of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game is attempted, and the methodology of this comparison will be explained. As part of establishing the basis for the comparison, the utilisation of Arabic regional dialects is identified as a means of regionalisation/localisation used instead of Arabisation, the method applied for localising the game's packaging and textual assets. In addition, the criteria for selecting the Arabic voice actors are explored explaining the choice of Arabic dialects presented in the game. Moreover, significant linguistic

features of each selected dialect are highlighted. The comparison between Arabic and English commentaries thus underlines the commentary style in each which reveals cultural foreignisation, and the variation in their text typology which shows the inapplicability of the concerned theory unlike the previous assets. Finally, a commercial observation on the Arabic localisation of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game commentary in relation to the size of the project contradicts the fundamentals in the video games localisation literature.

3.4.1 Overview of Football Commentary

Although academic interest in sport linguistics is still in its infancy, a relatively recent study (ibid) explores the language of sport announcer talk (SAT). Sport commentary, or SAT, is usually presented on different yet complementary levels, which are play-by-play and colour commentary, alternatively described as prime and co-commentators. Commentators of each level uniquely contributes to sport announcer talk. Play-by-play (PP) commentators “produce a rapid flow of speech to describe the quickly unfolding events”, whereas colour commentators (CC) “elaborate on the current topic and give their opinion on the game” (Humpolík 2014, pp. 10-11). Despite the different features of its components, sport commentary generally has entertaining and informative functions. On one hand, to entertain the audience, the commentary needs to sound interesting by providing “levels of voiced excitement”, which correspond to the changeable events of the game (ibid). Exciting football moves that provoke commentators’ high intonations tend to be defined by social norms. On the other hand, sport commentary is supposed to be informative, while avoiding being plainly descriptive, since the audience is usually able to view the game.¹² Therefore, the information provided has to be evaluative and to cover background information (ibid).

The addition of audio files to football video games, in the form of commentary, is aimed at increasing gamers’ enjoyment and the game’s immersion (Bernal-Merino 2008). Football video game commentary is an imitation of TV broadcast commentary. However, both PP and CC do not have the same functions as previously explained. At first glance, the audiences of TV and video games may seem equal since the game/match is visible to both, and, therefore, they need a commentary that offers more than a description of the game. However, as an

¹² Radio broadcast audience is an exception, since the audio description of the sport commentary is the only source of information.

audience, gamers are partly different, since they are not just watching the match in anticipation, but, in addition, they are controlling the game and planning for the next step (Humpolík 2014). Hence, the function of football video game commentary is no longer accounted as informative, but as simulation of football authenticity:

Since football broadcast and the sportcasters are inseparable under the usual circumstances for obvious reasons, it is logical for a computer game that simulates football to also simulate its social context and the social norms that accompany it. (ibid, p. 17)

In other words, football commentary in video games is created to enhance the reality of the game, which makes its function purely entertaining.

Video games feature a degree of openness which allows the gaming dynamics to develop various sequences each time the game is played, depending on the gamer's choices and skills (Bernal-Merino 2008; O'Hagan and Mangiron 2013). In terms of football video games, matches are virtual and are constructed from variable elements selected by the game engine based on the gamers' decisions (O'Hagan and Mangiron 2013). Therefore, it is difficult, if not impossible, to repeat identically the same match twice, which highlights another difference between TV and video games commentary. While the first is spontaneously created during the unfolding events of a real match, the latter is recorded before any of the possible virtual matches are distinctively constructed (Humpolík 2014). Hence, video game commentary is not recorded beforehand in full length, but in segments via an audio technique called stitching:

Stitches are short audio files containing utterances made by game characters, segmented and recorded separately so that they can be used at different stages of the game as appropriate, with variables inserted in the game. (O'Hagan and Mangiron 2013, p. 136)

The purpose of the stitching technique is to link audio segments to create what sounds like flowing speech. Despite the fact that stitching might be the most appropriate method that answers to the nature of the medium and the function of its commentary, artificially joint utterances potentially lack naturalness, even if the sentences are grammatically correct (ibid).

3.4.2 Creation of Video Game Commentary

To ensure the same level of naturalness for which TV commentary is known and broadcasted matches are enjoyed, football video games adopt an unusual method for creating their commentary. For clarification, Humpolík (2014) describes the unique process of creating video game commentary as:

To sound authentic, the sportcasters were given specific contexts and simulated the speech they would use in them. That gives us a very specific linguistic situation, in which a sportcaster pretends to sound spontaneous. This is recorded and then presented to the audience in a virtual context where the spontaneous speech would be required. (ibid, p. 17)

Instead of writing a commentary script for the actors to voice, like the dialogues of other video game genres, voice actors are provided with written texts describing possible situations of football matches and on which they are asked to commentate. Since this method requires experienced voice actors in order for them to produce spontaneous commentary segments, football video games tend to rely on professional voice talents to record and present their commentary (Bernal-Merino 2008). Since the 2010 release, the English European version of the *FIFA EA Sports* video game series have featured Martin Tyler and Alan Smith.¹³ In a taped interview posted on the website of the British newspaper *The Telegraph*, both commentators talked about their work experience in the *FIFA EA Sports* commentary. In confirmation with what has been discussed so far, they said that they are provided with football match scenarios; for example, (a team is 3-0 up with 10 minutes to go and then conceded a goal), and on which they are asked to give multiple commentary versions. There is no visual simulation of these scenarios, instead the commentators have to imagine them based on their long experience of football commentary. Both commentators stated that they spend several days each year recording new lines of commentary for the new release of the *FIFA EA Sport* video game. This way, a library of recording is created and gamers annually hear fresh and updated commentary (Tayler and Smith 2015).

¹³ Martin Tyler is an English football commentator who was voted the FA Premier League commentator of the decade in 2003. Alan Smith is an English commentator and a former professional footballer.

3.4.3 The Source Text in Video Game Commentary

Exploring the unique process through which the *FIFA EA Sports* video game commentary is created reveals an unusual linguistic situation, which raises an important question about the nature of the translation practice involved. The creative and spontaneous way in which the English commentary is created makes us question whether the recorded commentary or the match scenario is the source text for the Arabic commentary. If a transcription of the English commentary is used as a source text, its Arabic translation will be geared towards English gamers, the target audience in the source culture, and, hence, the Arabic commentary will lack the naturalness and reality which are main features of video game commentary. Alternatively, if match scenarios are translated into Arabic and commentators are then asked to follow the same unscripted method to create spontaneous Arabic commentary, an interesting translation situation is produced from which a concrete commentary source text is absent. In other words, the Arabic commentary will be geared toward Arabic gamers, the target audience in the target culture, and will fulfil the entertaining function of video game commentary by sounding natural and real to the Arabic football measures. However, the unscripted method of creating a target commentary is difficult to measure in terms of word count, which is a marketing determiner for the size and budget of the video game localisation project (Bernal-Merino 2016c).

Esam El-Sha'waly, a famous Tunisian football commentator in the Arab World and the PP commentator of the Arabic localised *FIFA EA Sports* video game series, talks about the process of creating the Arabic commentary. Although El-Sha'waly does not specify whether he was provided with an Arabic translation of the transcribed English commentary or that of match scenarios, he stresses that no restrictions were imposed on the Arabic translation of the commentary. He explains that EA Sports chooses a commentator for his popularity and for the thrilling expression for which he is known, and that limiting the commentator in a translated text prevents the commentary's success. Hence, the commentary he produced for the *FIFA EA Sports* video game is as spontaneous as the ones he produces for real life matches broadcasted on Al-Jazeera Sports channel, where he works (El-Sha'waly 2011). In fact, in the field of sport translation, it is recommended that translators have the same cultural and historical background as sports' participants, use sports abbreviations and figurative language, and understand the target culture's views of sport participants (Sans 2016).

Therefore, it is preferable that sport casters and/or sport reporters take responsibility for sport translation. Due to the undefined framework according to which the English commentary is translated into Arabic and the level of freedom allowed by sport translation, it is fair to say that the Arabic commentary of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game is the result of a localisation rather than a translation process.

3.4.4 Analysis of the Arabic Commentary

To underline the linguistic and cultural aspects of the language transfer which occurred in the Arabic localisation of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game commentary, a comparative analysis of the Arabic and English commentaries is performed in the following sections. Due to the absence of a traditional form of source and target texts and to the nature of video games, which prevents identical repetition of a match, a specific methodology is followed to set the basis of the comparative analysis. A number of match pairs were played by alternatively selecting Arabic and English as the language of commentary, while maintaining the same variables; (stadium, teams, formations...etc.), in each match pair. To explore a wide scope of linguistic variety in the commentary, two match pairs involved international teams; (Barcelona vs. Real Madrid and Manchester City vs. Manchester United), while one pair consisted of Arabic/Saudi teams; (Al-Hilal vs. Al-Etihad). In addition, one of the international match pairs was played against the computer, whereas the rest were played against a friend. Varying matches between human against computer and human against human were undertaken to explore the linguistic/commentary variety available. Moreover, in an attempt to generate matches that are close as possible in each pair, the level of difficulty for all matches was set to a minimum to ensure minimum interference from artificial intelligence (AI). Finally, the commentaries of all matches were transcribed and compared.

3.4.4.1 Commentary Styles

The English European version of *the FIFA 15 EA Sport* video game features Martin Tyler as the play-by-play commentator (PP) and Alan Smith as the colour commentator (CC). Respectively, the Arabic localised version of the game features Esam El-Sha'waly, a Tunisian, and Abdullah Al-Harby, a Saudi commentator. El-Sha'waly is a popular figure in the Arab football world, admired for his expressive and elaborative commentary, fluctuating intonation and Tunisian dialect. In comparison, Al-Harby is less popular yet is a well-known voice on Al-Jazeera Sports

channel. Despite their spontaneous and high quality performance in the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game, the mutual commentary is considered culturally foreignised by many Arabic gamers. In the Arab football world, having a single commentator performing both the play-by-play and colour commentaries is a common Arabic style. Therefore, replicating the English style of commentary presentation, by having a distinct commentator for each commentary level, in the Arabic localisation of the game's commentary does not reflect the reality of Arabic football. On Arabic video game fora, Arabic gamers express their discontent with the participation of a second commentator, whose involvement spoils their enjoyment.¹⁴ Although the Arabic localisation of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game commentary is completed in Qatari studios under the supervision of a local Middle Eastern distribution company, Red Entertainment, by professional Arabic commentators, this obvious act of foreignisation was not prevented. The reason for not rectifying the cultural foreignisation of the Arabic commentary in the new releases of the game in spite of Arabic gamers' dissatisfaction is potentially due to technical and commercial factors. Replacing two commentators, the PP and CC, by one in the Arabic localised version requires recoding the game, the storage and insertion of audio files, and, thus, a higher localisation budget (Bernal-Merino 2016c).

3.4.4.2 Introducing Dialects in the Target Text

Due to the spoken nature of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game commentary, its Arabic localisation utilises regional dialects instead of the Modern Standard form, placing regionalisation side by side with Arabisation in the Arabic localisation of the same product. Although the English commentary of the European version of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game is solely presented in British English, the Arabic localisation of the commentary is presented in two distinct regional dialects, Tunisian and Saudi. Given that spoken Arabic consists of around 22 regional dialects, the introduction of a dialect in the target text where there is none in the source text is an important strategy in game localisation when dealing with such linguistic variation (O'Hagan and Mangiron 2013). In addition, the use of dialects makes the Arabic commentary more exciting by giving it a local flavour, unlike other video game titles, such as *Call of Duty*, which utilise Modern Standard Arabic for their audio assets

¹⁴ Arabic gamers' opinion on this point can be viewed at <https://saudigamer.com/fifa-15-saudi-editions-release-date/>.

localisation, leading to their foreignisation and to Arabic gamers' dissatisfaction. The utilisation of regional dialects in the Arabic localisation of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game highlights a diglossic domestication.

Selecting the Tunisian and Saudi dialects for the Arabic localisation of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game commentary is not an indication of primarily targeting Tunisian and Saudi Arabian gamers within the Arabic market. Indeed, the selection was a difficult marketing decision based on a number of criteria set by the distribution company, since the Arabic world is filled with professional commentators from across its regions. Given the size of the localisation project, the team at Red Entertainment Distribution Company wanted to ensure that their selection would lead to a successful Arabic commentary. The company was seeking commentators who have long experience in football commentary, who are popular among the young Arabic audience and who work together in harmony (Salem 2011).

The contrast between the Tunisian and Saudi dialects highlights interesting linguistic features which contribute to the reality of the Arabic commentary. While Al-Harby, the Saudi (CC) commentator, maintains almost pure Arabic speech, El-Sha'waly, the Tunisian (PP) commentator, recurrently uses English football lexicon. This linguistic variation is connected to the historical background of the Tunisian dialect and that of football commentary in the Arab world. Due to long-term exposure to a foreign language in a local context, namely to French during the colonial period, Tunisia has long been a bilingual community, in which code switching is a common linguistic feature (Belazi 1991). Code switching refers to "a bilingual mode of communication characterised by frequent shifts from one language to another (typically with phonological interference) through the flow of speech" (Timm 1975, cited in Belazi 1991, p.23). The reason bilinguals switch codes in a single conversation is for their ability to express themselves equally in both languages (ibid). Although code switching in the Tunisian dialect typically happens between Arabic and French, in his commentary, El-Sha'waly tends to shift between Arabic and English. It is claimed that the language of football commentary first started in the Arab world (particularly colonised countries) in a foreign form, mainly English, and that its assimilation was a long journey that progressed with the advancement of audio-visual media (Gamal 2008). Since English has a strong presence in the field of football and bilinguals conveniently switch codes in their conversations, it is understandable for El-Sha'waly to replace French with English in the context of football.

Interestingly, it is observed from a number of interviews with El-Sha'waly that when expressing himself he shifts between Arabic and French, but when discussing football, he switches between Arabic and English. Examples of El-Sha'waly's Arabic and English code switching in the Arabic commentary of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game are provided below, as well as their back translation which reflect the Arabic, specifically Tunisian dialect, grammar.

Back translation	Arabic phrases
It was in its way to the <i>corner</i> (English term) but the goalkeeper saved it from the <i>corner</i> (Arabic term)	كانت في طريقها للكورنر لكن الحارس استبعدها من الزاوية
And the ball is in the <i>out</i> [sic] (Arabic term) <i>out</i> (English term)	و الكرة في البرة أوت
The <i>match</i> (Arabic term) is over then, the referee's whistle ends the <i>match</i> (English term)	انتهت المباراة إذن صافرة الحكم تنهي الماتش

Table 1 Instances of Code Switching

Considering the relative novelty of football commentary in the Arabic language, some foreign terms take precedence over local equivalents despite their availability, such as foul, corner and out (ibid). Hence, it could be argued that what is witnessed in El-Sha'waly's commentary is borrowing and not code switching. However, borrowing refers to importing words into a language with the possibility of these undergoing phonetic, morphological or semantic changes, and that in the case of borrowing the speaker proceeds on the basis of one code (Belazi 1991). In contrast, when code switching is involved, there is no source or recipient language, since both languages are present at any point in time, and the speaker alternates from one code to another (ibid). Therefore, the bilingualism of El-Sha'waly's commentary is considered code switching, a feature for which the Tunisian dialect is known. On the other hand, the limited occurrence of foreign terms in Al-Harby's commentary, (which appeared only once in three virtual matches, and featured specialised terms such *derby*), can be considered borrowing, since he adheres to a single code throughout his commentary. The

reality of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game commentary lies in being a true imitation of the TV football commentary by representing the characteristics of the Arabic dialects.

3.4.4.3 Comparing Arabic and English Commentaries

Analysis of the transcribed commentaries shows that the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game commentary tends to follow a certain linguistic sequence, ranging between informative and expressive text types. The English commentary starts with information about the teams' formation, then it proceeds to describing the match's events. As the virtual match progresses, the expressive part of the commentary either provides sentences or phrases describing interesting manoeuvres or critical decisions, or names the player who is momentarily controlling the ball, to maintain the flow of speech when no important events occur. When applicable, the stretches of expressive texts are instilled with informative texts, which offer additional information, such as historical/background details, about a relevant team or player. On the other hand, the Arabic commentary of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game features a different sequence of text typology. Instead of starting with the team formation, the Arabic commentary begins with an expressive text describing the importance of the match and the excitement of football, while including fragments of information stating the playing teams' names. The expressive part that follows is very similar to that of the English commentary, as it describes the unfolding events of the match and states the players' names when no event is worth describing. However, the additional background information inserted in the expressive part is very limited, in other words, the majority of the Arabic commentary is essentially expressive, unlike the English commentary. Although the theory of text typology showed relevance to the Arabic localisation of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game packaging and in-game texts, the free translation of the commentary prevented applicability of such theory. Text typology is only applicable if "the target text skopos requires 'equivalence' (in the sense of text type analogy) between source and target texts" (Nord 2005, p. 23). Since it is essential for texts on the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game packaging to be operative and informative, and for in-game texts to be informative, the skopos of their Arabic correspondents requires equivalence. In contrast, the commentary aims to be entertaining regardless of the text types used for delivering this function. Therefore, the Arabic commentary shows equivalence on a functional rather than on a textual level.

In order to qualify the reality of the Arabic commentary and to assess the cultural and linguistic differences of the Arabic and the English football contexts, the linguistic stitches of commentaries are compared. In the process, a number of obstacles were faced, and in return a defined methodology was sought. Given the difficulty of identically repeating the same match twice, the commentaries of each match pair did not provide a rich enough subject for comparison. Finding equivalent phraseology or stitches was challenging under the uncontrolled development of each match pair. Therefore, instead of comparing the commentaries of each match pair separately, all transcribed Arabic commentaries were collectively compared with their English counterparts to allow a wider scope for equivalence. Due to the fact that the purpose of adding audio files/commentary to football video games is to increase the game's immersion, only the part that fulfils this aim in the Arabic commentary is considered a subject of comparison. Since CC in the Arabic commentary is not a simulation of reality, because it does not follow the Arabic commentary style of having one commentator for both CC and PP commentary, texts of colour commentary are excluded from the comparison. This helps shift the focus of comparison to what is real according to the Arabic commentary style, which is the play-by-play (PP) commentary. Moreover, the variation of text typology between the Arabic and English commentaries of the game resulted in more data, yet less chances of equivalences. Hence, informative texts were exempted due to their minimal existence in the Arabic commentary, while expressive texts remained the core of comparison. Finally, when comparison of expressive texts of the PP commentary in the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game is attempted, some phraseology mistakenly showed equivalence between Arabic and English. In order to verify if two seemingly equivalent stitches are actually paralleled, the situations which generated them were compared as well. In other words, linguistic equivalence is accounted as such if it is supported by situational equivalence in the football gameplay, such as a foul or a free kick. Only linguistic equivalences supported by situational equivalences are considered valid examples in this section. For further facilitation to finding equivalence, stitches are classified into phrases comprising football terminology, those describing football manoeuvres or participants' decisions, and others describing players' performances. Examples on both are provided below, while the English stitch is presented in brackets in the discussion, a triple presentation of the Arabic, Arabic written, transliterated and back translated, is included in tables.

3.4.4.3.1 Example of Football Terms

The Arabic and English versions of this type of stitches tend to show little differences in their phraseology, as football terminology, which naturally shows equivalence, is the main element on which the stitch is based. However, this is not always the case as sometimes Arabic and English commentators describe the same game situation differently, despite using equivalent football terminology. Two examples are provided below; one demonstrating similar phraseology, and another demonstrating different phraseology yet similar meaning.

A common move in football is playing the ball, in an attack, across the field from one side to the other or to the middle. When such a move is encountered in the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game, the English PP commentator usually says 'in goes the cross'. The table below shows the Arabic phrase, and its translations, expressing the same move.

Arabic	تمريرة عرضية وأحلى
Phonological transcription	Tam'reera ardiah wala ahla
Back translation	A beautiful wide pass

Table 2 Example (1) for Arabic football term

Since the cross is a single move that needs to be followed by other moves in order for the match to progress, it only entails a simple phrase to describe it. The Arabic words *tam'reera ardiah* are the equivalent term for the English *cross*, while the adjective *wala ahla* (good) is optional, which is not always mentioned with the term. Due to the simplicity of this move, the stitch which describes it shows simple phraseology in both languages, focusing on the football term cross.

Some football decisions are similar in Arabic and English matches, yet commentary on them tends to differ occasionally from one language/culture to the other. The case of an offside presents a good example, despite the fact that the football term 'offside' remains in its English form in the Arabic stitch as part of the linguistic feature code switching. An offside in a game is decided when a player is in an active play while he is nearer to his opponents' goal line than both the ball and the second last opponent. In the English match, the stitch 'that's offside and the referee has acknowledged that fact' is generated by such situation. Despite carrying the

same meaning, the phraseology of the equivalent Arabic stitch, presented below, is noticeably different.

Arabic	قرار مية في المية صح أوفساید
Phonological transcription	Karar myiah fi elmyiah sah offside
Back translation	a decision 100% correct offside (English term).

Table 3 Example (2) for Arabic football term

While the English stitch uses a full sentence in an active voice, mentioning the decision, an offside, and focusing on the person, the referee, who confirms it, the Arabic stitch simply uses a phrase which gives value to the decision without mentioning who made it. Despite their different phraseology, both stitches confirm the offside decision in an equal level of assertion. The English stitch describes it as a fact, and, similarly, the Arabic stitch describes it as a decision 100% correct. In summary, the football term offside is equally used in both languages, yet the commentary in each language used a different phraseology to reach to the same conclusion.

3.4.4.3.2 Examples of Players' Actions

These types of stitches are not specifically describing football moves or decisions, but are expressing commentators' reactions to them. Therefore, the linguistic and cultural differences between Arabic and English phraseologies are clear. While the English phraseology is short, direct and formal, the Arabic phraseology tends to be extended, figurative and informal. The linguistic and cultural variation of the Arabic and English commentaries are demonstrated in the following examples.

When a player is about to score but the goalkeeper saves the shot, the latter is praised for his performance in the English commentary by: 'good work by the goalkeeper'. In a similar situation, the Arabic commentator cheerfully shouts the following stitches:

Arabic	غرك ما يلزمش، غرك مافيش، ماك اثنين ماشدقتيل، شي ممكن، حليس و أروع
Phonological transcription	Gerak ma yelzam'neesh, gerak mafeesh, minack ethnain ma shufnash, mush momken, hares wala ar'waa.
Back translation	I don't need other than you, there is no one else but you, we haven't seen two of you, impossible, brilliant goalkeeper.

Table 4 Example (1) for Arabic description of player's action

The example above shows the simplicity and concise phraseology of the English stitch that delivers the commentator's admiration of the goalkeeper's performance. On the other hand, the Arabic commentary offers four dependent clauses and one independent 'brilliant goalkeeper' for delivering the same meaning. In addition to the linguistic variation between the two commentaries, a cultural variation is also signified. This example highlights the tendency of English speakers to express themselves directly in few words, and the inclination of Arabic speakers to be more emotional and rather expressive.

Another situation is when players are passing the ball so poorly that the opposite team can easily take it away from them. In such a situation, the English commentary uses the stitch: 'they've got to keep the ball better than this, because that's just give away to the opposition'. The Arabic commentary on an equivalent situation expresses the following stitch:

Arabic	الفريق هذا كأنه يقدم الهدايا لخصمه يقوله ما نحبش نلعب خذ الكرة
Phonological transcription	Elfarik hatha ka'anoh yekadem elhadaiah lekhasmuh yequoloh ma nehebish nel'ab khuth elkurah.
Back translation	As if this team is offering presents to its opposition saying we don't like to play, take the ball.

Table 5 Example (2) for Arabic description of player's action

Both Arabic and English stitches express similar meaning, the team is easily losing the ball, yet in a different phraseology. The English stitch consists of two clauses, one which gives advice 'they've got to keep the ball', and another which explains the team's inability to keep the ball by using the expression 'give away'. On the other hand, the Arabic stitch neglects the advice,

and, instead, stresses the team's inability in keeping the ball. It consists of two clauses, each using a figurative language, 'the team is offering presents to its opposition' and 'the team is asking its opposition to take the ball because they don't like to play' repeatedly delivering the same meaning. The previous examples demonstrate the level of reality the Arabic commentary has reached in the absence of a tangible form of a source text. In addition, the examples show how the Arabic commentary fulfils the entertaining function and achieves cultural and linguistic domestication.

When comparing the level to which the written and the voiced channel modes are localised, we find the Arabic localisation of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* offers inconsistent communicative levels. In response, many Arabic gamers tend to set each channel on the language which complements their gameplay experience; a common ludic behaviour under the game's linguistic flexibility.¹⁵ In that, their role changes from passive receivers of translation to active agents.

3.4.4.4 Commercial Observation

The Arabic localisation of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game commentary is of a high standard, increasing the game's immersion and sales. In video game localisation, re-voicing is usually reserved for triple A titles and locales with higher profitable margins (Chandler and Deming 2012; O'Hagan and Mangiron 2013; Bernal-Merino 2015). The reason re-voicing is reserved for higher budget games is because "audio localisation (script translation, actors recordings and studio times) accounts for 50 per cent to 70 per cent of the localisation budget" (Bernal-Merino 2015, p. 74). Therefore, the localisation of audio assets designates fully localised video games from partially localised ones (Chandler and Deming 2012; O'Hagan and Mangiron 2013; Bernal-Merino 2015). However, despite its partial localisation, as seen in the packaging and in-game analysis, the Arabic localisation of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game offers a high quality Arabic commentary which contradicts claims of the video game localisation literature. By the *FIFA EA Sports 2012* release, its sales overtook its rival PES Konami in the Arabic market and promised to reach 200-250 thousand copies. It was only at that point that a decision on its Arabic localisation was made (Salem 2011). In its first year, the Arabic localisation of the

¹⁵ An example of the bilingual experience of Arabic gamers can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hCJPPRW935w>.

commentary delivered 160 hours of recordings, including editing, and around 200 thousand words of Arabic commentary (ibid).

Since it is generally agreed that re-voicing is only performed for fully localised video games, and that it is performed for the Arabic localisation of the *FIFA 15 EA Sports* video game despite its partial localisation, further investigation was deemed essential. In addition to the qualitative analysis provided above, a quantitative analysis is sought to calculate the ratio of Arabic commentary to the English. Despite the expressive nature of the Arabic commentary demonstrated in examples 4.4.3.2, it is found that the word count of the transcribed Arabic commentaries is noticeably less than that of the English. In the match pairs played against a friend, the Arabic commentaries consisted around 85% of the English, including the pair consisting of Saudi teams. The match pair played against the computer showed an even smaller ratio, as the Arabic commentary consisted of only 61% of the English. This leads to the assumption that the game's commentary is partially localised to Arabic. Hence, the re-voicing of the Arabic commentary does not indicate a full localisation of the game, as explained in video game localisation literature, but streamlines with the partial Arabic localisation of the entire game.

3.5 Conclusion

The *FIFA 15* case study provides an overview of the video game localisation process and highlights the types of domestication and foreignisation Arabic gamers encounter in video game localisation. Discussing domestication in a localisation research is foreseeable, yet the chapter highlights aspects of cultural, technical and diglossic domestication that exist beyond the traditional definition. On the other hand, discussing foreignisation in localisation is unexpected due to the target-oriented nature of the industry. The chapter proposes two types of foreignisation, one that is intentionally practiced due to commercial decisions, yet does not affect the clarity of the message, such as the standardisation of brand names and maintaining two Arabic commentators. The other type of foreignisation is that which hinders the message accessibility and is due, namely, to the industry's technical implications, such as the translator's isolation, collaborative translation and lack of linguistic quality assurance (QA). In addition, the chapter highlights the unconventional process of translating the game's audio files which destabilises the notion of source text as we understand it as a fundamental of Translation Studies. In light of the absence of the source text, the Arabic commentary

produced is natural and reflects real characteristics of the Arabic football commentary. The Arabic localisation of the commentary signifies a deviation from the video game localisation norm, where audio files are included in the budget of a partial localisation project. Moreover, the chapter draws our attention to the active role of the target users of video games, as they can linguistically shape their gameplay experiences according to each's personal preference. Arabic gamers tend to seek bilingual gameplay experiences as a means of overcoming the foreignising translation of the UI and maintaining the game's immersion. This chapter highlights terms of Translation Studies, domestication and foreignisation, the source text and the target user, in a video game localisation context which will continue to be questioned in the following chapters where they take different forms.

4 Reassessing Domestication and Foreignisation in Arabic Localisation: The *Knorr* Website Case Study

4.1 Introduction

Today, an increasing number of companies are localising their websites to Arabic, highlighting an important field of translation practices that is rarely recognised in translation and/or localisation research. Generally speaking, websites serve different purposes ranging between ‘a marketing tool, a direct sales facilitator or a technical support provider’, through which websites are aimed at building customer relationships (Bortoli and Ortiz-Sotomayor 2009). Among the wide number of websites localised to Arabic, the *Knorr* website has been chosen as a case study for a number of reasons. *Knorr* is a multinational company, a subsidiary of Unilever, which has a long and strong presence in the Arabic market, despite its varying incarnations in different parts of the Arabic world. In some Arabic locales, such as the Gulf, *Knorr* is presented as an independent brand name, while in others, such as Egypt, the *Knorr* brand name appears jointly with the local brand *Fine Foods*. As a result, *Knorr* is eager to sustain its brand identity, yet is equally eager to localise its products to the Arabic locale. This brings to the fore the concept of glocalisation, which was discussed in the previous chapter in relation to *FIFA 15 EA Sports* packaging, and its negotiation between the global and the local. Moreover, while many companies rely only on Modern Standard Arabic for localising their websites, *Knorr* utilises different forms of the Arabic language, Modern Standard Arabic and regional dialects, to target specific locales within the Arabic market. This highlights points of comparison and contrast with the video game case study, where the same linguistic approach was utilised for targeting a non-locale-specific audience.

The Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website provides a unique case study for applying Venuti’s theory of invisibility (2008) to localisation. In addition to the forms of domestication and foreignisation introduced in the previous chapter, the *Knorr* case study proposes a diversified type of domestication. While messages serving the company and those serving its clients are supposed to be equally delivered in terms of clarity, the Arabic translation of the *Knorr* content seems to prioritise the former type of messages. This means that the roles of domestication and

foreignisation need to be reassessed in the commercial context of website localisation. By exploring types of foreignisation and domestication encountered in *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites, the chapter will examine the conflicting factors influencing the translation process, which allow it to take multiple shapes, to involve a network of agents and to target a broad audience. In addition, the chapter will draw on Nord's theory of translation as interpersonal interaction (2007) to help explain the translation dynamics of the Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website.

This chapter seeks to address the translational, technical and commercial aspects of the Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website through two main parts. The first part explores *Knorr's* marketing campaign, under which the Arabic localisation is delivered, and identifies the decentralised model as the applied localisation model which entails mixing local and localised contents. Christiane Nord's theory of translation as interpersonal interaction (ibid) allows us to focus on the process of translation through the agents involved in it. This part ends with a discussion of the most relevant website localisation strategies and the commercial reasons behind specifically targeting the Egyptian, the Gulf and the Saudi locales within the Arabic markets. The second part of the chapter presents the analysis of *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites by following the users' experience, starting from the commercial and technical elements which help users reach the *Knorr* Arabic websites as part of their usability. Furthermore, analysis of the local content, which is produced in the absence of a source text, examines the linguistic and cultural features taking into account the local Arabic website conventions. Moreover, the analysis seeks to identify the text producer and the target audience, as the agents involved in the Arabic localisation of the local content, and flags up different types of domestication and foreignisation strategies. Analysis of the localised content, which is translated from a source text, compares the source and target texts and assesses the Arabic translation's fulfilment of the communicative function. In light of the varying communicability levels among texts serving Arabic users' interests and those serving the Company's interests, the visibility and invisibility of translation are observed as reinforcing the developing market's marginal status from the perspective of a British business. Finally, the chapter concludes by restating the focal points which were stressed in the course of the discussion.

4.2 The Story of *Knorr's* Marketing Campaign

In 2011, in response to the noticeable decline in its Canadian sales, *Knorr* set itself the task of redefining its target audience and establishing an innovative marketing campaign. Mothers of children under 12, the primary cooks in the household who search for dinnertime solutions, were identified as *Knorr's* new target audience. *Knorr* understood that by 4pm, this target audience is shopping for answers to the question “What’s for dinner?”. Therefore, *Knorr* launched a program to answer this daily question via simplified traditional and complicated appetising recipes, accompanied by original food photography and offered on different marketing platforms, with a strong emphasis on digital media. The Canadian program, which aimed at establishing loyalty and driving repeated purchase, yielded such impressive results that *Knorr* decided to roll it out globally (Communications 2014).

Today, the 2011 Canadian key question appears, as a tagline, on *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites; thus, they are part of the ‘What’s for dinner?’ campaign which targets mothers and offers mealtime solutions. However, the *Knorr* British website, which is considered the source given that *Knorr*, Unilever, is an English-Dutch company, no longer features the same campaign. It recently moved from the “Love at first taste” campaign, which targeted ‘foodie millennials’ in 2016 (Mortimer 2016), to the “Time to dig in” 2017 campaign. The openness and dynamic nature of hypertext allows web content to be constantly updated, making its life cycle highly dynamic (Jimenez-Crespo 2013). While this encourages users to visit websites repeatedly, it, simultaneously, makes it difficult for website translation and localisation research to work with a stable form of text. The content of *Knorr's* British website, with which the current research has started as a source of data, changed before the chapter was completed. Although the content of *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites remained constant during the time of analysis, its stability is predictably subject to change. Therefore, following a synchronic approach is essential for defining the scope of this analysis. The chapter focuses on the content of *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites as they were accessible starting from October 2016 and until February 2017.

4.2.1 A Localisation Perspective

The *Knorr* website is a marketing tool which serves the purpose of a showcase displaying *Knorr's*

products and offering recipes to promote them. Given that *Knorr* products vary noticeably across international markets and slightly within the Arabic market, each Arabic locale-specific website has to display products sold at brick and mortar retailers, and offer recipes which employ the products available in each locale. In addition, the culinary context is so culture-specific that recipes need to be developed in the Arabic locales to ensure effective communication and target users' satisfaction. In fact, the vice president of Unilever Arabia, Van Kesteren, is quoted as saying: "our recipes are based on the needs of the Arab consumers and we avoid simply recycling products from Europe or the US." (Business 2006). Therefore, *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites are not a genuine representation of the *Knorr* British website, but they follow a decentralised localisation model:

The decentralized model implies offering a common 'shell' or visual structure for the sites, with the actual local websites controlled and produced in each country, often mixing localized and local content, but also creating a new full website from scratch. (Jimenez-Crespo 2013, p. 36)

In this sense, *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites adopt a global template to show consistency with the original and international versions of the website. Moreover, they combine local content, specifically created for the target locales, with localised content, created outside the target locales and then adapted for them (Yunker 2003). This type of negotiated content presents an additional layer of glocalisation, in which local and global contents are integrated in a comprehensive textual unit, despite the number of source authors and translators involved in the process. In fact, in such an interpersonal interaction, the traditional concept of a unified source text is challenged, because it takes different forms within the boundaries of a single textual unit, the website.

4.2.2 A Translational Perspective

The fact that *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites are not identical representations of the British website is an indication of an unconventional process, which does not necessarily move between stable forms of source and target texts. Although Christiane Nord (2007) did not consider the context of website localisation, her theory of translation as interpersonal interaction shows

particular relevance to the Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website. Her theory allows us to focus on the process of translation in which multiple agents are involved, instead of perceiving translation as a practice of a single agent steadily moving from a defined start to an end. Nord suggests using 'translation action' as a general term which describes translation practices even those from which a source text is absent. When two or more agents are involved in the translation process, Nord observes the theory of action becoming a theory of interaction, as the agents and their roles interconnect through a network of relations. The initiator or the commissioner "is the person... or institution that starts off the translation process and determines its course by defining the purpose for which the target text is needed" (ibid). In cases where the source material is produced for receivers under the conditions of the source culture, the source-text producer is indirectly connected to the translation process, by being responsible for merely "the features of the source text". In contrast, if the source text is "motivated by the need for a text in a particular translation process", the source-text producer is directly involved in the process. Both cases influence the translator's role, as it could either be "carrying out the commissioned task", or "compared with a target-culture text producer expressing a source-culture sender's communicative intention" (ibid). Within the multiple possibilities of translation actions, Nord emphasises Vermeer's idea of the source text's 'dethronement', where "the source text is no longer the first and foremost criterion for the translator's decision; it is just one of the various sources of information used by the translator" (ibid). Finally, Nord identifies the target text receivers as the "addressee of the translation", who are "a decisive factor in the production of the target text", and, hence, are "of crucial importance to the translator" (Nord 2007, p. 19).

Nord's theory of translation as interpersonal interaction caters for a variety of translation actions, in which the source text, the source-text producer and the translator are variable agents. The Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website is a dynamic process which features almost all Nord's suggested translation actions. Given that the boundaries of text, in the website context, are rather blurred since they are not defined by the textual elements appearing on a web page, the whole website is considered the minimal textual unit (Jimenez-Crespo 2013, p. 50). The different textual elements, technically referred as nodes, of the *Knorr* website collectively create its textual unity. Since *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites present a glocalised text, multiple translation

actions simultaneously take place, in which roles of some of the translation agents are interchangeable. The locally developed nodes are created in complete isolation from a source text, hence, a 'target-culture text producer' or a 'culture consultant' is involved in the process. On the other hand, the localised nodes mirror a stable form of a source text, or version of it, thus, their translations involve a source-text producer, directly or indirectly, and a translator. The dynamics of these processes imprint *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites with mistakes, linguistic and cultural foreignisation and domestication, from which many inferences can be made which explain a lot about the target audiences' identities. Only the commissioner of *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites is clearly identified as the *Knorr* Company, who started the translation process to promote its sales in the Arabic market.

4.2.3 A commercial perspective

Knorr's Arabic localised websites are a summarised version of the *Knorr* British website. John Yunker (2003) explains that partial website localisation allows companies to "test [the] waters" of new markets and avoid a large initial investment. Given that *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites are not following the progression of the *Knorr* British website's campaigns, the investment in both seems contrasting. Accordingly, it is assumed that *Knorr* is managing its Arabic online presence with a limited budget, which supports the idea of the Arabic market is being tested. However, the Company's performance in the Arabic market suggests otherwise. In an interview with Reuters, the chief executive of Unilever stated that by the end of the current decade, emerging markets will account for 75% of the company's turnover, while Europe and the US will be low growth territories. He was also quoted as saying: "we are by any standards the emerging market company" (Sezer 2011). Hence, it could be argued that prolonging the "What's for dinner?" online campaign is due to the positive response it is receiving in the Arabic market, which continues to contribute to the company's profits. In contrast, the recurrent changes of the British website reflect the market's need for constant stimulation. However, the *Knorr* Company's performance in the Arabic market still does not explain the partial Arabic localisation of its website. The comprehensive localisation strategy potentially holds the answer, as it does not entail including the entire content of the source site in its localised version, but instead aims at creating an equivalent user experience (Yunker 2003). In this sense, the Arabic localisation of the

Knorr website aims to offer Arabic users a proper representation of the Company, as well as an Arabic experience of the website. In consideration of the level of maturity of local Arabic food companies' websites, *Knorr* seems to level its original online experience with the local Arabic experiences via partial localisation. Hence, *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites offer a glocalised online experience; a middle ground that captures the essence of the *Knorr* British website in the experience of local culinary Arabic websites.

The Arabic market consists of multiple locales, most of which have their own sub-culture and regional dialect. Therefore, *Knorr* caters for the market's diversity by addressing the Arabic market in a localisation project that offers three versions of the *Knorr* website. *Knorr's* decision to target Egypt, the Gulf and Saudi Arabia through the Arabic localisation of its website is a result of its assessment of the Arabic market. Although most of the tools explored in the website localisation literature are originally used for determining the languages worth targeting, they will be used, in this context, to discuss *Knorr's* decision to target the above-named Arabic locales. The T-index (Claverie 2010) is the most recent method for calculating languages' return on website localisation investment. However, given that the T-index is a tool utilised for commercial websites facilitating sales transactions and that the *Knorr* website does not offer this function, the T-index is not an applicable method here. Alternatively, both Yunker (2003) and Singh (2012) suggest carrying out a market review before selecting a language for a target. The review should include economic forecast¹⁶, competition from foreign and domestic companies, Web penetration, and the company's operations and available sources in the local country. With Unilever's main offices being located in Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Egypt, they are potentially reporting about the industry's size and the company's sales, and they are managing *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites locally. In terms of competition, *Knorr* have no local competitors, since most local Arabic food processing industries produce spices, food cans, pasta, etc. while bouillon and stock cubes are limited to foreign brands. Therefore, *Knorr* faces a strong foreign competition in the Arabic Market (namely *Maggi*, *Nestlé*), but almost no domestic competition. Because this scenario applies for almost all Arabic countries, this factor does not in itself justify *Knorr's* decision to

¹⁶ The process of attempting to predict the future condition of the economy.

target the selected locales. Nevertheless, the Gulf countries, especially United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Bahrain, show high internet penetration rates (92%), which places them head to head with countries at the top of the highest penetration list (www.internetlivestats.com). The case, however, is not the same for Saudi Arabia and Egypt, which show penetration figures of 64.7% and 33% respectively. Although other Arabic countries, such as Lebanon (75.9%) and Morocco (57%), show higher rates than either or both of Saudi Arabia and Egypt, they are not targeted by *Knorr's* Arabic localisation. This is possibly because web penetration is not a sufficient factor in itself but contributes with the other factors to the market/language's value.

4.3 The Arabic Experience of the *Knorr* Website

Knorr's Arabic localised websites share more similarities than differences. The Egyptian and Gulf websites offer English as a language option to facilitate access to the content for non-Arabic users, while the Saudi website lacks this option. All three of *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites present a main horizontal navigation bar and a visual site map, through which Arabic users have access to the displayed *Knorr* products and recipes. The volume of recipes varies across the Arabic locale-specific websites, with the Egyptian website offering the highest number (145 recipes), followed by the Gulf (122 recipes), while the Saudi website lags behind (93 recipes). In addition, links to five kitchen tips are offered to assist mothers and complement their culinary experience. Vivid images of products, appetising dishes and detailed instructions accompany each of the sections. At the bottom of the homepages, navigation text is provided to direct users to the Unilever's legal page (*Privacy Policy*), contact information and the agency responsible of the Arabic localisation (*Digital Republic*).

In this section, I aim at thoroughly exploring the Arabic experience of the *Knorr* website, by following the Arabic user's path to navigate the websites. First, I will start by discussing the elements that help Arabic users find *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites; brand recognition and global navigation. Discussions will address usability, which is a crucial factor facilitating the website's navigation by reducing the cognitive load needed for processing web information, and will tap into the technical and the commercial implications of the Arabic localisation process. In addition, I will analyse the local content of *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites based on Nord's

theory of interpersonal interaction, by identify the network of agents involved and the characteristics of the targeted audience. Given that the local content is not mirroring a source text, it is compared with the content of Arabic culinary websites, as they shape the local conventions of Arabic websites. Finally, I will analyse the localised content of *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites which is a translation of a source text. Here, Venuti's theory of visibility (2008) is considered not in terms of the translator's visibility, but the visibility of translation. Accordingly, the imperialistic implication of domestication is reassessed in the context of localisation, where domestication is the translation brief and is supposed to serve the target users.

4.3.1 Finding *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites

Assisting Arabic users in finding the *Knorr* website(s) that specifically target them is an important part of the website's usability. In the context of website design and localisation, usability is defined as: "the degree to which people (users) can perform a set of required tasks" (Brinck et al. 2002, p. 2). Usability is generally delivered via a number of dimensions; those related to finding *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites are memorability, how easy it is for users to remember, and efficiency, the time required to perform a task (Jimenez-Crespo 2013).¹⁷ The concepts of memorability and efficiency are generally discussed in terms of structuring the website or designing its functions (Nielsen 2012). However, because the Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website does not utilise the Roman alphabets, addressing these dimensions starts before users land on the website. Recognising the *Knorr* brand name in an Arabic speaking market and reaching the *Knorr* website(s) which specifically target Arabic users via global navigation are important parts of *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites' usability.

4.3.1.1 Brand Recognition

Brand name identification is an important part of a website's usability, as it helps emphasise users' certainty of being on the right page. As has been discussed in the previous chapter (section 2.1.1.1), brand names translation/localisation usually follows one of several methods, which vary considering the brand name's semantic reference and the target customers' background of the source language. The brand name *Knorr* originates from the company's German founder Carl

¹⁷ For more on website usability, refer to Brink (2002, p. 2-3) and Jimenez-Crespo (2013, p.36).

Heinrich *Knorr*. Hence, the name does not carry a semantic reference that needs to be retained, nor core values that need to be conveyed. Therefore, the standardisation approach, keeping the name in its foreign form, is followed to maintain consistency across international markets (Smith and Klein-Braley 1997; Mooij 2004) and ensure brand recognition by non-Arabic speakers within the Arabic market. Taking into account the different alphabets of source and target languages, a graphic adaptation (Torresi 2010) is provided, in addition to the foreign name, to ensure *Knorr* brand recognition by Arabic speakers. This is essential because the English language competency of mothers (*Knorr's* redefined target audience) is hard to predict, as it could vary from limited skills to bilingualism. Hence, transliteration ensures the brand name is legible. It is worth noting that the Arabic transliteration follows the German pronunciation of the brand name *Knorr*, [/ˈknɔːr/](#), which articulates the letter *k*, unlike the anglicised pronunciation, [/ˈnɔːr/](#). Its pronunciation is domesticated to English when the German company was taken over by the giant Unilever, turning it from *Knorr*, [/ˈknɔːr/](#), to [/ˈnɔːr/](#). However, when *Knorr* entered the Arabic market, it retained its German pronunciation but with an English identity. The fact that Arabic users do not recognise the name as a German company shows a different level of domestication. This proposes a tripartite model of Venuti's domestication, where the Anglophone dominance is simultaneously practised over German and Arabic cultures.

4.3.1.2 Global Navigation

As a multinational company, *Knorr* localises its website for different languages and locales. Given that website users prefer to have direct access to their local page (Yunker 2003), directing international users to the relevant homepages is considered part of the website's efficiency. To achieve this aim, *Knorr* implements a number of navigation techniques. This section discusses the techniques *Knorr* uses for its Arabic localised websites in comparison with those it uses for international websites. *Knorr* uses its US website as a global gateway page, where a list of country-specific websites is provided, and users can select their country/language of preference. Each country-specific website is stored in its own country by giving it a country code top-level domain (ccTLD), for example; *Knorr.ca* for the Canadian website and *Knorr.es* for the Spanish website. This technique holds legal and technical implications, it protects the company's brand name abroad (ibid), and it speeds up download times locally (Maroto and Bortoli 2001).

Nevertheless, *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites are not included on the global gateway list, instead, they feature a unique URL (*Knorr-kitchen.com*), which sets *Knorr* Arabia apart from the company's international websites. By visiting *Knorr's* Arabic URL, users are first directed to the Egyptian homepage. From there, the Saudi- and Gulf-specific websites can be selected from a drop down list. Having *Knorr's* Egypt-specific website as a gateway for Arabic regional access is potentially due to the language service provider or the *Knorr* local office responsible for the website's Arabic localisation being located in Egypt. In addition, *Knorr* uses the Geolocation technology for its UK and US-specific websites, which refers to:

using an IP address to locate the web user and then deliver content meant for that specific geographic location... without the user having to actively select [SIC] his or her country or language. Companies can use this to deliver targeted region-/country-specific content to their users and block users from getting content they do not wish them to see. (Singh 2012, p. 157)

This means that users need only to search for *Knorr* on their browsers, and they are immediately taken to their region-specific website. However, the geolocation technology is not effective on *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites.

The fact that *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites have a different URL and domain name points to a number of commercial implications. The independence of *Knorr* Arabia's IP address is probably part and parcel of the websites' decentralised localisation model, which is managed by the company's offices in the selected locales. That is, the regional offices manage the websites' budget, and, hence, their content and structure do not reflect *Knorr's* British website, as other localised websites do.¹⁸ In addition, giving the websites an entirely different web page file name, with the addition of a hyphen and the word 'kitchen', is a strategy for enhancing search engine optimisation (SEO) (Singh 2012). Moreover, *Knorr* Arabia's hyphenated name places it in parallel

¹⁸ Despite being stored in their own countries, *Knorr's* US website and those on its gateway list are reflective images of the British website. After the recent update on the latter, the *Knorr* Brazil website followed its footsteps, while the US website is under construction. This is potentially due to the distributed localisation model, where "the central office hosts the content management software, but each local office has access to their localised site to make necessary changes" (Yunker 2003).

with that of one of its strongest Saudi competitors (Googdy-Kitchen.com); a strategy for increasing the website's memorability. In fact, the brand's Arabic name, placed under the English one on the Arabic websites' logo, is presented as 'مطبخ كنور' which translates as *Knorr Kitchen* (Figure 18). By taking such technical measures, Knorr is bringing its Arabic localised websites closer to their target audiences, which in a way, can be observed as technical domestication.

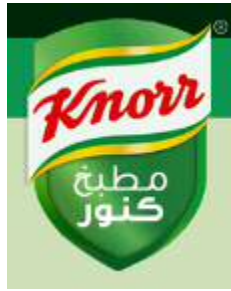


Figure 18 The Knorr Arabic Logo

4.3.2 The Local Content

The local content of *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites offers an unconventional translation process, in which fundamental concepts of Translation Studies, such as the author, the text and the target audience, are re-evaluated. In the absence of the source text, the local content is developed by a language service provider (LSP), or *Knorr's* offices in each country. As explained earlier, in a translation action that lacks a source text, the role of the translator is compared with that of a target-culture text producer who is responsible for expressing the commissioner's communicative intention (Nord 2007). It could be argued that the text/content, which the target audience read, is, in a way, the source text and the target text simultaneously. On these grounds, the void created by the absence of the source text in the local content of *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites shifts the focus to its author. In this case, the author or the target-culture producer, as identified by Nord, fulfils the role of a 'cultural consultant' (ibid), who is potentially acknowledged by the local website conventions in the target culture. In website localisation, the source culture conventions are replaced with target culture conventions, to fulfil the brief of giving the impression that the website is specially designed for the target users (Jimenez-Crespo 2013). The local content of *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites is concluded in the tagline, descriptive passages, recipes and recipe videos. By addressing the linguistic and cultural features of the websites, the

analysis of the local content will potentially answer questions about the Arabic localisation method, the choice between Arabisation or regionalisation, and the identities of the author and the target audience.

4.3.2.1 Linguistic Features

Despite targeting specific locales within the Arabic market, the Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website does not consistently follow the regionalisation method. *Knorr's* Egyptian website appears partially regionalised, whereas the Gulf and Saudi websites are mostly Arabised. On the one hand, the general feature of inconsistent Arabic localisation methods suggests the independence of the local content's authors. On the other hand, the consistency of some nodes across *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites indicates otherwise. This linguistic irregularity is potentially due to the adherence of each *Knorr* locale-specific website to the linguistic conventions of its respective local websites, which perhaps occasionally intersect. Given that website conventions tend to be shaped differently in each locale, and that more than one Arabic culture is targeted, the irregularity of *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites' linguistic features show multiplicity of audiences as much as it shows multiplicity of authors. Hence, it is questioned if the multiple authors work in isolation or in collaboration, and if one of them is more authoritative than the others. In addition, the identity of the target audience is also questioned in terms of background and gender.

Aiming to answer these questions, I will analyse the local content of *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites and measure it against the website conventions of local Arabic companies. Given that a large number of Arabic food-processing companies have established an online presence, the range of *Knorr's* local Arabic competitors is defined by those whose websites are similar to *Knorr's* both in terms of displaying products and providing recipes. Brochure websites are excluded because they are limited to briefing about the company's business (*Almarai* and *Alsunbulah*). Similarly, I will not include websites providing recipes in English only (*Marmum*), and those displaying recipes as images of printable copies, rather than as part of the webpage/hypertext (*Kuwait Flour Mills & Bakeries Co.* and *Edita*). In addition, websites of companies from Arabic regions other than those targeted by the Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website, such as Algota (Syrian), are not considered. Under these criteria, only the websites of *Eldoha* and *Pasta Regina*

(Egyptian), *Goody* and *Al-Alali* (Saudi) and *Danat* (Gulf/Emirati) are considered part of the corpus. During the course of the analysis, when all or most selected websites agree on a linguistic feature, they will be addressed by Arabic conventions. However, if they disagree, each will be addressed separately. Below, I will investigate the linguistic contents of *Knorr's* Arabic locale-specific homepages, mainly the tagline and descriptive passages, comparing them and measuring them against the local Arabic conventions. In addition, recipes are linguistically analysed, by comparing their use of measurement units and the voice and verb formation of their directions across the locale-specific websites and against the linguistic conventions of *Knorr's* local Arabic competitors.

4.3.2.1.1 The Tagline: “What’s for Dinner?”

As has been previously explained, the question “What’s for Dinner?” is the drive behind one of *Knorr's* marketing campaigns, which targets an audience of mothers. Therefore, having this question as a tagline on *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites indicates that it is a form of traditional translation which derives from a source text, and, hence, belongs to the localised content. However, the Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website tagline is perceived as an overlap of the localised and local contents. The Arabic question needs to be measured against the local conventions of Arabic websites’ taglines, and, at the same time, to be compared to the source question. In addition, analysis of the Arabic localised tagline contributes to answering the localisation method question, and adds linguistic value to the discussion.

Although the Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website specifically targets Egypt, the Gulf and Saudi Arabia, the Arabic localisation of the tagline is consistently presented in the Egyptian dialect across the locale-specific websites. This suggests that a single author/LSP delivers the Arabic localisation, or that *Knorr's* regional offices work in collaboration. While providing an Egyptian tagline on the *Knorr* Egyptian-specific website is part of the regionalisation method, providing the Egyptian tagline on the Gulf and Saudi specific websites is not a relevant type of localisation. Examination of the selected local Gulf and Saudi websites reveals that taglines tend to be regionalised, in other words, they are only phrased in respective dialects. Hence, the provision of an Egyptian tagline on the Gulf and Saudi websites disrupts the local Gulf and Saudi conventions and is perceived as an act of dialectal foreignisation. Given the level of engagement of *Knorr's* regional offices in the Arabic market, such a foreignisation act is difficult to overlook. On the other

hand, the Egyptian tagline is potentially a strategy for targeting an audience wider than the Gulf and Saudi nationals. In consideration of the thriving job market in the Gulf and Saudi Arabia which attracts job seekers from around the Arabic World, the region is known to be cosmopolitan. Hence, the Egyptian dialect, which acts as the Arab World's 'lingua franca', is possibly the best casual Arabic form to address a diverse audience. In this context, the prevalence of the Egyptian dialect is not entirely due to its cultural dominance, but partly to the economic power of the Gulf region. This signifies a multilateral dialogue between English and the forms of Arabic, as English and Egyptian are viewed as two lingua franca in different worlds, while English and the Gulf represent economic powers.

Understanding the target audience and its culture is necessary for delivering the localised message with the same level of clarity as the original (Yunker 2003). The Arabic localised tagline reads: *هتطبخي إيه النهارده؟*, back translated as: 'What will you (feminine pronoun) cook today?' From a linguistic perspective, the Arabic question is shaped around the housewife and her culinary duty, by highlighting the feminine pronoun in relation to the act of cooking. This semantically contrasts with the English question which focuses on dinner as the main noun. In other words, while the English question foregrounds the result of food preparation (dinner), the Arabic question emphasises the user/cook and her involvement in food preparation. This linguistic shift is linked to the nature of the Arabic culture, as lunch is traditionally the main meal; hence, mentioning dinner in the Arabic question would potentially constitute an act of cultural foreignisation.¹⁹ Therefore, avoiding naming a specific meal in the Arabic question prevents cultural or sociological confusion about the main meal of the day, and leads to the domestication of the text. In fact, the English version of the Egyptian and Gulf *Knorr* websites present the question as "What's for Lunch?", which supports the proposition of lunch being the main meal of the day according to the Arabic customs. In this sense, the Arabic localisation of *Knorr* website's tagline is culturally domesticated on all websites.

¹⁹ It is worth noting, however, that the long working hours of modern life have forced people's eating habits to change; for some Arabic families, dinner is now the new lunch. The exact number of families switching to the Western style is not quantified, while the traditional perception of lunch being the main meal of the day still prevails even in theory.

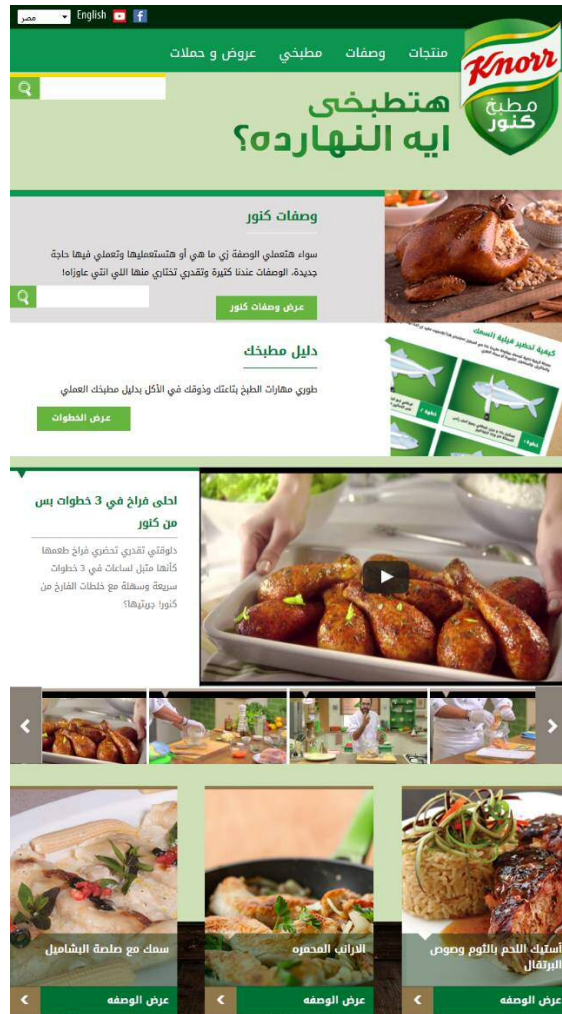


Figure 19 Knorr's Question Answered in Images

4.3.2.1.2 Descriptive Passages

The Arabic localisation of *Knorr's* descriptive passages indicates multiplicity of authors/offices, and that one of them is more professional than the rest. In culinary websites, descriptive passages are usually located under headlines to give users insights about the labelled content. On *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites, descriptive passages are featured under the headlines/items of the homepages' visual site map; *Knorr Recipes*, *Your Kitchen Guide* and the main recipe video link. These passages appear regionalised on the Egyptian website (Figure 20), while on the Saudi and Gulf websites (Figures 21 and 22 respectively), two are Arabised²⁰ and the

²⁰ Although Regionalisation and Arabisation may not be entirely relevant in this context, since these texts/nodes are originally created in Arabic and are not a product of translation, they are still used for their clear denotation.

third is presented in English. Considering the varying conventions of each locale which potentially influence this linguistic variation, the local Emirati and Saudi websites are examined. It is evident that phrasing descriptive passages in Modern Standard Arabic is part of the linguistic convention, while the English language is only used on the English version of the websites. Hence, presenting one of the descriptive passages in English on the *Knorr* Gulf and Saudi websites is an act of foreignisation, which is largely due to the technical issue of mistakenly compiling the English text in *Knorr's* Arabic website hypertext. On the contrary, complying with a single language/dialect throughout the descriptive passages on the Egyptian homepage indicates the technical proficiency of the LSP, or *Knorr's* office, responsible for the Egyptian website.



Figure 20 Descriptive Passages on Egyptian Website

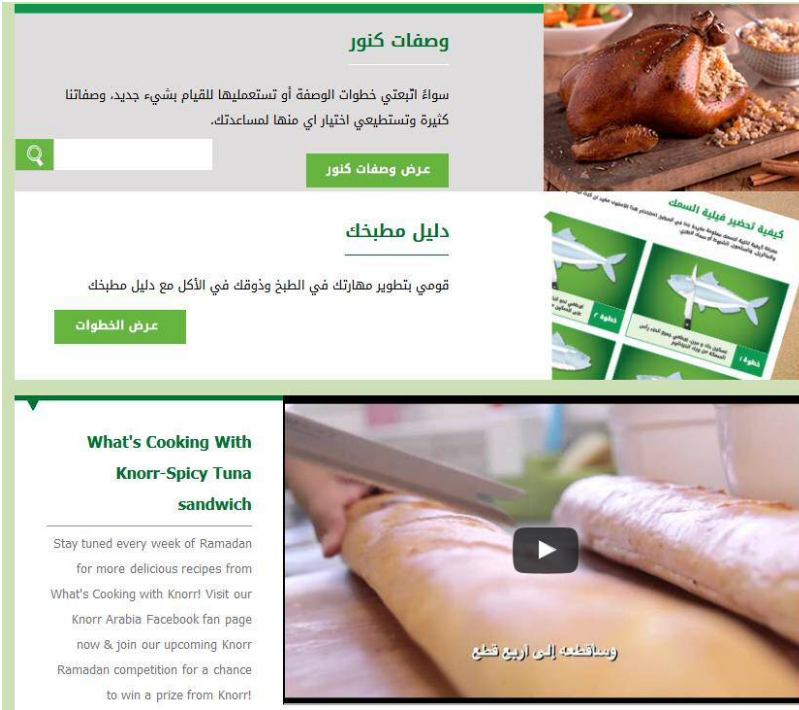


Figure 21 Descriptive Passages on Saudi Website

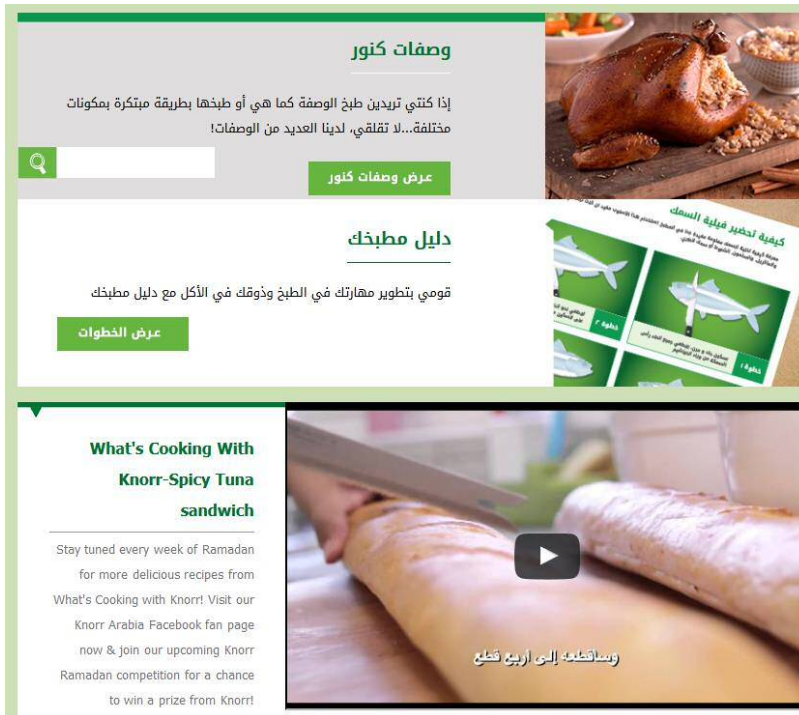


Figure 22 Descriptive Passages on Gulf Website

4.3.2.1.3 Recipes

Recipes form the majority of *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites' content. Within the defined timeline of the study of these websites, the total number of recipes varies on each locale-specific website. On the Egyptian website, 145 recipes were presented, while 122 and 93 recipes were offered on the Gulf and Saudi websites respectively. Each recipe is divided into two parts, ingredients and method/direction, and almost all recipes on the three locale-specific websites are formed in Modern Standard Arabic. Across *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites, recipes show inconsistency in terms of stating ingredients in metric or imperial systems, and in terms of giving directions in different voices and verb formations. This allows us to detect a process of target text production in which a network of authors are involved, not only across the Arabic websites, but also within a single locale-specific website. The inconsistent recipes make us question the identity of the recipes' author(s) and in return prompt us to question the identity of the target audience(s). In the following paragraphs, these questions are addressed by linguistically analysing both parts of the recipes and assessing them in light of the conventions of local Arabic websites.

4.3.2.1.3.1 Measurements

Part of conveying clear and comprehensible recipes is providing consistent measurement units, be it metric or imperial. On local Arabic websites, the convention for providing measurement units is to use the imperial system. However, recipes on *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites show varied adherence to the local convention in that they inconsistently give measurements by means of both systems. The metric system is more dominant on the Egyptian and Gulf-specific websites, as it is provided in almost 44% and 41% of the recipes respectively, yet it is only given in 3% of the Saudi website's recipes. On the other hand, the imperial system accounts for 82% of the Saudi recipes, whereas it accounts for 42% of the Egyptian and 38% of the Gulf recipes (Figure 23). The percentages unaccounted for in all three locale-specific websites relate to recipes which jointly use metric and imperial units. In summary, the use of both systems shows relative balance on the Egyptian and Gulf-specific *Knorr* websites, while the imperial system shows dominance on the Saudi website. This means that the Arabic localisation of *Knorr* websites adheres to the local conventions in the Saudi-specific website, while it shows less adherence to the local conventions on the Egyptian and Gulf-specific websites.

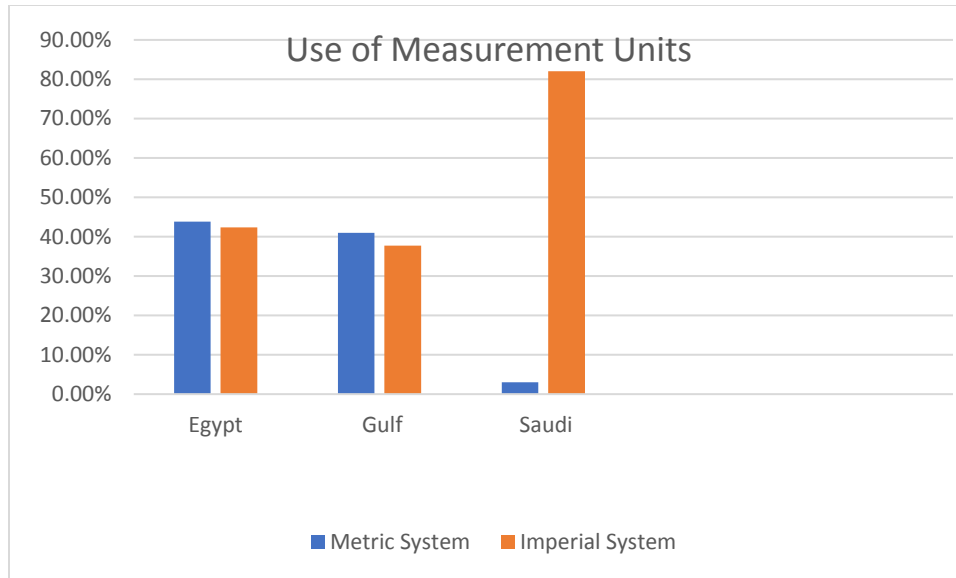


Figure 23 Usage of Measurement Units on Knorr Arabic Localised Websites

4.3.2.1.3.2 Directions

In Arabic, recipes' directions can vary in voice and verb forms between passive voice, first person (plural), and imperative/second person feminine or masculine pronoun. In culinary websites, the decision on using one of these forms relies heavily on the company's marketing strategy and its target audience. Given that most local food processing companies target housewives and mothers, the Arabic convention for verb formation in recipes is the prevalence of the second person feminine pronoun. Nevertheless, *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites do not adhere to the Arabic convention, as their recipes vary in voice and verb forms. On the Egyptian-specific website, 48% of the recipes provide directions in the passive voice, 22% in the second person (imperative) feminine pronoun, 13% in the first-person plural and 2% in the second person masculine pronoun. On the Gulf-specific website, 26% of recipes' directions are provided in the first-person plural, 20% in the second person feminine pronoun, while the second person masculine pronoun prevails with 47%. The Saudi-specific website shows less variation by providing 62% of its recipes in the second person feminine pronoun and 36% in the passive voice (Figure 24). The percentages unaccounted for in all locale-specific websites relate to recipes jointly use directions in mixed voices and verb forms. In summary, only 31.5% (114 recipes) of a total of 362 recipes across all

three locale-specific websites seem to adhere to the local Arabic convention. The data provided leads to the same conclusion of the measurement analysis, i.e., that the Saudi-specific website adheres the most to the local conventions.

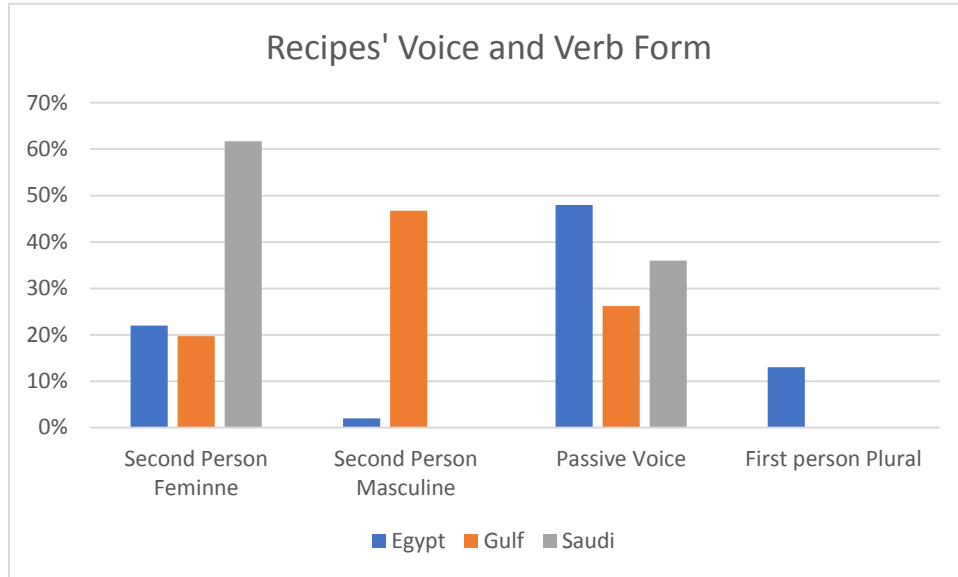


Figure 24 Recipes' Voice and Verb Forms on Knorr's Arabic Localised Websites

4.3.2.1.3.3 The Author and the Audience

Inconsistency of the recipes' voice and verb formation affects the overall coherence of the Arabic localised websites and, particularly, the Gulf website's commitment to *Knorr's* marketing strategy. Since the first-person plural and the passive voices are gender-neutral, the masculine voice is the main problematic aspect of *Knorr's* local content. Despite *Knorr's* marketing strategy of targeting mothers (the primary cooks in the household), the imperative masculine pronoun dominates recipes on the Gulf-specific website. This act of gender foreignisation either refers to the identity of the author or an additional target audience beside mothers. One possible explanation is that most recipes on *Knorr's* Gulf website are designed by a male cook, and, hence, his identity is visible through his writing. Preserving the author's male identity in a feminine context is acceptable in the Arabic language, on the basis that the masculine voice is a form of inclusive speech, by which a diverse audience of both men and women can be addressed. Although this rule is part and parcel of the Arabic grammar, its utilisation in a content which

specifically target mother association is irrelevant. The fact that the tagline and the descriptive passages on the Gulf-specific website are formed in the feminine voice and the majority of the recipes are presented in the masculine affects the coherence of the website as a textual unit. *Knorr's* commitment to its marketing strategy would in fact necessitate adjusting the recipes' voice and verb forms to the gender of the audience it aims to target, even if their writer/designer is of the opposite gender.

Alternatively, it could be argued that by using the masculine voice, *Knorr* is potentially targeting another type of audience, in addition to mothers, in the Gulf locale. The Gulf region is known to attract job seekers from across the Arabic world, the majority of whom are males who, in many cases, are living away from their families, and are responsible for domestically supporting themselves. The presence of a Lebanese male cook starring in some of the recipe videos provided on the *Knorr* Gulf-specific website seems to support this argument. However, it is worth noting that those same videos are also provided on the Saudi-specific website whose recipes are dominated by the imperative with feminine pronoun and feature no masculine voice. In addition, the 2% masculine voiced recipes on the Egyptian-specific website appear identical to those on the Gulf website, and it can easily be concluded that they are borrowed from it. Hence, it is fair to say that the use of the masculine verb form in the Gulf recipes is more likely a result of inconsistent writing style and faithfulness to the company's marketing strategy than a matter of defining a wider audience in the Gulf locale.

4.3.2.2 Cultural Features

Exploring the cultural features of *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites helps expand our understanding of the Arabic localisation process and the identity of the target audience. During the analysis of *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites, we have noticed that recipes are not exclusive to each locale-specific website, but rather circulate across all three websites. This indicates a form of collaboration between the authors of the local content, LSPs and/or *Knorr's* regional offices. In addition, recipe circulation also suggests the target audience's openness to dishes from other regions/countries. Hence, in what follows, the circulation of recipes is studied quantitatively and the prominent culinary traditions in the Arabic market are explored. Furthermore, recipe videos on each locale-specific website are examined in terms of the

individuals acting as *Knorr's* Ambassadors and their concluding phrases. This sheds further light on the varying identities of the target audience in most targeted locales.

4.3.2.2.1 Recipes' Circulation

Circulation of recipes across *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites is an additional indication of the collaboration between the local content's authors. The selection of recipes posted on the Arabic websites complies with *Knorr's* marketing campaign, which aims to answer the daily question about what to cook via both simplified traditional and complicated recipes. While complicated recipes sound neutral, traditional recipes are more complex in that they are culture-specific. Some traditional Arabic dishes fit this category due to their peculiarity and identification with their original cultures, but others have blurred boundaries, as they have crossed cultural borders and became widely acceptable by many. Therefore, circulating recipes through *Knorr's* Arabic websites is a type of content management that does not necessarily contradict customers' satisfaction. 21.4% of the Egyptian website recipes are shared among the three websites, while 9% are shared with the Saudi website and 4% are shared with the Gulf website. This means that the Egyptian website is distinguished by 65.5% of its recipes. The Gulf website shows slightly higher percentages, as 25.4% of its recipes are shared among all Arabic localised websites, while 16.4% of its recipes are shared with the Saudi website and 9% are shared with the Egyptian website. This leaves 53.3% of the recipes belonging exclusively to the Gulf website. By holding the smallest number of recipes, the Saudi website shows the highest percentages of shared recipes, as 33.3% of its recipes are shared among the other locale-specific websites, 21.5% shared with the Gulf website, and 14% shared with the Egyptian website. This means that only 31.2% of the Saudi website recipes are exclusive (see table 1).

	Share Among All	Shared with Egyptian	Shared with Gulf	Shared with Saudi	Exclusive recipes
Egyptian Website	21.4%		4%	9%	65.5%
Gulf Website	25.4%	9%		16.4%	53.5%
Saudi Website	33.3%	14%	21.5%		31.2%

Table 6 Recipe Circulation among Knorr’s Arabic Websites

This level of recipe circulation reveals layers of cultural foreignisation and domestication among *Knorr* Arabic localised websites. With the emphasis on culture-specific dishes, as opposed to those being secondarily part of the culture, we can note 32.4% of the Egyptian recipes are traditional, followed by 21.3% of the Saudi recipes, while the Gulf recipes present the fewest percentage of 12.3% traditional dishes (Figure 25). Percentages of traditional dishes in each locale-specific website stand for cultural domestication. Despite being related to a specific Arabic culture, some dishes are commonly enjoyed across the Arabic World. This is the case, for instance, of *Tabbouleh*, Lebanese salad, *Harrira*, Moroccan soup, and *Molokhia*, Egyptian soup. Due to their popularity, these dishes are culturally neutral, hence, their inclusion in a locale-specific website is not considered an act of foreignisation. Similarly, international dishes, such as *Chicken Cordon Bleu*, *Onion Soup* and *Spaghetti Bolognese*, are not considered culturally foreignised, since they fit *Knorr’s* campaign brief of recipe provision (section 2). On the other hand, cultural foreignisation, in the context of *Knorr* recipes, is detected when a recipe, which is exclusively traditional to one locale, is provided for another locale. For example, rabbits and chicken liver are common proteins in the Egyptian cuisine, but are not as widely appealing to the Gulf and Saudi cultures. Therefore, providing *Fried Rabbit* and *Chicken Liver Pasta* on the Gulf and Saudi websites is likely to count as an act of cultural foreignisation. Nevertheless, an additional type of cultural domestication can be witnessed on the Egyptian website, where 2% of the recipes are vegetarian versions of traditional dishes, made suitable for the Christian population during their time of fasting. Nowadays, it is fairly common for Egyptian culinary

websites and TV shows to address Christians’ needs in the recipes presented. It is worth noting that this kind of recipes does not overlap with the other locale-specific websites, since the Christian audience is not commonly addressed in the Gulf and Saudi cooking programs. This means that excluding them from *Knorr’s* Arabic localised Gulf and Saudi websites adheres to the conventions of the respective locales, and is, hence, an act of cultural domestication. Given that the Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website targets specific locales within the Arabic market, the types of foreignisation and domestication highlighted are sensed on a regional level. In contrast, the types of foreignisation and domestication highlighted in the *FIFA 15* video game were detected on a linguistic level, because its Arabic localisation was generally addressing the Arabic market.

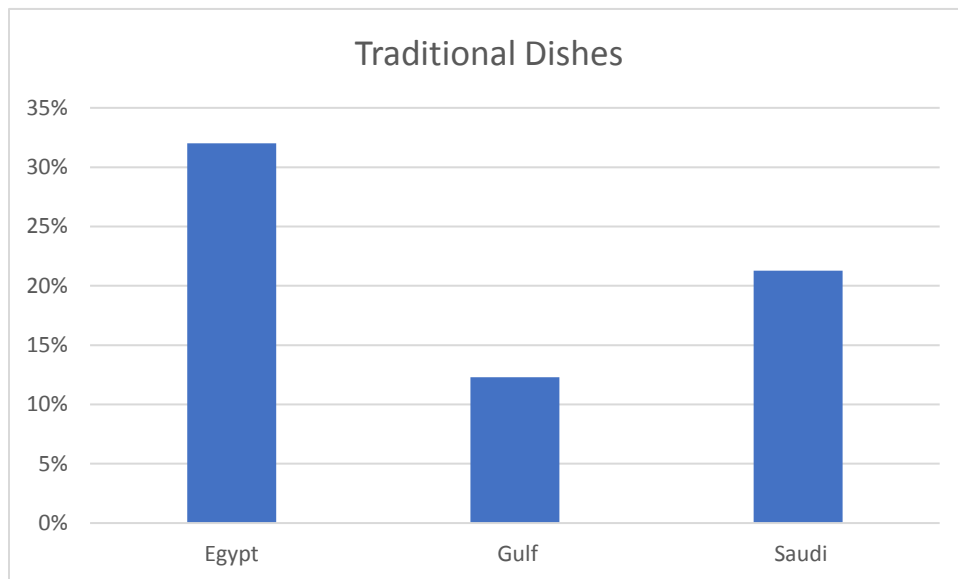


Figure 25 Percentages of traditional recipes on Knorr’s Arabic localised websites

4.3.2.2.2 *Knorr’s* Ambassadors

Knorr usually selects a locally popular culinary figure to be its brand ambassador, who stars in the recipe videos featured on its locale-specific website. Application of this strategy varies across the Arabic localised websites: the Egyptian website complies with it, whereas the Gulf and Saudi websites feature a number of *Knorr’s* customers as the brand ambassadors. Exploring *Knorr’s* recipe videos, particularly the selection of the brand ambassadors, the language/dialect they

speak and their concluding statements, helps to reveal the dynamics of developing recipes, illuminates the target audience identity and potentially tells us more about the Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website. It would seem that *Knorr's* Egyptian website has a bigger budget for developing videos, and that it mainly targets Egyptian audiences, who are treated as passive addressees whose role terminates upon receiving professional advice. Alaa Elsherbini and Hosam Masoud, Egyptian professional chefs and hosts of cooking programs on national TV, prepare dishes in a *Knorr* kitchen studio. They speak Egyptian dialect, and conclude each video with the phrase بالهنا و الشفا (an Arabic version of the French bon appetit); while no English subtitles are provided. On the other hand, *Knorr's* Gulf and Saudi websites seem to have a lower budget for recipe videos, and cater for a cosmopolitan audience who is considered an active addressee, encouraged to share their successful recipes. *Knorr's* Gulf and Saudi videos feature expatriates living in Dubai, mostly preparing dishes in domestic kitchens. *Knorr's* Gulf and Saudi ambassadors are characterised by different origin, profession and gender: one of them is a Lebanese male, while the rest are Lebanese, Indian, Iranian-Sudanese and Spanish females. Arabic ambassadors speak their own dialects, except for the mixed presenter who speaks Jordanian, her husband's dialect, while the non-Arabic presenters speak English. In all videos, when any one language is spoken, subtitles of the other are included. All presenters conclude their recipes with the phrase: "This is what's cooking in my kitchen today. What's cooking in yours?"

Analysis of the local content raised many questions about the Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website as an interpersonal interaction, in relation to the source of the Arabic localisation, the author and the target audience. Although different parts of the local content allowed for a number of possibilities about its source, it can be said that the local content of *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites is produced by a collaboration of multiple sources and authors. Due to the proper linguistic presentation of its homepage and the use of a professional kitchen for its recipe recording, the Egyptian website seems to have a higher budget, and, hence, its content is professionally produced by an LSP. *Digital Republic*, whose link is provided at the bottom of the websites' homepage, is likely to be the company in charge. The Gulf and Saudi websites seem to share common characteristics such as the generally Arabised method of localisation, the tagline's dialectal foreignisation, the technical/linguistic error/foreignisation on their homepages and the

use of domestic kitchens for recording recipes. Hence, it is assumed that they have a lower budget, which potentially means their localisation is carried out by *Knorr's* regional offices in the Gulf and Saudi Arabia. The common template of *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites suggests the application of the distributed model on a regional level, which allows a central office, most likely *Digital Republic*, to host the content management software, “but each local office has access to its localised site to make necessary changes” (Yunker 2003). In terms of recipes, the major content of the *Knorr* website, it is apparent from the inconsistent measurements and verb formation that they have multiple authors, who could vary between males and females. According to the videos, some of those recipes are potentially contributed by *Knorr* customers in the Gulf and Saudi locales, but others are designed by Egyptian professionals. Moreover, *Knorr's* target audience varies substantially in each locale. According to *Knorr's* marketing campaign, its main target audience is expected to be mothers. However, the possibility of targeting a male audience is also considered in light of some videos and the masculine voiced recipes. Furthermore, we can conclude that the Egyptian website mainly addresses an Egyptian audience, which is inferred from utilising the regionalisation approach and the absence of subtitles on its videos. On the other hand, the Gulf and Saudi websites address a cosmopolitan audience, which is indicated by the recipe presenters, their concluding phrases, the addition of subtitles and offering the lowest percentages of traditional dishes. Therefore, regionalisation is not the best method for localisation, since using any one dialect will be considered foreign, hence, the Arabisation method seems fair.

4.3.3 The Localised Content

In a decentralised localisation model, the localised content is that which “transcends locale-specific characteristics” and, hence, “needs to be standardised across locales” (Singh 2012, p. 101). From a translational perspective, localised content is that initiated by a source text. The Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website features two types of nodes which belong to the localised content. *Your Kitchen Guide* is a localised version of the British *Tips & Tricks*, while the *Privacy Policy* is Unilever’s legal document presented on all *Knorr* websites, original and localised. The following sections explore the localised contents on the *Knorr* Arabic websites, by raising questions about their technical presentation and their source texts. Furthermore, the varying

communicative levels of their translations are assessed and linked to the visibility of translation, which is explained as an act of commercial dominance in the website localisation context where domestication to the target language is a must.

4.3.3.1 *Your Kitchen Guide*: A Middle Version of a Source Text

Out of understanding of people's desire for insider knowledge, and to give users a reason to come back to the *Knorr* website (Jones 2008), the *Tips & Tricks* link offers users techniques to complement their culinary experience. The content is based on hints and tips from Marco Pierre-White, *Knorr's* brand ambassador, on picking and preparing fresh ingredients, presented on over 200 webpages. On the Arabic localisation of the website, a more simplified version offers as few as five tips under the link *Your Kitchen Guide*. In comparison, presentations of both the British and the Arabic localised contents highlight technical and commercial considerations relating to the localisation process. The large content of *Tips & Tricks* is presented on a network of pages as part of the website's hypertext. On the other hand, the small content of *Your Kitchen Guide* is offered as e-texts, which are PDFs created from printed documents, and are simply uploaded and made available online (Jimenez-Crespo 2013). The content of e-texts is not considered part of the hypertext, since only the links which direct to them are embedded in the hypertextual structure. In fact, there are a number of commercial advantages for this less technical approach to uploading web content. As a content, e-texts/PDFs are more flexible than hypertext, as "they can be posted on a website for download or can be printed for distribution at regional offices" (Yunker 2003, p. 154). In addition, they are easier to update, and they offer higher resolution documents especially for illustrations (ibid).

In website localisation, "translators do not work directly on the source text, but rather, with a hybrid middle version... Source texts might not exist in a traditional stable manner, but rather in a dynamic fashion" (Jimenez-Crespo 2013, p. 54). A comparison between the content of *Your Kitchen Guide* and its British source reveals a more dynamic approach than the traditional source to target text. In such translation processes, Nord explains that the production of the source text could be motivated by the need for a text in a particular translation process (Nord 2007). Hence, more roles are involved in the process than the familiar source author, translator and target audience. The five tips presented on the Arabic websites are brief and simple representations of

the complexity and extent of some of the tips offered on the British website. Considering the cost-effective presentation of the Arabic content, it is fair to say that thoroughly translating the content of *Tips & Tricks* is not part of the website's Arabic localisation budget. Hence, a selection of the original content was edited and made into a summarised version. The existence of an English copy of *Your Kitchen Guide* on the English version of *Knorr's* Egyptian- and Gulf-specific websites supports this statement. This means that, in this particular context, the British content is no longer considered the source text for the Arabic content, but is the base from which a source text is developed. In this case, the source text producer is not simply the one who produced a text for an audience in the source culture. Instead, the source text producer is, now, the person who produced a text under the target circumstances for an audience in the target culture, which is then requested for translation (ibid).

Furthermore, the content of the Arabic version of *Your Kitchen Guide* carries semantic and communicative errors, which make the acts of translation visible. On one hand, this evidently supports the presence of the dynamic translation process discussed above, and on the other hand, it illuminates a different perception of the translator's invisibility (Venuti 2008) in the context of localisation. This section presents two types of errors, which negatively affect the text's communicative function by offering irrelevant and misleading meanings. *Your Kitchen Guide* provides instructions on some culinary techniques, such as how to spatchcock a chicken and cook a steak. Instructions on the latter aim at explaining different degrees of cooking a steak. While the general message is clearly communicated, the terms *rare* and *medium rare* are recurrently mistranslated and, hence, interrupt the text's communicative and informative functions. The Arabic lexicon used for *rare* is نادرة (nadirah), which expresses the meaning of superlative or extreme of its kind, a sense which appear to be irrelevant to the context of steak cooking. Furthermore, the Arabic translation of the chicken tips presents a misleading translation, which leads to different results from that stated by the tip's title: "How to Spatchcock a Chicken?". One of the steps instructs the user to remove the breastbone completely, yet the Arabic translation ignores the word bone and instructs removing the breast completely. Hence, the Arabic translation evidently gives different instruction, which will lead to different results from those specified by the tip's title "How to spatchcock a chicken". Although such translation

errors are not an intentional strategy for foreignising the text, their negative effect on its readability mark it as a foreign text. In comparison with recipe nodes where local conventions were disrupted, the effect of translation errors is more powerful as they interrupt the communicative function.

The semantic and communicative errors in the content of *Your Kitchen Guide* imprint the texts with a form of visibility of the translation act. In the context of localisation, the translator's visibility is perceived differently from Venuti's conceptualisation of the idea. Given that localisation is aimed at facilitating the message of the product, users tend to read translations for their meaning, and question any language use that interferes with the text's clear communication. Hence, the translator's visibility is an opaque representation of a message that was intended to be accessible. On the other hand, Venuti's views of the translator's visibility are formed in the literary context, and aim at reflecting cultural differences through true representation of the other. Due to the different translation purpose in each context, message-oriented in localisation and culture-oriented in literary translation, the concept of visibility holds opposite references. Similarly, the concept of fluency shows contradicting connotations, as in localisation it denotes communicability and, thus, fulfilment of the localisation brief, while in literary translation, it denotes authority and imperialism. Another difference between the concepts of the translator's visibility in both contexts is the direction of translation. In literary translation, the translation discussed is that feeding into the English language, whereas in localisation the translation inferred usually moves from English to other languages.

4.3.3.2 *Privacy Policy*: A Traditional Source Text

The legal content on *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites is presented under *Privacy Policy*, a section which is accessed via a hyperlink at the bottom of each site's homepage. *Privacy Policy* is an external hyperlink, which directs users to a node outside the limits of the *Knorr* website, <http://www.unileverprivacypolicy.com/arabic>. Unilever's privacy policy explains how the company handles users' information, in terms of collection and use, minor protection, use by third party and cookies. In the following sections, the technical presentation of the legal content is discussed with consideration to its commercial implications. Then, its Arabic translation is analysed and compared to the translated legal content of the *FIFA 15* video game. Finally, the

Arabic translation of the legal content is observed from Venuti's perspective of the translator's invisibility.

The fact that the content of the *Privacy Policy* is stored externally sets it apart from the entire content of *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites. The *Privacy Policy* is an important legal document on any website, as it states the company's views and procedures on the information collected from visitors (Privacy Trust). Therefore, its content should be standardised across the languages to which the website is localised. In fact, Unilever offers its *Privacy Policy* in as many as 49 languages, in addition to the varieties of English. Almost all *Knorr* websites, original and localised, offer the *Privacy Policy* as an external hyperlink, to direct users from around the world to the hypertext, which stores the legal content. Given that the localisation model of *Knorr* website varies potentially across languages²¹, the external content of the *Privacy Policy* is independently localised via a centralised model, which enables Unilever to manage the multilingual versions of the website centrally. Hence, the Arabic content of the *Privacy Policy* is one of many translations, which derives directly from an English content, without being modified into a middle version, as was the case in *Your Kitchen Guide*.

Despite being translated from a source text belonging to a technical genre, the Arabic translation of the legal content holds limited traces of a translation act. The Arabic translation of the *Privacy Policy* is expressed in a formal legal language, characterised by long sentences and impersonality; addressing persons by their position in the legal process (Khan and Khan 2015). Nevertheless, the Arabic translation is fluent, communicative and clearly expresses the message, mainly, but not exclusively, by means of explicitation. The latter is applied to emphasise the meaning or increase formality. For example, the word *extremely* is added to the phrase: Unilever takes privacy (extremely) seriously, تتعامل شركة يونيليفر مع موضوع الخصوصية بجدية بالغة. In another instance, *effective* is added to the phrase: Subject to the terms of this (effective) Privacy Notice, مع مراعاة شروط سياسة الخصوصية... السارية. In addition, dynamic equivalence is commonly used to translate words which have different connotations/contextual meanings. For example, the word *communication* expresses different meanings in the following sentences:

²¹ *Knorr's* Arabic localisation follows a decentralised model, but the case seems different for the Turkish and Indian localisation.

- You have previously requested a product or service from us and the *communication* is relevant or related to that previous request.
- You can opt out of receiving *communications* from us.

For the first statement, communication is translated as *the call/contact*: أن تكون قد طلبت مسبقا منا *كان اتصال* بخصوص ذلك الطلب السابق, while in the second it is translated as *notifications*: يمكنك اختيار الكف عن تلقي مراسلاتنا. The legal content of *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites is different, in terms of language, from that of the *FIFA 15* inner packaging. As discussed in the *FIFA 15* chapter, its legal content went through a process of simplification as a means of intra-lingual translation aimed at simplifying the legal language for the lay audience (Bhatia 1997) before being translated into Arabic. However, the legal language of *Knorr's Privacy Policy* is more formal; in other words, the language is not as simplified. This is potentially due to either targeting an audience that is potentially more mature than that targeted by the video game, or for the Company to show authority.

The fluent Arabic translation of Unilever's *Privacy Policy*, despite having to mirror a stable source text of a technical genre, refers to the translator's invisibility. Unlike the previous theoretical discussion of *Your Kitchen Guide*, the connection of the legal content to Venuti's theory shows more similarities than differences. Venuti argues that in literary translation, the translator's invisibility creates an illusion of transparency, which "conceals the numerous conditions under which the translation is made" (2008, p. 1). These conditions, he explains in other instances, are the choice of a foreign text for English translation, the strategy devised to translate it and the translator's crucial intervention. Hence, he perceives the translator's invisibility as "symptomatic of a complacency in British and American relations with cultural others, a complacency that can be described- without too much exaggeration- as imperialistic abroad and xenophobic at home" (ibid, p.13). Although the translation direction is reversed in the localisation context, the illusion of transparency created by the translator's invisibility in the *Privacy Policy* conceals parallel conditions to those in literary translation. The legal content, apart from the remaining nodes of the *Knorr* website, is chosen for transparent translation strategy, and a crucial intervention is made for the translation to comply with the legal system and linguistic conventions of the target culture. The aim of the transparent translation of the *Privacy Policy* is to ensure clear

communication of the company's policy and protection of its rights in a developing market, as much as it is protected at home. Hence, the translator's invisibility is still "symptomatic of a complacency in British... relations with cultural others" (Venuti 2008, p. 13), a complacency that can be described as imperialistic in the economic context, in addition to Venuti's discussions on the ideological context.

Furthermore, viewing the levels of translation transparency in the *Privacy Policy* and *Your Kitchen Guide* as integral parts of *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites, and their effect on Arabic users contributes to Venuti's theory in the context of localisation to developing markets. Despite the culinary genre's simplicity and the legal genre's sophistication, the Arabic translation of the latter is communicative, fluent and, thus, domesticated. On the other hand, the Arabic translation of the first is foreignised not so much in terms of the translation strategies in use, but in terms of the negative effect of the incommunicative translation, marked by errors, on the text's readability. This means that when Arabic users read the content of *Your Kitchen Guide*, they might not fully comprehend the message intended. However, the message of the *Privacy Policy* is clearly communicated in a legal language, which implies authority. By linking this contrast in message delivery to the question of whom the message is serving, it is apparent that the interrupted message serves Arabic users, while the clear message serves *Knorr*, Unilever. Hence, the commercial communication can be interpreted as: an Anglophone business is making profits out of a developing market, in the process of which it is clearly communicating its rights, but is not as strict in communicating its services. Thus, the amounts of loss and gain on each side are imbalanced. In this sense, domestication and foreignization, as viewed by Venuti, do not establish a neat binary opposition (2008). When localising to developing markets, they both contribute to highly self-conscious projects where translation serves an appropriation of foreign cultures for agendas in the sending (instead of the receiving in Venuti's terms) situation, both economic and political.

4.4 Conclusion

The Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website foregrounds the applicability of different aspects of Venuti's work, offering an interesting reading for Translation Studies. The case study highlights

the nexus of relationships between languages of different and similar origins, English, German, Arabic and different forms of Arabic, providing a new model for Venuti's theory of invisibility. The fact that *Knorr* is penetrating the Arabic market as an English company while concealing a German identity shows that Venuti's binary model can become multilateral through layers of domestication. The multilateral model is also observed in the parallel position of English and Egyptian as two lingua francas in different contexts, international and regional, creating a dialogue between English and Egyptian, on one hand, and between Egyptian and the other forms of Arabic, on the other hand. In addition, Venuti's theory is useful in the local and localised content analysis. Analysis of the localised content emphasised the biased application of domestication towards messages serving the company, Unilever. Having said that, a new role for domestication and foreignisation is proposed in the commercial context, where they both contribute to English language hegemony. For the locally developed content, achieving linguistic domestication is deemed challenging, since the target audience is identified as being multicultural and of both genders, while the cultural domestication is well addressed.

Furthermore, through Nord's interpersonal interaction theory (2007), the Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website can be seen as a dynamic process that challenges concepts considered to be fundamental to Translation Studies. The notion of 'text' is destabilised as it features in different shapes within the boundaries of one project, the Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website, varying from a traditional point of origin, to a middle version, to having no source text. Accordingly, the roles of the source text producer, the cultural consultant and the translator are interchangeable. Finally, the partial Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website is delivered by applying different website localisation models. The distributed model is utilised as the *Knorr* Egyptian website seems to be managed by the central office/LSP which is hosting the content management software controlling the other regional websites. Moreover, the decentralised model is utilised for creating the local content, while the centralised model is used for hosting the website's legal document.

5 The Relativity of Foreignisation in Arabic Localisation: The Blackboard Learn Case Study

5.1 Introduction

Blackboard Learn is one of the biggest learning management systems (LMS) in the educational market (Hill 2017), and it is widely used in Arabic universities. *Blackboard Learn* is chosen as the third case study of this thesis because it is a product of highly technical content, which is delivered entirely in a written form. Its Arabic localisation consistently utilises Modern Standard Arabic, through which the entire Arabic market is targeted. On the one hand, this compares with the Arabic localisation of *FIFA*, which had a similar target but different linguistic methods, i.e. Arabisation and regionalisation. On the other hand, it contrasts with the Arabic localisation of *Knorr*, which targets specific locales within the Arabic market. Furthermore, the demographic of *Blackboard's* target audience is different from that of *FIFA* and *Knorr*, because *Blackboard Learn* is not a product available off the shelf or accessible to anyone who has internet access. *Blackboard Learn* is a product exclusive to a professional audience specifically, members of educational institutions, who are allowed access to it by the institution to which they belong. In this sense, the target audience of *Blackboard Learn* is not dominated by gender, as it overlaps with both *FIFA's* and *Knorr's* target audiences, but is rather dominated by profession, a category which was absent from the previous case studies. Moreover, the decision to purchase *Blackboard Learn* is institutional rather than individual. In other words, the decision is not made on the basis of the users' personal preference, as is the case for *FIFA* and *Knorr*, but by stakeholders of the educational institutions. This notion implies an imposed restriction on the users' freedom of choice, which starts from the choice of product and can also extend to the language in which *Blackboard Learn* is used.

Additionally, *Blackboard Learn* is chosen as a case study because it allows further interpretations of Venuti's theory of invisibility (2008). Venuti focuses on the textual element of foreignisation:

Foreignising translation signifies the differences of the foreign text, yet only by disrupting the cultural codes that prevail in the translating language... deviating enough from native norms to stage an alien reading experience.

(*ibid*, pp. 15-16).

However, the *Blackboard Learn* case study considers the textual element of foreignisation in light of the intratextual elements. Applying Venuti's ideas to the Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn* allows us not only to examine the foreignisation of the product's translation, but also to consider the foreignising effect of globalisation (Altbach 2004; Lumby and Foskett 2015) on the Arabic context of higher education, where the translation is used. Nord's distinction between intertextual and intratextual coherence, part of her interpersonal theory (2007), is drawn upon to explain the implications of the double foreignisation of the context and to discuss novel aspects of foreignising translation. The chapter highlights the linguistic attitudes to foreignising translation in the Arabic academic context, and the similarity the agenda of foreignisation in the commercial context shows to the agenda of domestication in the literary context. The chapter also explores the ethnocentricity of foreignising translation based on Venuti's and Schleiermacher's discussions of identity.

This chapter starts with brief background information about Blackboard Inc. and its expansion from a consulting company to one of the leading trademarks of learning management systems. It then defines *Blackboard Learn* in the context of translation theory, by making a connection between its users' dynamics and Nord's theory of translation as interaction activity on one hand. On the other hand, a connection is also made between the global dynamics of today's academia and Venuti's theory of foreignisation and domestication. This creates a comprehensive theoretical framework for the chapter's micro and macro analysis. Before commencing the translation analysis, the chapter's methodological approaches are explained. Analysis of the Arabic localisation of Blackboard Learn will focus on the textual and the intratextual aspects of the product's translation, and will overlook the technical aspects of its localisation to avoid repeating areas covered in the previous case studies. Therefore, the term translation is generally used here to refer to the process of language transfer, while localisation is used when referring to the overall project of *Blackboard Learn's* Arabic localisation.

5.2 Blackboard Inc., a Multiproduct Company

Blackboard is a trademark well known for its learning management system (LMS) that dominates the educational market today. When it first started in 1997, Blackboard was a

consulting firm providing technical standards for online learning (Bradford et al. 2007). The following year, Blackboard merged with a course management software provider called CourseInfo LLC, and together they released their first online learning software (ibid). With contentious mergers with and acquisitions of start-ups, competitors and communication companies²², Blackboard Inc. expanded its learning management system service to a number of separately licensed products in the fields of mobile learning, synchronous communication and learning analytics (Kolowich 2011). When sales of *Blackboard Learn*, the LMS, to the company's customer base started to slow down, Blackboard Mobile, Connect, Collaboration and Analytics helped boost the company's revenues (ibid). This highlighted Blackboard Inc.'s need to reach untapped markets. Although its Arabic localisation has been available since 2003, Blackboard's noticeable entrance into the Arabic market happened in 2011. This marks the year when Blackboard Inc., like other international companies entering unfamiliar markets, established a partnership with a local company to assist distributing Blackboard Inc.'s products in the region (Maurer 2011). Since 2011, Board Middle East (BME) became the master Blackboard distributor in the region (BME 2011), and the use of Blackboard started to spread in Arabic universities.

Today, Blackboard Inc. promotes its communications and analytics products to governments and businesses, however, its image as an educational technology trademark is undeniable. Therefore, the chapter will focus on Blackboard, its Arabic localisation and usage, in the educational sector, and particularly the tertiary level, where programs are based on certain aims and educational outcomes and are governed by international standards. Furthermore, given that Blackboard products have separate licenses, which might not be equally purchased by different universities, and that confidentiality hinders access to some of these products, especially Blackboard Analytics, the chapter's analysis will focus on Blackboard's core product: Blackboard Learn. Blackboard Learn is the web-based software through which lecturers post educational materials and communicate with their students.

²² In 2000, Blackboard acquired its competitor MadDuck Technologies, purchased CampusWide Access Solutions Inc. in 2001 and its rival Promethius in 2002, acquired SA Cash in 2003, and merged with its rival WebCT in 2004 (Bradford et al. 2007). In 2008, Blackboard purchased the notification company Connect-ED, live-communications companies Wimba and Elluminate in 2010 and the outsourced call centres Presidium in 2011 (Kolowich 2011; Young 2011). Also in 2011, Blackboard acquired the analytics firm iStrategy, the start-up MyEdu and the helpdesk and student service Perceptis in 2014 (Biemiller 2014; Empson 2014; Schaffhauser 2011).

5.3 *Blackboard Learn* in Translation Terms

Unlike *FIFA* and *Knorr*, *Blackboard Learn* is a product for specific users within a specific context. It is a collective user product which is not purchased by its first-hand users. The university makes the decision to purchase it; a team of system administrators manages its operations; and lecturers develop materials for students to use. This multi-user dynamics is linguistically influenced by the international academic context in which it is taking place. Therefore, analysis of the Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn* must consider the micro and macro aspects of the product's utilisation in the Arabic context. Nord's distinction between the addressees of the translation and its users (2007) is applied to pinpoint the primary users of *Blackboard Learn* within its hierarchy of users, and to identify the content with which these users are addressed. In addition, Venuti's observations of the Anglophone hegemony in the literary context (2008) are compared to the Anglophone hegemony in the international academic context in light of the globalisation of higher education.

In the previous case study, the application of Nord's theory helped identify the network of agents involved in the process of developing the *Knorr* website and the agents it addresses. On the other hand, the application of her theory in the *Blackboard Learn* case study aims at identifying the source text for the Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn* and its target users. Nord differentiates between the target-text receiver and the target-text user by identifying the first as "the addressee of the translation", and the latter as "the one who finally puts it (the target text) to use" (2007, p. 22). This distinction brings to our attention the fact that despite being the agents purchasing *Blackboard Learn* and having their names associated with it, universities are not the agents who finally put *Blackboard Learn* to use. On the contrary, each type of *Blackboard Learn* users is addressed with a different type of content and they each put their relevant content to use. These contents are not equally localised to Arabic. Exploring the different *Blackboard Learn* contents, users and their roles in the *Blackboard Learn* experience is essential to pinpointing the content which is subject to Arabic localisation and the target users who put this content to use.

The localisation of *Blackboard Learn* content and the linguistic attitudes of its users are highly influenced by the academic environment in which they exist. Arabic universities where *Blackboard Learn* is used do not work in isolation, but are affected by and contribute to the international educational context. The fact that globalisation has reached academia allows

English and the Anglo academic culture to prevail, while other languages and academic cultures are expected to follow in order to be part of the international academic community. In this sense, the commercial academic context reveals hierarchies of dominance and marginality and is similar, in that respect, to the literary context, which is the key field on which Venuti based his theory of foreignisation and domestication. The study of the Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn* and its usage will therefore allow further interpretations of Venuti's theory to emerge when observed in light of the internationalisation of higher education.

5.3.1 The Pragmatics of *Blackboard Learn* Users and Content

To accommodate an audience featuring a hierarchy of users, Blackboard Inc. addresses each group through a relevant channel and content that best suits that user's needs. These channels and contents are not equal in terms of presentation, accessibility and text types. Moreover, not all Blackboard content is localised to Arabic. To identify the primary user(s) who put(s) *Blackboard Learn* and its Arabic localisation to use, the roles of *Blackboard Learn* users are discussed and compared below.


5.3.1.1 University Stakeholders: The Decision Makers

Blackboard's main website (Figure 26) functions as a marketing tool, which offers a brief account about the company and its scope, displays its products and acknowledges its partners and its target clients\sectors. In other words, Blackboard's website is a showcase for potential clients, among whom are universities' stakeholders. Given that the decision to purchase *Blackboard Learn* lies in their hands, the website presents persuasive content, which highlights the product's advantages and their positive effects on education. Although a version of the Blackboard website is localised into the main European languages (French, German and Spanish) it is not localised into Arabic.

Campus Technology readers choose Blackboard Learn as the #1 LMS

We're honored to receive multiple honors in Campus Technology's annual Readers' Choice Awards.

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5 steps to designing an ideal student experience

It's no secret that today's students arrive with very high expectations for their education experience. Explore our ebook to learn how to define a student experience that drives enrollment, retention and graduation.

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Smart organizations understand the correlation between corporate learning and employee retention.

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See how a high activity research institution exceeded their five-year goal of enrolling 5,000 new students in its eLearning program in one year.

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Reducing costs, meeting state mandates, & improving customer service

Through an IT Help Desk services partnership, TFC not only met state mandates, but they also improved efficiencies to reduce costs.

[Share >](#)

Are you a digital trends myth busting master?

Are you up-to-date on your K-12 digital learning trends? Do you know what teachers need to build capacity for digital learning? Take our quiz and put your knowledge to the test.

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What's your digital learning vision?

Begin mapping out your digital learning vision with this interactive infographic, then download the free toolkit and engage with a K-12 digital learning expert to create your blueprint for success.

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NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory partners with Blackboard to enhance the employee learning experience

Blackboard Learn provides platform for structured knowledge exchange to support comprehensive online learning ecosystem.

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Blackboard awards Whiteboard as winner at Penn State HackPSU

HackPSU, an annual hackathon held at Penn State, took place a couple weeks ago and Blackboard was honored to be a Gold Level sponsor at this year's event. The event was completely planned and executed by a team of dedicated students, with support from the Penn State K12 Network. Read more about the event on our blog.

[Share >](#)

Ensuring Student Success in the 21st Century: Through scalable practices for identification & intervention

Even with the dedication of resources and funding to student success, many students are still left behind. Why are so many students still not achieving optimal levels of success? Download this report to better understand these challenges and gain new insights into student success from years of Blackboard research.

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- Blackboard App
- Blackboard Collaborate
- Blackboard Inspire
- Blackboard iLangelo
- Blackboard Learn
- Blackboard Connect
- Mobile Learning
- NextGen
- Blackboard iMosaic
- Blackboard Open Content

K-12 Products

- Blackboard Classroom
- Blackboard One Community Manager
- Blackboard Mobile Communicators App
- Blackboard Nova Notifications
- Teacher Communication
- Blackboard Social Media Manager
- Blackboard Collaborate
- Blackboard Open Content
- Blackboard iAves
- Blackboard Personalized Learning
- Mobile Learning

Contact Us

- Support
- Get New Information
- Product Suggestions

Figure 26 Blackboard Website

It is possible that the Blackboard website lacks an Arabic version because Blackboard distributes its products in the region through its partner BME. On the latter's website, Arabic universities' stakeholders are expected to view *Blackboard Learn*. The BME website (Figure 27) is the regional showcase for Blackboard products and uses similar persuasive content, nevertheless, it is also offered in English and lacks an Arabic version. It could be argued that Arabic is not the only language in the Middle East, where other languages are encountered, such as Farsi, Hebrew and Turkish. For such a multilingual region, English seems a common medium of communication and a cost-effective one. Alternatively, it is possible that the BME website is offered in English because this is the language dominating the business world today. However, the BME website offers images of men in the Gulf traditional outfits and women with hair covers, which shows partial non-verbal localisation to the Gulf and Islamic markets.

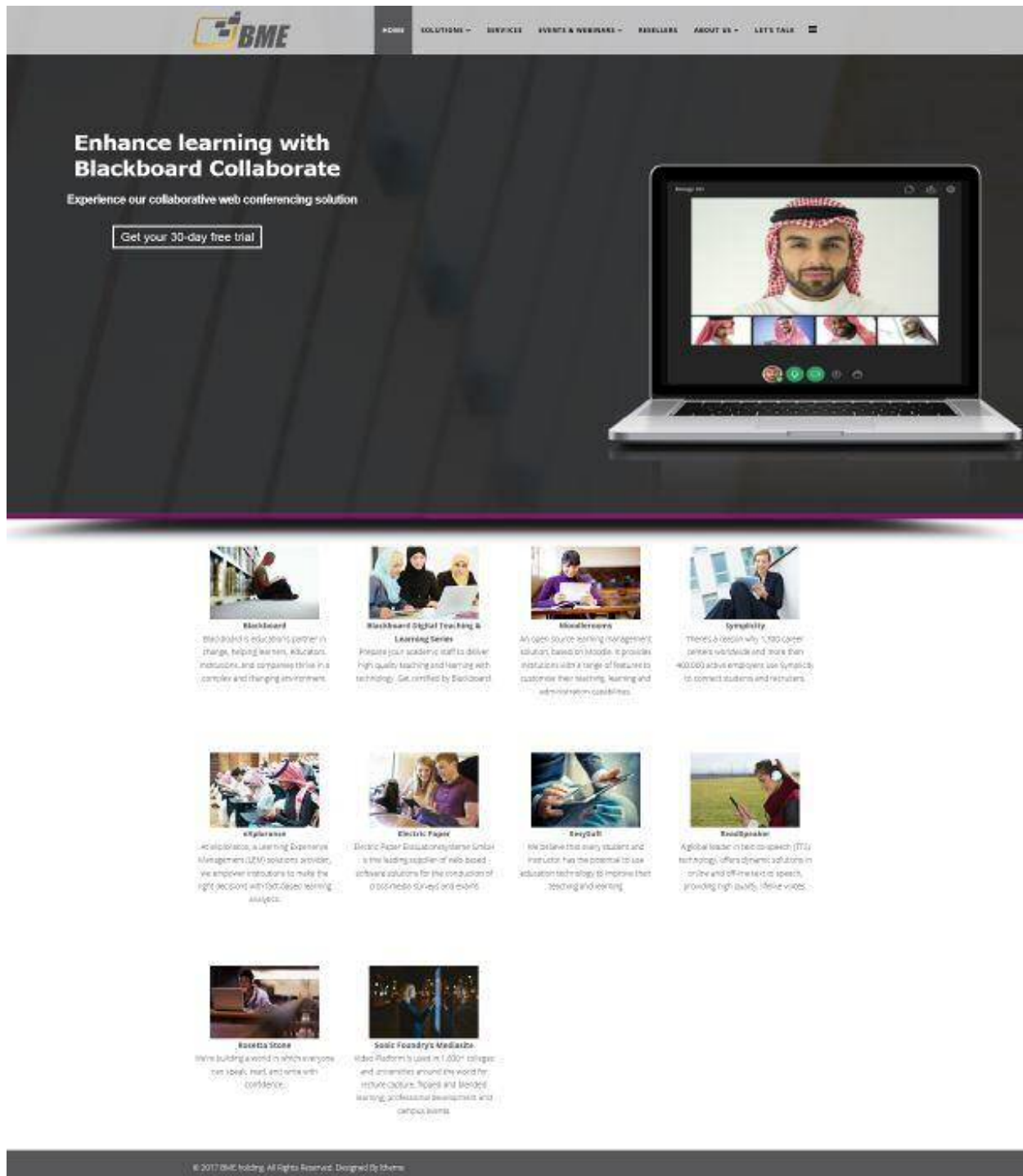


Figure 27 Board Middle East Website

5.3.1.2 System Administrator: IT Personnel

Once the decision to acquire *Blackboard Learn* is made and the purchase of its license is completed, the responsibility of installing and operating the software falls on a team of administrators at the purchasing university. The content addressed to Blackboard

administrators is delivered through a variety of channels to assist their complex and challenging mission. Through an installation process, Blackboard administrators deal with the technicalities of creating a *Blackboard Learn* environment, which includes the choice between one or two server architecture, the operating systems Windows, Linux or Solairs, and running Blackboard's database within Microsoft SQL or Oracle (Patterson 2013). For further assistance, resources for *Blackboard Learn* system administrators are available at Blackboard Inc.'s support website, 'Behind the Blackboard' (ibid). Access to both types of content is restricted by login credentials from Blackboard Inc. After the *Blackboard Learn* installation is completed, administrators fulfil their system roles, which include creating users, modules, and tab groups and managing courses and enrolment.²³ These tasks, in addition to others, are performed via the administrator panel and/or the tools\admin subfolder on Blackboard home folder (ibid). Restricted access to the administrators' channels prevents me from verifying the availability of their Arabic localisation, yet it is clear that the Blackboard support website, Behind the Blackboard, does not include Arabic on its language list. Nevertheless, another Blackboard support website, Blackboard Help, which offers support for administrators as well as instructors and students, is partially localised to Arabic (Figures 28 and 29). Although Blackboard administrators control almost all users' accounts and content, they are limited in number and do not represent the majority of *Blackboard Learn* users.

²³ Administrators' roles also include delegating some of the simple tasks to lecturers, from outside the administrators' team, who can perform them on their control panel.

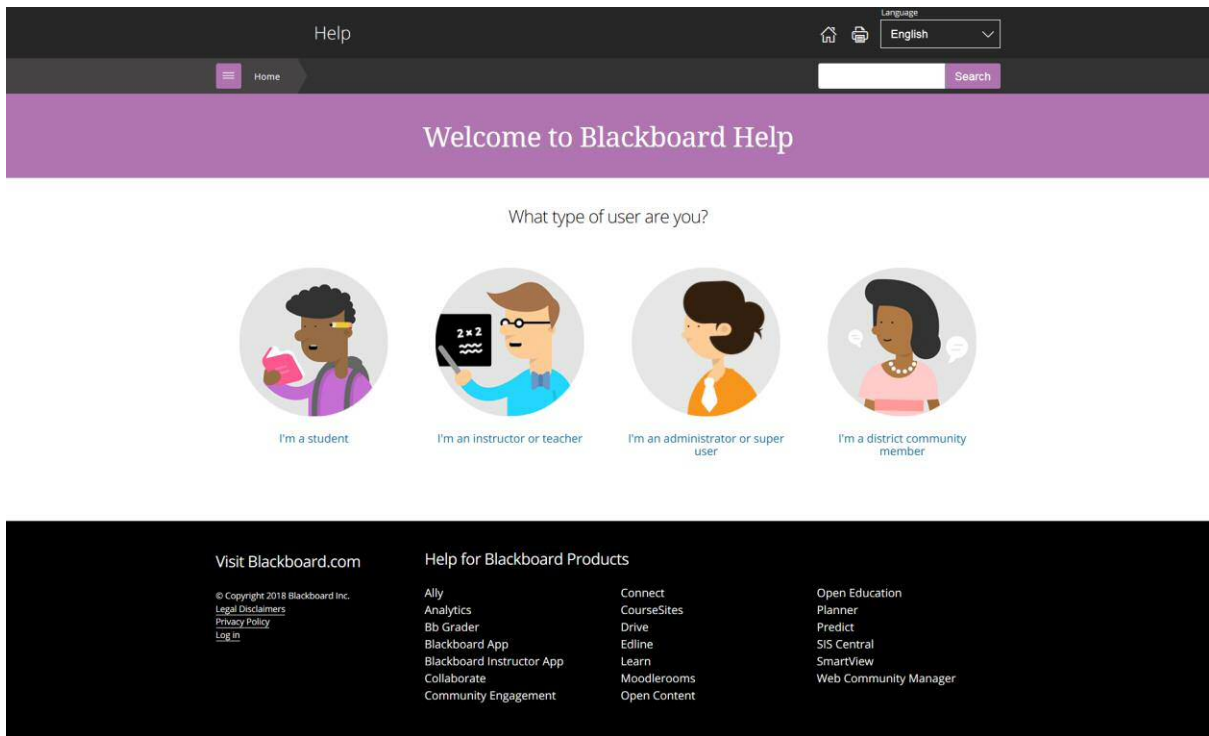


Figure 28 Blackboard Help Website

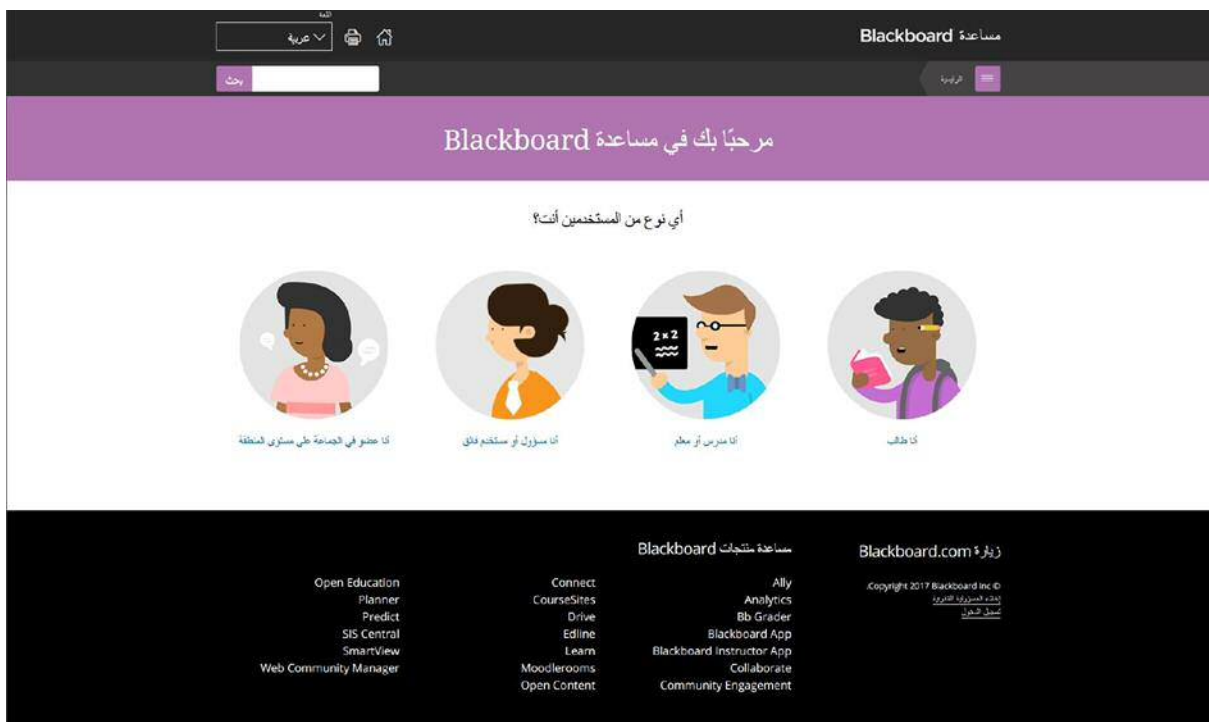


Figure 29 Arabic Localisation of Blackboard Help Website

5.3.1.3 Lecturers: The Content Developers

Lecturers' accounts are protected by usernames and passwords authorised by the university to which the lecturers belong. When logged in, lecturers access their accounts' homepage, which varies in organisation and design from one university to the other, but generally leads to the list of courses the lecturers are assigned to teach. On each course page, lecturers are provided with Add Course Modules and Customise Page functions, which allow them to include course materials and arrange them in the manner which will be visible to the students (Rice 2012). In addition, for each course, there is a control panel which helps lecturers further manage the course materials' organisation and presentation, post notifications, set and receive assignments and tests, grade the students and manage their progress (Figure 30). The lecturer page's tools, functions and control panel items are mostly localised to Arabic (Figure 31), with the exception of some trademarks, the list of Blackboard's partners, and other similar items.

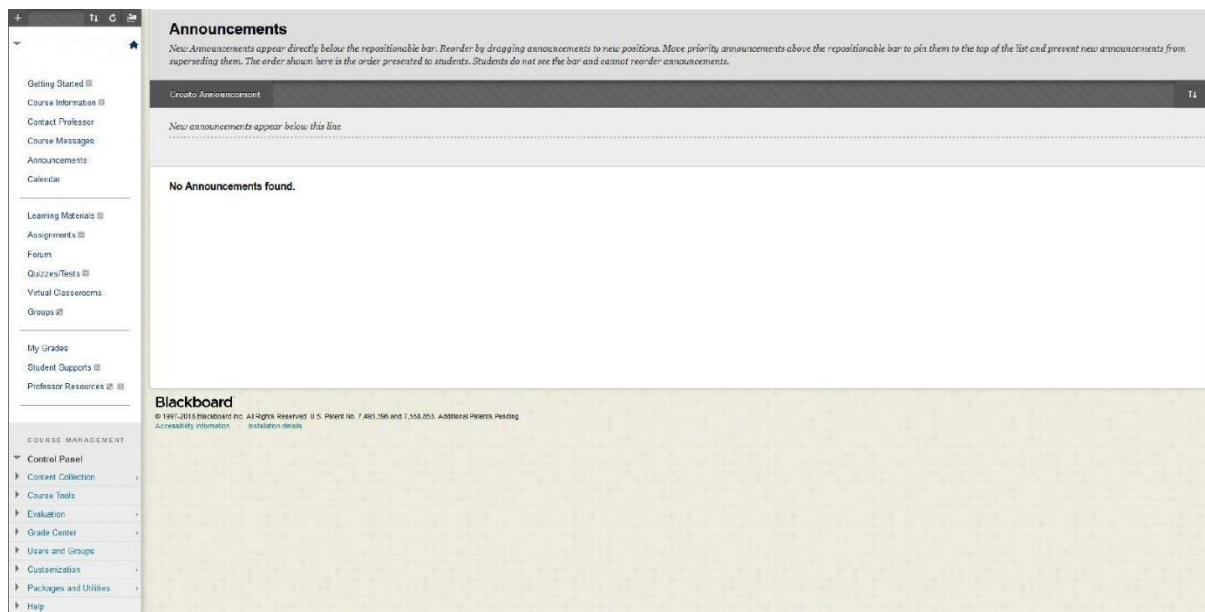


Figure 30 Lecturer's Course Page

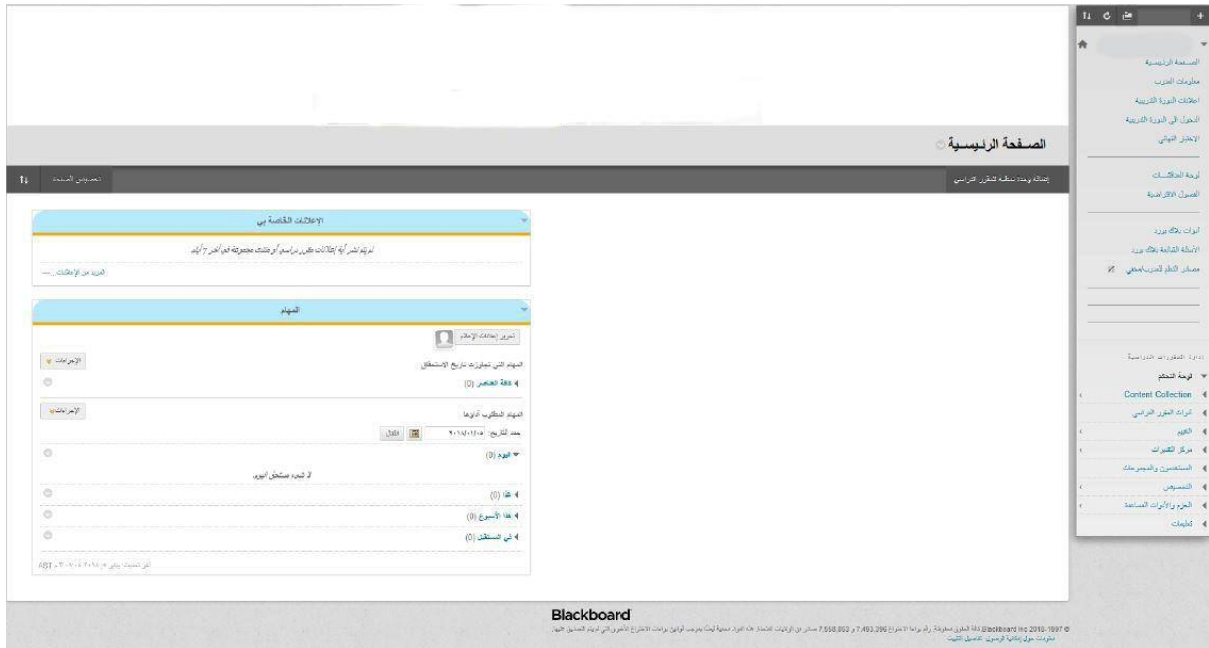


Figure 31 Arabic Localisation of Lecturer's Course Page

5.3.1.4 Students: The Consumers

Students' accounts are similar to the lecturers' in terms of accessibility and organisation. Generally, the students' homepages present the list of courses in which the students are enrolled, and possibly a list of tools too (Figure 32). Customised by the course's lecturer and reflected on the student's account, a menu is provided on each course page. Through this menu, students can navigate the content uploaded by the course's lecturer, course materials, notifications, announcements, assignments and/or tests. Since it is not part of the student's role to perform tasks similar to the lecturers, such as managing course materials, the students' course page does not include a control panel. In fact, when compared with the content developed by their lecturers, the students' part of Blackboard Learn content, labels, commands, options and instructions, is limited in volume and is partially localised to Arabic (Figure 33).

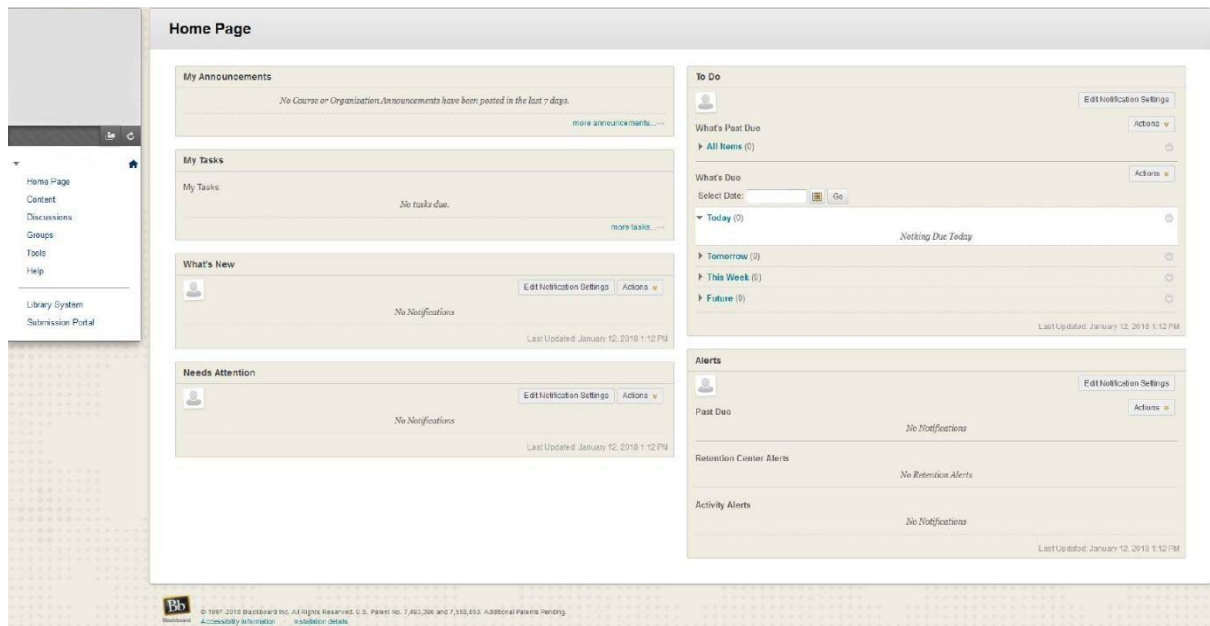


Figure 32 Student's Course Page

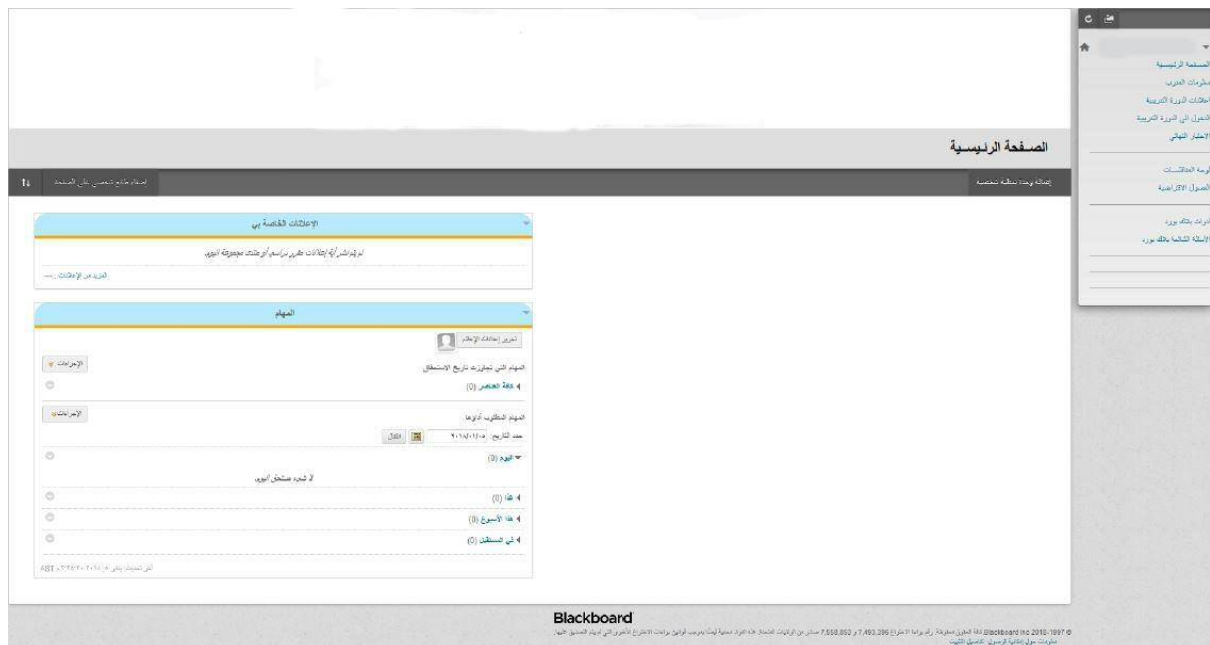


Figure 33 Arabic Localisation of Student's Course Page

5.3.2 The Target User and the Source Text

Based on the previous overview, we can say that *Blackboard Learn* challenges some of the fundamental assumptions of Translation Studies, specifically concerning the notions of user and source text. *Blackboard Learn* offers pluralised notions of user and content, and, hence, allows the source text and target reader to take malleable forms. Different types of texts by different authors are labelled *Blackboard Learn* content, and multiple receivers/agents share the term '*Blackboard Learn* user'. In terms of multimodality, Blackboard is similar to *FIFA* since

they both offer different types of content through different channels. However, unlike Blackboard, *FIFA* addresses its various content to the same users, gamers who play the game, while Blackboard addresses its different content to different users.

Despite their unquestionable importance, the roles of university stakeholders and system administrators are relatively limited. In the Arabic *Blackboard Learn* experience, university stakeholders are placed in the driver's seat, due to their authority and administrative decisions. They get to decide on *Blackboard Learn* purchase, or alternatively other LMSs, and the language in which the software will be officially used throughout the university. However critical these decisions are in the Blackboard experience, they do not qualify university stakeholders to be *Blackboard Learn* users.

Similarly, the *Blackboard Learn* environment cannot operate effectively without system administrators, who also have the power/ability to change the *Blackboard Learn* translation as they, or the decision makers, see necessary. However, as their Blackboard support website suggests, system administrators are behind-the-scenes users. They get the system up and running as part of their job, but they do not benefit from its services, and, hence, the term *Blackboard Learn* users does not faithfully describe them.

In addition, the content with which university stakeholders and system administrators are addressed is either overly public or extremely discreet, and it shows limited traces of Arabic localisation. Therefore, despite their significant contribution to the Arabic *Blackboard Learn* experience, neither university stakeholders nor system administrators can be viewed as *Blackboard Learn* target users, nor can the contents addressed to them be considered a source text for the product's Arabic localisation.

On the other hand, lecturers and students take a backseat in the Arabic *Blackboard Learn* experience when it comes to overarching decisions, yet as users they are more visible, and the same is true of the content they put to use. As the cornerstone of the educational system, without whom the entire system would not have come into existence, students appear as the main users of *Blackboard Learn*. The environment is created for their service, to preserve course materials in a safe and easily retrievable manner, to facilitate documented communication, and to help them keep track of their records. That being said, most of *Blackboard Learn* content, which students put to use, is of their lecturers' creation, and not part of the software or its Arabic localisation.

Lecturers are the users who put most of *Blackboard Learn* software to use, in order to develop the educational content for their students. In a way, lecturers stand on the middle ground between system administrators and students. They are relatively behind the scenes users, who partially manage *Blackboard Learn* operations, yet not far enough to be invisible. Instead, their contribution is more visible, and the part of the software with which they interact is accessible by a wider range of users than that of the administrators. In fact, lecturers equally benefit from the services of *Blackboard Learn* just like their students.

Therefore, this chapter gives space to lecturers as the primary users of *Blackboard Learn*. Although students and lecturers interact with similar user interfaces (UI), the students' UI is fairly limited, and, thus, students are viewed as secondary users of *Blackboard Learn*. The students' role as *Blackboard Learn* users will be considered in the study's survey, but analysis of the content of their accounts will be marginalised.

5.3.3 The Concept of Authorship in *Blackboard Learn* Localisation

The content, UI, which lecturers use to manage their *Blackboard Learn* accounts and students use to fulfil their academic obligations is the subject of Arabic localisation. It is the source text which is partially translated into Arabic, and lecturers and students put to use. That part of *Blackboard Learn* is highly technical; it consists of labels, commands, options and instructions. In any language version, the intention and effect of such content is inevitably the same; assisting users in performing promised tasks. Therefore, the concept of authorship, as realised in elements of Translation Studies, is absent in the translation of *Blackboard Learn* content.²⁴ Lecturers and students are not interested in the content's author, but are rather concerned with the software's functionality. Controlled (natural) language, standardised vocabulary, grammar and style, is increasingly used for this kind of technical documentation/content. By having "one meaning for each term and a simplified grammar for the construction of sentences" (Mogensen 2010, p. 245), controlled language reduces ambiguity, improves readability and potentially overcomes weaknesses of automated translation. Hence, translation of this type of language prioritises facilitating human-machine interaction, and does not accommodate "human subjectivity".²⁵ In this view, usability, specifically linguistic

²⁴ In a general sense, authorship of Blackboard content belongs to the manufacturing company.

²⁵ A concept emphasised by Venuti in his discussion of foreignising translation as opposed to "the humanist assumptions underlying domestication" (2008).

usability, is an important aspect of software localisation²⁶, which aims at delivering an equivalent experience to that perceived by the original/source user. Accordingly, the translation of software content should “present new technical information to a new audience, and not reproduce the source text, *per se*, or reflect its style or language” (Byrne 2006, p. 11). In other words, for a technical content such as that of *Blackboard Learn*, meaning and interpretation are more important than form and manner.

5.3.4 Internationalisation of Higher Education

Before we go further in analysing the software’s translation, it is important to understand the Arabic academic context in which *Blackboard Learn* is used, and which is subjected to a general form of foreignisation. In the early years of the twenty-first century, the General Agreement in Trade and Services (GATS), and the World Trade Organization (WTO) by definition, recognised higher education (HE) as a service (Maringe 2010; Vardhan 2015; Al-Khalifa 2016). Since then, knowledge has become a commodity freely traded around the world (Altbach 2004). The notion implies that the global academic community is united by common values, and a university must possess a universal set of perspectives (Lumby and Foskett 2015). This signalled the reality of globalisation reaching the academic domain, in light of which a number of implications were observed. English became the language unifying the global academic community to facilitate international knowledge transfer:

English is the medium of almost all... internationally circulated scientific journals, and it also dominates other academic fields... textbooks written from a US or UK perspectives are sold worldwide influencing students and academics in many countries... The English-language databases in various disciplines are mostly widely used internationally. (Altbach 2004, pp. 10-11)

In addition, the concepts of ‘world-class’ universities and ‘global’ graduates were emphasised, leading to an international competition among HE institutions (Robson 2011) and the implementation of HE internationalisation practices.²⁷ The response of HE institutions

²⁶ In that, software localisation is similar to website localisation and is different from video games localisation where immersion is of high importance.

²⁷ In the context of HE, globalisation represents a state of being, while internationalisation represents a process. Globalisation is defined as “the economic, political and societal forces pushing twenty-first century higher education towards greater international movement”, and internationalisation is defined as “the particular

worldwide differed according to their status. Leading universities, mostly Anglophone ones, increased transnational education and established international branch campuses and collaborative programs (ibid). Accordingly, they are viewed as following a heterogeneous approach, one which sustains multiple distinctive cultures (Lumby and Foskett 2015).

At the other end of the scale, universities aspiring to improve their status established partnership with international universities, sought international accreditation and used English, whenever possible, as the language of instruction (Almansour and Kempner 2015; Vardhan 2015). Therefore, the approach they follow is considered homogeneous, because they have set a higher academic culture, the Anglophone culture, as a goal (Lumby and Foskett 2015).

The commercialisation of HE allows interactions between organisations from both sides of the spectrum, but it enforces an academic hierarchy (ibid) and, hence, a modern sense of imperialism (Vardhan 2015):

While GATS would bring developing countries into a global framework of commerce and exchange in higher education, it would remove aspects of autonomy from decision making concerning education. (Altbach 2004, p. 23)

“The reflection of high value in ‘global’, ‘international’ or ‘cross-cultural’ elements implies a lower value for ideas associated with ‘national’, ‘regional’ and ‘local’” (Lumby and Foskett 2015, p. 98). This statement applies to HE institutions following both the heterogeneous and the homogeneous approaches. However, its implication for those applying the latter is more violent and imperialistic, because the national cultures are being affected in the attempt to answer to the dominant culture.

The modern international academic context shows “hierarchies of dominance and marginality” similar to that observed by Venuti in the literary context (Venuti 2008). Both contexts are influenced by relative imperialistic forces, political and commercial, and, hence, a translation project commissioned for internationalised HE, for instance the Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn*, is expected to feature similar practices of foreignisation and

manifestation of cross-border interactions undertaken by institutions in reaction to being pushed” (Cantwell and Maldonado-Maldonado 2009, p.290) .

domestication. This chapter will consider the translation of *Blackboard Learn* in terms of facilitating message clarity and usability and in terms of reception in the internationalised/foreignised context of Arabic universities.

5.4 The Chapter's Methodology

Today, *Blackboard Learn* is used by many Arabic institutions at different educational levels. Studying the Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn* and its usage without considering the level of education in which *Blackboard Learn* is used, would provide unfocused findings and limit the study's value. Therefore, the current chapter will discuss *Blackboard Learn*, its Arabic localisation and usage, in the context of tertiary education, while excluding secondary education, where the software is potentially used.

With the aim of thoroughly exploring the Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn* and due to lack of extensive research in this area, I followed different lines of investigation. The first is examining the literature on software localisation, learning management systems and their use in Arabic universities and the internationalisation of higher education and its implications for Arabic universities. The second is the analysis of a specific case of the Arabic localised content of *Blackboard Learn*, to which I had authorised access from a Saudi university.²⁸ In addition, a survey of *Blackboard Learn*'s Arabic users was conducted to understand the ways in which these users interact with the software and the linguistic environment in which *Blackboard Learn* is used. The evidence and findings reached from all investigation methods are used to support the chapter's analysis and argument.

For the survey, a questionnaire was designed based on the analysis of the accessed accounts to compensate for the lack of further empirical data and to complement the final findings of the case study. The survey mostly utilised closed-ended questions because they have higher response rate and are easier to analyse. The questionnaire was set to obtain four types of information: concerning institutional and individual behaviours, usability, linguistic and demographic information. To help participants qualitatively assess the Arabic localisation of

²⁸ It is important to note that the *Blackboard Learn* accounts to which I had access are demo accounts. This means they are not as developed as those in use by active members of the university in question or any other university. Therefore, analysis of the accessed *Blackboard Learn* accounts are unlikely to be applicable to all active Arabic localised accounts.

the *Blackboard Learn*, they are offered ranking scale response options. The quantitative data is, thus, used as a means of qualitatively assessing the *Blackboard Learn* Arabic localisation.

Questions about institutional behaviour enquired as to whether users received training on *Blackboard Learn* and whether using a certain linguistic version of the software is made compulsory by the university to which the user belongs. Questions about individual behaviour investigate whether university members actually use *Blackboard Learn*, their frequency of use, and whether they seek support if needed or alternatively read *Blackboard Learn* instructions. Questions about usability focused on the most used *Blackboard Learn* functionalities, those users find easy or/and difficult to use and whether this is due to functional, linguistic or competency reasons. Linguistic questions focused on the language in which the training workshops operated on *Blackboard Learn*, the language in which Arabic users operate their accounts, users' opinion on the clarity of *Blackboard Learn* terminology, users' comments on or rating of the instructions' clarity and users' linguistic back ground. Finally, demographic questions enquired about the users' academic discipline, their affiliation with science, social sciences or humanities as broader areas, the type of university (public or private), the city in which their university is located and their gender. A copy of the questionnaire is included in the thesis appendix.

The survey targets public and private universities from the Gulf and Jordan, and excludes international universities located in the Arabic World, and Arabic universities who do not use *Blackboard Learn*. To reach as many Arabic users of *Blackboard Learn* as possible, target universities were officially contacted and asked to distribute the questionnaire electronically to their schools. In addition, the questionnaire was distributed via unofficial contacts with members of Arabic universities from the same geographical area. Official consent was obtained from all participants, and those who did not give their consent were not allowed to fill in the questionnaire. The number of participants reached 217, but only 159 essentially use *Blackboard Learn*, 58 of which are lecturers and 101 are students.

5.5 The Arabic Experience of *Blackboard Learn*

In response to the international academic frame, Arabic universities are seeking international accreditation and collaboration, welcoming English as the language of instruction, especially in scientific domains, and encouraging their members to publish in English. Within this

linguistically imperialistic, commercially driven academic environment, *Blackboard Learn* and its Arabic localisation are utilised. On the one hand, analysis of the Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn* content is important for examining aspects of the language transfer in the translation process and the extent to which Arabic users find the translation communicative. On the other hand, exploring the linguistic attitudes of Arabic users to the product and its Arabic localisation under the influence of internationalisation of HE is equally important. The following sections present an analysis of *Blackboard Learn* translated texts and a discussion of the Arabic users' attitudes based on Nord (2007) and Venuti's (2008) theorisations.

5.5.1 The Target Text

The Arabic translation of *Blackboard Learn* utilises Modern Standard Arabic, an inclusive linguistic form with which the entire Arabic market/locale is equally targeted. Application of the Arabisation method is also relevant for the content's written form and the formal language of the academic context. The *Blackboard Learn* Arabic translation is delivered by means of literal translation, which seems to have conveyed some but not all of *Blackboard Learn* messages. The majority of the *Blackboard Learn* Arabic translation features lexical and syntactic interference²⁹ and many instances of ambiguity and inconsistent translation, which imprint it with a foreignised effect. This is mutually due to intertextual and intratextual factors.

Literal translation is discouraged in software localisation and technical translation (Esselink 2000; Byrne 2006) because it prevents producing a communicative language that is clearly referential to the target users. In addition, under the time and financial constraints of localisation projects, translating the controlled language of software does not guarantee delivering as controlled a language as the source. In other words, the main purpose for designing controlled language, which is reducing ambiguity and overcoming weaknesses of automated translation by having one meaning for each term (Mogensen 2010), is not entirely fulfilled in its Arabic translation. This reinforces the aspect of human subjectivity (Venuti 2008) back in the context of software localisation, and, hence, "different receivers... [can] find different meanings in the same linguistic material offered by the text" (Nord 2007, p. 31).

²⁹ Interference is defined as "the importation into the target text of lexical, syntactic, cultural or structural items typical of a different semiotic system and unusual or non-existent in the target context, at least as original instances of communication in the target language" (Aixelá 2009).

Furthermore, Arabic users acquire both Arabic and English languages to varying educational levels, which affects the way in which they perceive the Arabic translation of the controlled language. Therefore, Arabic users tend to have multiple interpretations and varying levels of comprehension with regard to *Blackboard Learn* Arabic content. As a result, perception of foreignised translation varies from one receiver of the *Blackboard Learn* Arabic translation to the other.

Analysis of the Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn* gives equal consideration to the intratextual coherence and the intertextual coherence (ibid) of the Arabic translation. The first gives value to the Arabic receivers' understanding of the *Blackboard Learn* Arabic translation and the linguistic situation in which they receive it. Findings are based on analysis of the Arabic translation supported with the questionnaire data concerning the Arabic users' linguistic background and their understanding of the Arabic translation. Intertextual coherence gives value to the relation of the *Blackboard Learn* Arabic translation to its source, by comparing it to the English version of *Blackboard Learn*. Both types of analysis provide new contexts in which Venuti's perception of foreignisation, as a signifier of the differences of the foreign text by disrupting the cultural codes that prevail in the translating language (2008), is probed and challenged. The intratextual analysis introduces a personal/subjective element to foreignising translation, while the intertextual analysis shows that foreignisation in software localisation plays the same role as domestication does in literary translation.

5.5.1.1 Intratextual Coherence

Intratextual coherence is a concept discussed by a number of Translation Studies' theorists, and it refers to the target text's intelligibility to its receivers. With specific reference to Nord, she explains that a target text, which makes sense in the communicative situation and culture in which it is received, is regarded as sufficiently coherent with their situation (2007). In this sense, the *Blackboard Learn* Arabic translation is only considered coherent with its receivers' situation if it makes sense to them. However, the Arabic communicative situation and culture, especially in the academic domain, is in constant change, and, hence, the target receivers' interpretations of the *Blackboard Learn* Arabic translation are not equal. With the internationalisation of HE reaching Arabic universities, English became widely accepted as a medium for academic communication. This affects the way in which Arabic users perceive the partial localisation of *Blackboard Learn* content. In addition, the nature of *Blackboard Learn*

as a software allows users to learn Arabic coined terms despite being incommunicative or non-referential. Trying out the functions of *Blackboard Learn* by putting its Arabic translation to use enables Arabic users to learn the coined terms by associating them with the functions they represent. The more frequently these translations are put to use, the more they will make sense in the Arabic communicative situation of *Blackboard Learn*, and in a later stage, they start to be referential. Nevertheless, when the Arabic translation of *Blackboard Learn* is not put to use, i.e. in the case where Arabic users operate *Blackboard Learn* in English, the translation remains incommunicative and will not be coherent with those users' communicative situation.

Thus, the communicative situation of the Arabic *Blackboard Learn* users is not static, neither are their interpretations of the software's Arabic translation. The Arabic translation of *Blackboard Learn* features varying communicative levels to those who put to it use, ranging from association, to acquisition and to reference. Accordingly, the Arabic users' perception of a foreignised translation varies largely. However, receivers of the Arabic translation, who are considered as such given they do not put it to use, find it incommunicative, because they use the English version of *Blackboard Learn*. The following sections will demonstrate how the Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn* is perceived by as linguistically diverse an audience as the one that it targets.

5.5.1.1.1 Partial Translation

The content of *Blackboard Learn* is partially translated into Arabic, as some of it remains in its English form. The main English content in the Arabic *Blackboard Learn* concerns the company's partners, such as McGraw Hill, and other brand names such as YouTube, SlideShare and Flickr (Figures 34 & 35). Similar to *FIFA*, the standardisation approach, keeping the brand name in its foreign form, is followed to build upon the brand's strong image that benefits from consistency across target markets and maintaining international brand recognition (Smith and Klein-Braley 1997; Mooij 2004). However, unlike the *Knorr* case study, the graphic adaptation is not included, which is potentially due to the bilingual background of most Arabic academics. These brand names are mostly visible on lecturers' accounts, 34% of whom use the English version of *Blackboard Learn*. Additionally, 66% of the surveyed lecturers who use the Arabic version of the software have completed most of their education in English, French or bilingually, a combination of either and Arabic. Accordingly, neither of those groups

perceive the English brand names as foreign, especially the first group who use *Blackboard Learn* in an entirely foreign version.



Figure 34 Partial Translation: Trade Marks



Figure 35 English Version of Figure 34

5.5.1.1.2 Neologism and Interference

As a result of the literal translation of *Blackboard Learn* Arabic content, the majority of its terminology is characterised by the presence of neologism or forms of interference. *Blackboard Learn* terminology expresses concepts related to the academic environment, such as assignments, discussion boards and course reports, and others related to the operating environment, such as starter posts, high contrast and filters. The first type of terminology is generally conveyed in communicative terms which pre-exist in the Arabic language, with some exceptions. However, most of the latter type of terminology is newly introduced to Arabic in terms of literal translation, and, thus, is far less communicative.

Communicability of the Arabic operating environment terminology is perceived differently by Arabic users of *Blackboard Learn*. In the questionnaire, lecturers were asked to describe their understanding of the terms إشارات مرجعية Bookmarks, الرسائل البادئة Starter Posts, التباين المرتفع High Contrast, and عوامل التصفية Filters. 9% of those who use *Blackboard Learn* in Arabic or bilingually³⁰ find the terms referential, 20% acquire the terms by frequently using the software in Arabic, while 40% only recognise the terms by testing the functions they

³⁰ Bilingual operation of *Blackboard Learn* is due either to its partial translation in some universities or the bilingual method of study in some disciplines.

represent. The majority of those lecturers have been using the Arabic or bilingual versions of *Blackboard Learn* for over three years. On the other hand, 31% of the lecturers do not understand these terms because they use *Blackboard Learn* in English. In other words, the clarity of the Arabic operating environment terminology is not immediate, and is considered foreign by its receivers, yet is relatively sensible to its users.

Similar conclusions can be drawn from the Arabic users' understanding of other terms, which are less or widely encountered. Glossary, a term which belongs to the academic environment, is a tool Blackboard offers lecturers and students alike. Its translation المسرد (almasrad) is not commonly used in the Arabic academic context, hence, only 12% of lecturers and students are able to identify the tool to which this term refers, while 88% could not recognise it. Despite conveying semantically related connotations, the Arabic translation of Upload and Download, تنزيل and تحميل (tahmeel and tanzeel), show a wider acceptance, because they belong to the operating environment terminology which is commonly encountered in many Arabic localised software. 49% of lecturers and students are able to differentiate between the Arabic terms, while 51% believe they are semantically confusing. The terms حزمة (hizmah, Package), معاينة (mu'ayanah, view) and تعيين (tai'yeen, set) are equally common operating terminology, yet are semantically independent, and, thus, show an even wider acceptance. 34% of lecturers and students find them referential, 22% acquire the terms from frequently using Arabic localised software, while around 18% do not understand the terms but associate them with the functions they represent. On the other hand, 26% of lecturers and students do not understand these terms because they are used to operating technical products in English. Most Arabic translations of the operating terminology and the less common academic environment terminology are not immediately clear to Arabic speakers. For those who operate *Blackboard Learn* in English, the Arabic translation is not coherent with their communicative situation, and, hence, they are the ones who mostly perceive it as foreign. However, for those who use the Arabic version of *Blackboard Learn*, the translation varies in its intratextual coherence based on the users' situation of frequently encountering these terms, and, thus, their perceptions of foreignised translation vary accordingly. In other words, the value of a foreignised translation is subjective and relative to its receivers' communicative situation and the linguistic positions from which they stand.

The context of *Blackboard Learn* Arabic localisation shows a different conceptualisation of

foreignisation from that discussed by Venuti. The latter talked about foreignising translation varying in “cultural situations and historical moments, what is foreignising in one translation project will not necessarily be so in another” (Venuti 2008, p. 20). However, the Arabic localisation of *Blackboard learn* shows varying interpretations of foreignising translation in the same project. In addition, Venuti discussed the concept of foreignisation from a textual perspective and from the translator’s standpoint, and as a tool for resisting the Anglophone ideological hegemony (ibid). On the other hand, the *Blackboard Learn* case study presents the concept of foreignisation from an (inter)personal perspective and the receiver’s standpoint, and as a tool of the Anglophone economic hegemony.

The nature of the *FIFA 15* video game is similar to that of *Blackboard Learn* in terms of allowing users to learn incommunicative terms by testing their functions and/or frequently encountering them. Because Arabic gamers also have different linguistic backgrounds, it could be argued that they might have different views of what foreignising translation is in the *FIFA 15* UI. However, such a conclusion could not be drawn from the *FIFA 15* case study, partly due to the linguistic freedom the *FIFA 15* video game offers, which allows gamers to set different parts of their gameplay experience to different languages. This linguistic freedom promotes a context where incommunicative terms do not have to be tolerated. Arabic gamers can easily switch to the language they find more accessible, as opposed to *Blackboard Learn* users who, in many cases, are restricted by the linguistic choices of users with higher authority. In addition, the assessment methodology of the *FIFA 15* case study, surveying online gaming fora, did not allow a detailed assessment of the Arabic gamers’ opinions on the foreignising translation of the game’s UI, but rather a general observation of their linguistic attitudes. Therefore, the relativity of foreignising translation is more visible in the *Blackboard Learn* case study, although its existence in the *FIFA 15* case study is not entirely excluded.

5.5.1.2 Intertextual Coherence

Intertextual coherence is the target text’s relationship with the corresponding source text. Nord explains, “Intertextual coherence is considered subordinate to intratextual coherence, and both are subordinate to the Skopos rule” (2007, pp. 32-33). In other words, the target text’s relationship with its source is defined by the translation brief. Since the general aim for the Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn* content is delivering an equivalent experience, which facilitates usability, the Arabic translation is expected to correspond to the source in

terms of message delivery and clarity. Disrupting both or either factors is perceived as a type of foreignising the Arabic translation on a textual level. Analysis of the intertextual coherence offers us a closer look at the Arabic translation presented to *Blackboard Learn* users, and further develops the concept of foreignisation in the Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn*.

5.5.1.2.1 Incoherent Terminology

For software localisation, it is recommended to use standard terminology of the target operating system and to be consistent through the entire translation of the textual strings. For operating environment terminology, “Microsoft glossaries are often considered... the ‘standard’” (Esselink 2000, p. 407). The English version of *Blackboard Learn* shows consistency in operating environment terminology, when appearing on page titles or in the text. Although the *Blackboard Learn* Arabic translation is generally coherent with its source in terms of terminological consistency, it shows instances of deviation. The term *link* is concurrently translated into the Arabic terms, رابط *rabet* and ارتباط *ertibat*, which are close in meaning. Occasionally, a page’s title presents one of the Arabic terms, while the descriptive passage beneath presents the other, and in other occasions the opposite happens (Figures 36 and 38). In comparison, the English term *link* constantly appears in a single form throughout the *Blackboard Learn* English content (Figures 37 &39).

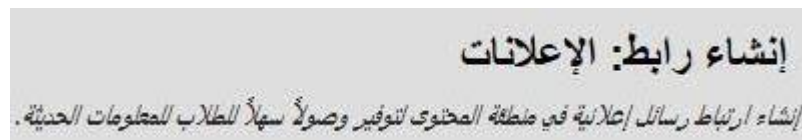


Figure 36 Different Translation in Title and Descriptive Passage

Create Link: Announcements

Create an Announcements link in a Content Area to provide students with easy access to timely information.

Figure 37 English Version of Figure 36



Figure 38 Different translation in title and descriptive passage (2)

Create Link: Discussion Board

Adding a link to a Discussion Board forum places the forum in the Content Area.

Figure 39 English version of Figure 38

In software localisation literature, “If menus or options are used to open a dialog box”, it is recommended to “use consistent translation for both the option and dialog box” (Esselink 2000, p. 66). Therefore, a glossary or a terminology list is usually created by the team of translators who worked on the product’s translation for internal consistency purposes. The English version of *Blackboard Learn* shows consistent academic environment terminology. For example, the function *Needs Grading*, which can be reached through the following path: Courses > Control Panel > Grade centre > Needs Grading, appears on three locations: the Control Panel list, the relevant page’s title, and in instructions. On all locations, the function is referenced in the same term Needs Grading (Figures 41 & 43).

However, the Arabic *Blackboard Learn* offers three different translations for the same term in each of its locations. On the Control Panel list, it is translated as ضرورة تصنيف تقدير, daru’rat tasneef taq’deer (Figure 40), while it appears on the page’s title, when the icon is clicked, as يحتاج تقدير, yahtaaj taq’deer (Figure 42). Furthermore, on the descriptive passage under the page’s title, the function is translated as يتطلب التقدير, yatatalab altaq’deer (Figure 42). Although all translations are communicative, clearly refer to the function and are semantically relative, they are not coherent with the source text’s consistency. In fact, when instructions are given, on other parts of *Blackboard Learn*, reference to the *Needs Grading* function is made in the third translation embedded in the descriptive passage, يتطلب التقدير, and not in either of those visible on the Control Panel list or the page’s title. This makes it difficult for Arabic users to recognise the function referred to in the instructions, and could potentially affect the usability of *Blackboard Learn*.

مركز التقديرات
ضرورة تصنيف تقدير

Figure 40 Needs Grading: first Arabic translation

Grade Center Needs Grading

Figure 41 English Version of Figure 40

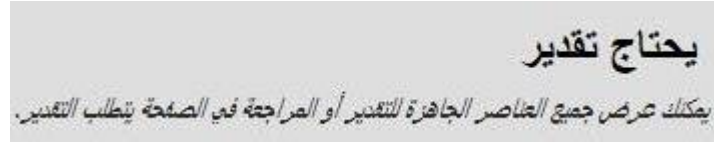


Figure 42 Needs Grading: second and third Arabic translation

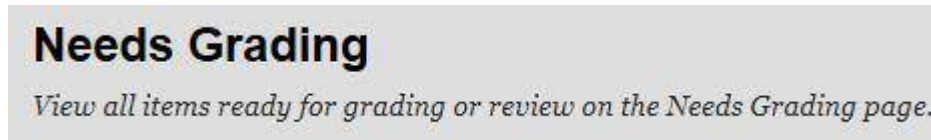


Figure 43 English Version of Figure 42

Such inconsistencies give the impression of a patchwork translation which is delivered by different translators and arguably make translators visible in ways Venuti perhaps did not expect. A possible explanation for inconsistent translation in software localisation projects is that a team of translators collectively work on the text strings, without a translation guide, clear instructions or complying to the glossary or terminology list (ibid). In addition, lack of linguistic QA processes is reflected in the translation being inconsistent and/or incoherent with its source.

5.5.1.2.2 Incoherent Message

Despite being delivered by means of literal translation, which hampers fluency, the Arabic translation of *Blackboard Learn* seems to convey fairly similar messages to the English source, with the exception of limited instances. The Arabic translation of the *Submission Receipt* function, which can be reached via: Grade Center > Full Grade Center > Reports > Submission Receipts, misses delivering the message correctly, as it conveys an opposite meaning of the English version. While the English text states: Each *student submission* receives a unique confirmation number, the Arabic translation reads; each assignment *sent to the student* receives a unique number, the Arabic version is: يتلقى كل واجب مرسل للطلاب رقم فريد (Figures 44 and 45). Given that the Arabic title of the relevant page generally describes the function, similar in that to the English: *Submission Receipts*, contradiction between the title and the descriptive passage cannot be recognised. Arabic users could easily get the wrong message that this function is concerned with reporting assignments sent to students, instead

of reporting assignments submitted by students.

Submission Receipts

Each student submission receives a unique confirmation number that verifies that the submission was received.

Figure 44 The source message for Figure 45



Figure 45 The Arabic translation of Figure 44

Translations in localisation projects are usually delivered by a team of translators, traces of which are supposed to be covered by having a clear translation guide, complying to glossary lists and performing linguistic QA. The time and financial constraints of localising to developing markets usually permit fulfilling some but not all these linguistic QA steps, and, hence, the work of multiple translators becomes visible to users through patchwork translation. The Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn* and the *FIFA* UI share comparable translation problems³¹ (see 3.3.1. instrumental translation, 3.3.2. documentary translation, and 3.3.3. inconsistent translation), which show collaborative translation practices and imprints the Arabic translation with foreignness. However, that level of foreignness is not present in the Arabic translation of *Knorr's* legal content, given the translation's consistency and intelligibility. These qualities result from processes of linguistic QA especially in specialised translation areas such as the legal field. Although all three localisation projects are addressed to the same market, more efforts are made to ensure the latter translation is fluent, transparent, and domesticated. This comparison emphasises the argument made in the *Knorr* chapter about domesticating translation being devised as a strategy for selected messages apart from others, when localising to developing markets. These messages are usually the ones serving the company's purposes as opposed to those serving Arabic users.

Nevertheless, *Blackboard Learn* offers a unique case which stands out from the other case studies. The foreignisation of its messages is not performed in a void, but in a foreignised

³¹ The advantage of *FIFA* over *Blackboard Learn* is that in many instances, texts are supported with images, which aid Arabic gamers when intelligibility is hindered.

context. The Arabic academic domain is being foreignised by the internationalisation of higher education and the imposition of the English language. Hence, the foreignisation of *Blackboard Learn* proposes its localisation is not commissioned for a wide spectrum of Arabic users, but for a specific audience within the academic domain. For such situations, DePalma explains: “the more products cost or were used by sophisticated multilingual audiences, the less likely companies were to see the need to localize them” (2006, p. 22). Because *Blackboard Learn* is expected to be used mostly in English, there seems to be a cut on its Arabic localisation cost by offering literal translation and lacking linguistic QA. The Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn* is an illusion of a service, the content’s accessibility to the Arabic audience. The double foreignisation of *Blackboard Learn* allows us to change the way we understand foreignisation in Venuti’s terms, and makes foreignisation seem similar, in definition and agenda, to Venuti’s conception of domestication. The foreignising translation of *Blackboard Learn* is:

[A]n interpretation that is... limited by its address to specific audiences and by the cultural or institutional situations where the translated text is intended to circulate and function. (2008, p. 14)

The institutional situation in which the Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn* is circulated is foreignised under the internationalisation of higher education, and the interpretation of the foreignising translation is limited by its address to the audience who still use Arabic as a medium of academic communication. Hence, the Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn* is a project commissioned not to be widely used in Arabic universities. However, the Arabic localisation is still offered as a linguistic feature of *Blackboard Learn* which allows the company to generate revenues from the Arabic market. Therefore, the Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn* is observed as a “highly self-conscious project(s) where translation serves an appropriation of foreign culture(s)” for economic agendas in the sending situation (ibid).

Arabic users are constantly encouraged to use the English version of *Blackboard Learn*, either due to the linguistic version imposed by their universities or the linguistic nature of their disciplines. In fact, the university, which provided access to the Arabic localised *Blackboard Learn* accounts, did not cooperate in circulating the questionnaire because its members are obliged to use the English version of the software. This means that the Arabic translation analysed and discussed above is the original translation provided by Blackboard Inc. to Arabic universities intending to put the Arabic translation in use. Users of activated Arabic

Blackboard Learn accounts may find the examples discussed different from what is visible to them, because the Arabic translation of active accounts is usually modified and adjusted.

Blackboard Learn offers system administrators a function which enables them to change parts of the translation which are valued as foreignising. The viability of this function holds economic and translational implications. Instead of going through the time and expenses of linguistic QA processes for multi-locale market, certain individuals from Blackboard's hierarchy of users are involved in shaping the translation of the software. Empowering system administrators with the ability to make such decisions, which parts of the translation are valued as foreignising or domesticating, reinforces the element of subjectivity in the translation readability. It is worth noting that lecturers can discuss with system administrators their opinions on certain parts of the translation, yet the function's control remains in the hands of the system administrators. Despite the lecturers' potential partial involvement in the adjustment of Blackboard Learn Arabic translation, only 27% of the surveyed lecturers are aware of this advantage. The rest of the lecturers believe they are captive to the translation they are offered.

5.5.2 The Target User

Arabic users are faced with two realities: the linguistic imperialism of the internationalised higher education, and a foreignised Arabic experience of *Blackboard Learn*. Both realities influence Arabic users and contribute to the linguistic decisions made in the *Blackboard Learn* experience. Within the Arabic academic domain, there is a general tendency to use English as a medium of communication, whenever possible. Many Arabic universities consider the use of *Blackboard Learn* as part of the modern linguistic approach, and impose the English version on their members. Hence, the linguistic decision is institutional, and users need to comply with their universities' linguistic choice, irrespective of their personal preference. In contrast, when *Blackboard Learn* users are obliged to use the Arabic version or are given the linguistic freedom and choose the latter, they are faced with foreignised translation. Although lecturers can participate in domesticating the *Blackboard Learn* translation, they cannot freely control the process. Unless they have the choice to switch to English, which is the language of technology for many, lecturers and students are forced to deal with the translation they are offered, despite their opinions on how communicative it is.

Amid these realities, lecturers and students, the core users of *Blackboard Learn*, are captive

to the decisions made by more influential users in the *Blackboard Learn* hierarchy. Unlike the previous case studies, Arabic users' linguistic background and linguistic preference are not the decisive factors in the Arabic *Blackboard Learn* experience. The linguistic dynamics of the Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn* raises a question about the target audience's identity. To find the answer to such a question, it is essential to revisit the distinction between receivers of *Blackboard Learn* Arabic translation and its users on a micro level. Arabic users who put the English version of *Blackboard Learn* to use, whether for personal or institutional reasons, are merely receivers of the Arabic translation.³² Therefore, they are not viewed as part of its target audience. On the other hand, users who put the Arabic version of *Blackboard Learn* to use are considered the target audience of its translation. Based on this distinction, the survey data is analysed in an attempt to define the target audience of *Blackboard Learn* Arabic localisation. The fact that the latter's identity is malleable indicates a blurred translation brief, and explains the level of foreignness visible in the *Blackboard Learn* Arabic translation.

5.5.2.1 The Identity of the Target Arabic Users

The identity of the Arabic *Blackboard Learn* target audience is hard to define, since Arabic users feature a range of linguistic attitudes to *Blackboard Learn*. Based on the realisation that not all receivers of a translation are its users, only the users of the *Blackboard Learn* Arabic translation are considered its target audience. Accordingly, the target audience of the *Blackboard Learn* Arabic translation forms a small proportion of the overall Arabic users. Out of the 217 surveyed participants, around 73% use *Blackboard Learn* as part of their academic experience. Those who use its English version form the majority with 49%, 30% use it bilingually, while the Arabic version is the least used by 21%. The motives for using each linguistic version vary considerably, and only the most relevant of these motives and those forming general themes are enlisted in the discussion below.

58% of the English *Blackboard Learn* users indicate their linguistic choice is imposed by their universities, 78% of them belong to public universities. Additionally, the English version is preferred by 28% of its users because they find it more communicative. 13% of those who use

³² Arabic is included as a second option on the list of languages, while English is the default language of the Arabic *Blackboard Learn*.

Blackboard Learn in a combination of Arabic and English say the bilingual version mirrors the linguistic nature of their disciplines. Some of the textbooks they teach/study are in Arabic while others are in English, while it is common for both languages to be jointly used in the classroom. The latter group teach/study in schools of sciences and social sciences. In addition, 25% indicate their bilingual choice is based on the fact that English is the lingua franca. On the other end of the spectrum, 29% of those who use the Arabic version of *Blackboard Learn* indicate it is imposed by their universities, which are public, while 35% of them find it clearer to understand. Users of *Blackboard Learn* Arabic translation are noticeably limited in numbers when compared with its receivers. Given the linguistic and translational implications of the institutional and personal attitudes described above, the target audience of *Blackboard Learn* Arabic translation remains difficult to characterise.

Adopting the English version of *Blackboard Learn* reflects the modern linguistic approach of many Arabic universities, and their linguistic attempt at securing their positions in the internationalised HE sector. In other words, the decision on the official language of *Blackboard Learn* is not always a presentation of the university's Arabic identity, but potentially its aspiration of being an internationalised university.

Arabic universities officially utilising the Arabic version of *Blackboard Learn* form the exception by still holding to their linguistic identity. These universities are the target audience of *Blackboard Learn* Arabic localisation. Although the present facts cannot further explain what drives their linguistic approach, the implication is clear that the *Blackboard Learn* Arabic translation is commissioned for the exception. Furthermore, additional institutional indicators which could illuminate the target audience's identity are absent. These indicators are the standards by which the Arabic translation of *Blackboard Learn* is assessed, the extent to which it is modified, and the individuals who approve the final version, and allow passing it as the university's official content/terminology of *Blackboard Learn*.

The identity of the target audience can neither be illuminated from the attitudes of *Blackboard Learn* users whose choice on the Arabic version is personal. Given the secured access to *Blackboard Learn* accounts and the viability of personalising its Arabic translation, the types of translation with which choosers of the Arabic version interact are concealed. The possibility of examining and comparing the different types of the Arabic translations which *Blackboard Learn* users find communicative would answer more questions about the target

audience identity; to what extent the translations are domesticated, what the users consider domestic and/or foreign, and what the standard usage of the technical language in each Arabic locale is.

Attempting to highlight the identity of the target audience of *Blackboard Learn* Arabic translation provided more questions than answers. The target audience of *Blackboard Learn*'s Arabic translation is linguistically malleable, due to a number of local and international factors. First, Arabic users belong to multiple locales, in which the linguistic norm varies even in relation to Modern Standard Arabic. Secondly, the English language's hegemony over the domains of higher education and technology affects Arabic users in terms of the type of technical language they use and their value of the foreign in the technical Arabic translation. Finally, the extent to which Arabic users are exposed to the foreignising Arabic translation of the technical content affects their tolerance and acceptance of the foreign.

This raises the question of whether the Arabic translation of *Blackboard Learn* is commissioned in the absence of a clear brief. Nevertheless, other substantial facts about the target audience, their linguistic environment and the nature of the product help explain the process of the Arabic translation of *Blackboard Learn*. The internationalisation of higher education strongly suggests that users of the *Blackboard Learn* Arabic translation are limited in number. Therefore, in spite of its insufficiency in the context of software localisation, literal translation is potentially promoted and the cost of linguistic QA becomes dispensable. In addition, the viability of personalising *Blackboard Learn* translation emphasises literal translation as a safe and cost-effective method of translation into Arabic, and linguistic QA as an unnecessary process.

5.5.2.2 The Nationalist Narratives of Arabic Users

As part of his discussion on foreignising translation, Venuti talks about nationalism/the nation, and the former's role in shaping the latter.

Language forms the particular solidarity that is the basis of the nation, but the openness of any language to new users allows nationalist narratives to be rewritten- especially when this language is the receptor of translations that are foreignising, most interested in the cultural differences of the foreign text. (2008, p. 84)

The relation between foreignising translation and the formation of the nation was first introduced by Schleiermacher, who called for foreignising translation as an act of enriching the German language by developing an elite literature. However, Venuti describes Schleiermacher's advocacy of the foreignising method as an advocacy of ethnocentricity, in that being no different from the domesticating method:

Schleiermacher was enlisting his privileged translation practice in a cultural political agenda: an educated elite controls the formation of a national culture by refining its language through foreignising translation. (ibid, p.86)

By investing the limited social group of the educated elite with considerable cultural authority, foreignising translation "never escapes the hierarchy of cultural values inscribed in the translating language" (ibid, p.85). Therefore, Venuti resists the ethnocentric violence of Schleiermacher's foreignisation as much as he resists that of domestication, and, instead, calls for a foreignising translation which encompasses rather than excludes. In this respect, Venuti endorses Newman's democratic concept of an English national culture, which acknowledges its diversity and refuses "to allow a cultural minority like the academy to dominate the nation" (ibid, p. 120).

Foreignising translation is based on the assumption that literacy is not universal, that communication is complicated by cultural differences between and within linguistic communities. But foreignising is also an attempt to recognize and allow those differences to shape cultural discourses in the translating language. (ibid, p. 120)

The Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn* offers an undefined image of Arabic nationalism and questions the existence of such a notion within its context. In fact, the foreignising translation of *Blackboard Learn* reveals aspects of relevance to both Schleiermacher's and Venuti's views on the connection of foreignising translation to nationalism.

On the one hand, the foreignising translation of *Blackboard Learn* is in parallel with Venuti's perception of foreignisation being inclusive, especially where it overlaps, in terminology, with the foreignising translation of other software and, hence, becomes accessible to the "popular reader". In this sense, the foreignising translation of *Blackboard Learn*, and other software, are enriching the Arabic technological literature without being exclusive to a particular social

group. Hence, the foreignising translation of *Blackboard Learn* seemingly presents a democratic concept of a national culture.

On the other hand, the Arabic context of *Blackboard Learn* equally highlights the role of Schleiermacher's national cultural elite, yet not by means of foreignising translation but by means of a foreign language. Based on the perception that the educated elite controls the formation of the national culture as part of a cultural political agenda, the Arabic educated elite are, hence, controlling the formation of their national culture by adopting the English language. This type of language refinement shakes the basis of the nation's solidarity, and questions whether the concept of imperialism is more relevant than nationalism in this context.

The foreignising translation of *Blackboard Learn* exemplifies a cultural political agenda on a rather international scale. The strategy of "close adherence to the foreign text in conjunction with an avoidance of the most familiar language in the receiving culture" (ibid, p. 97) is inapplicable to a context where the users are promised facilitated technology. Paired with the international academic influence, English is promoted as a linguistic alternative which fulfils both technical usability and academic prestige.

5.6 Conclusion

The *Blackboard Learn* case study highlights the additional value of Arabic localisation to Translation Studies. Most of this chapter's theoretical conclusions are drawn in the space between the foreignising translation of *Blackboard Learn* and the foreignisation of the Arabic academic and technical domains. Within the boundaries of the Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn*, Arabic users' perception of foreignising translation is subjective and, thus, relative. This is due to Arabic users having different linguistic backgrounds and different linguistic attitudes when operating technology. However, the nature of *Blackboard Learn* allows its Arabic users to test its functions and learn the Arabic terminology, which they might initially find incommunicative. In other words, in cases where the decision on using the Arabic version of *Blackboard Learn* is not personal, the neologism of the *Blackboard Learn* Arabic translation can be acquired from frequently encountering such terminology. This further promotes the relative perception of Arabic users to foreignising and domesticating translations.

In addition, the double foreignisation of *Blackboard Learn* is proposed as a concept of business translation that is equivalent to Venuti's domestication, "a highly self-conscious project where translation serves an appropriation of foreign culture" for economic agendas in the sending situation (2008). In light of the foreignisation of the Arabic academic domain, which is a result of the internationalisation of higher education, the target audience of the *Blackboard Learn* Arabic translation is expected to be limited. This seems to emphasise the need to cut back on the Arabic localisation cost in order for the company to generate more profits from the Arabic market. Therefore, Arabic is seemingly offered as a linguistic feature of *Blackboard Learn*, when in fact its literal translation does not entirely facilitate its messages. *Blackboard Learn* is potentially allowed to reach its Arabic users at this level of foreignising translation due to the feature which entitles certain users, system administrators, to modify the *Blackboard Learn* translation. In other words, the company seems to be handing the translator's responsibility, or more precisely that of linguistic QA, to the target users of *Blackboard Learn*, which is potentially another reason for cutting back on the Arabic localisation cost.

The Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn* changes our traditional understanding of how translation is practised. The fact that certain users are, in a way, included in the *Blackboard Learn* translation team pluralises the roles and identities of the agents involved in the translation interaction. Having certain users as translators indicates that the role of *Blackboard Learn* translators is not confined to agents positioned at the translation production side, but is extended to agents who are on the translation consumption side. This shows the multiplicity of the translator's identity as well as certain users' roles. Moreover, by allowing users to shape the Arabic *Blackboard Learn* experience and modify its translation, the translation process is observed in a state of motion, which continues even after the product reaches its target market. Another aspect of pluralisation in the translation interaction of *Blackboard Learn* is the linguistic identity of the Arabic audience, which is a by-product of the English language hegemony in both the academic and the technological domains. This highlights the difficulty of identifying the target audience of the *Blackboard Learn* Arabic translation and allows the project to be commissioned with a blurred translation brief.

A final political observation is made on the target audiences' linguistic identity by relating the

textual and intratextual foreignisation of *Blackboard Learn* to Schleiermacher and Venuti's theory of nationalism. The foreignising translation of *Blackboard Learn* and other technical products is enriching the Arabic technical content without being limited to a special group in the Arabic culture. However, the Arabic educated elite are refining the language of academia and technology by using the English language. In this respect, having Arabic national narratives rewritten by means of a foreign language, English, is considered a sign of imperialism.

6 Conclusion

This thesis is put forward as an acknowledgement of the rich context of Arabic localisation and its value to localisation and translation research. The thesis does not encompass all complexities of the context, but gives glimpses into the vast sphere of Arabic localisation, by covering a host of products and users, spans of different locales, and multifaceted processes. The value of the discussed case studies lies in allowing us to explore a neglected area of localisation research: localising to a developing market, and to observe localisation in theoretical terms. By applying Venuti's theory of invisibility, each case study helped shed light on an aspect of a developed market's relation with a developing market. Moreover, the application of Nord's theory of interaction allowed the case studies to underline the plurality of the localisation processes and agents, and explore different domains in which translation is practised. The cases studies also emphasised the users' linguistic experience in indifferent Arabic locales and gave value to their opinion as a qualitative measure of Arabic localisation.

In the course of the case studies, the questions set out at the start of this thesis, about localisation, its relation to Translation Studies and the perception of Arabic localisation by its users are successfully answered:

- How do processes of Arabic localisation differ from those described in the localisation literature?
- What is the connection between Arabic localisation and Translation Studies? In what way can theoretical models that are usually applied to Translation Studies illuminate practices of Arabic localisation?
- How are the translations produced in the context of Arabic localisation perceived and used by Arabic users?

In many ways, practices of Arabic localisation mirror the practices discussed in the localisation literature. However, the return on Arabic localisation investment seems to reshape some of the localisation processes as they are commonly known. In parallel with Brooks' explanation of tier-three markets (2000), Arabic localisation is partially delivered, yet its partial localisation is

uniquely performed. In video game localisation, revoicing a game's audio files is a costly process, and, thus, is reserved for higher budget games and locales with higher profitable margins. As a result, it is widely acknowledged in the video game localisation literature that the revoicing of audio files designates fully localised games from partially localised games. However, the situation explored in the *FIFA 15* video game case study does not seem to fall neatly within this categorisation. Arabic localised triple A titles, such as *FIFA 15*, *PES Konami* and *Call of Duty*, tend to feature re-voiced audio files despite the games being partially localised. This deviation is explained by qualitatively analysing comparative English and Arabic audio files from the *FIFA 15* video game, the subject of the case study. Discrepancies were found in the word count between the original and the re-voiced files, which concludes that instead of excluding the revoicing process from the partial Arabic localisation of the game, the audio files themselves were partially localised into Arabic. Accordingly, Arabic localisation seems to be delivered in a unique type of partial video game localisation, which balances between the high cost of the revoicing process and the profitable margin of the Arabic market.

In addition, the Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website shows a special kind of partial localisation. Website localisation usually follows a centralised model through which companies centrally manage the multilingual versions of their website, or a decentralised model where a common global template is maintained, but local offices provide local content. The most recommended, however, is the distributed model, through which a central office hosts the content management software, while each local office has access to its localised site to make necessary changes. The partial Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website seems to resemble all three models in a rather intriguing manner. In comparison with the original website, *Knorr's* Arabic localised websites clearly follow the decentralised model, where only the brand name and the colour scheme are preserved, while the content is locally developed. Nevertheless, they also seem to follow the distributed model on a regional level, as *Knorr's* Egyptian website appears to be managed by the central office who is hosting the content management software, while the Saudi and the Gulf offices have access to their locale-specific sites and adjust the content to the local taste. Moreover, the centralised model is observed when viewing the legal document of the *Knorr* Arabic websites, as the content is stored in an external hyperlink and is centrally managed by

Unilever. Although the Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website is partial, the website localisation models are applied in local, regional and international forms to deliver it.

In addition to being partially delivered, Arabic localisation is known for the weak linguistic quality of its translation. As DePalma (2006) explains, the perception that English works better for certain industries, such as software, drives many companies to cut on localisation costs especially when their products are used by sophisticated multilingual audiences. Quality assurance (QA) is on the list of billable items whose costs are a target for reduction. Dunne highlights that “much effort is devoted to functional QA but little or none to localization QA” (2006, p. 115). The case studies discussed above support both DePalma and Dunne’s insights, as they demonstrate products reaching their Arabic audience in a partially incommunicative state, in both technical and cultural contexts. The user interface of *Blackboard Learn* includes many opaque words and phrases which hinder operating the software in Arabic. In addition, the menus of the *FIFA 15* video game and the translated tips on the *Knorr* website feature multiple incommunicative instances, which do not allow simple sports and culinary messages to get through. However, lack of linguistic/localisation QA only applies to messages serving target users, while those serving the manufacturing companies are treated with more care. The legal document on the *Knorr* website, which presents Unilever’s privacy policy and protects the company’s rights in the Arabic market, is formally written and clearly expressed, signifying processes of linguistic QA given the technicality of the text. In Arabic localisation, linguistic QA seems to be a selective process, which is practiced for some but not all texts.

Based on the previous observation, linguistic QA is presented as a biased process, in which messages serving the company’s rights are consciously selected for fluent translation strategy, while messages serving the target audience remain challenged by the industry’s common practices; clarity of the translation brief, machine translation, the translator’s isolation, etc. This affects the roles of domestication and foreignisation in Arabic localisation and allows them to differ from their traditional roles in both localisation and literary translation. In the context of localisation, domesticating translation facilitates a product’s content to the language and culture of the target market, where it will be sold and used. The importance of domesticating translation lies in being a service which adds to the product’s functionality, and improves its usability. In this

sense, fidelity is perceived in the translation's commitment to the target audience, not its adherence to the source text; or in Venuti's terms: bringing the product back home and not sending the user abroad. On the other hand, localisation limits foreignising translation to maintaining the brand's recognition across international markets and to preserving the product's look and feel. In other words, foreignising translation simply signals the presence of an Anglophone business in the foreign market, while domesticating translation masks the identity of the Anglophone company, and imprints the product with a local image.

Localisation encourages us to change the way we understand domestication and foreignisation in the literary context. Venuti highlights domestication as an act of inscribing "the foreign text with a partial interpretation, partial to English-language values, reducing if not simply excluding the very differences that translation is called on to convey" (2008, p. 16). Therefore, he calls for foreignisation as a means of resisting "dominant values in the receiving culture so as to signify the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text" (ibid, p.18). If we were to describe domestication and foreignisation in the context of localisation in Venuti's terms, domestication would be: an act of inscribing the English product with partial interpretation, partial to the foreign-language values, reducing if not simply excluding the linguistic and cultural differences for the English product to sell in the foreign market. Accordingly, foreignisation would be defined as resisting dominant brands in the receiving culture so as to signify the services and functions of the English product. Given that the purpose of translation in the literary and the localisation domains is different, the roles of domestication and foreignisation differ in return. Literary translation aims to send the reader abroad, while localisation aims to bring the product back home. Moreover, the position of the English language is different in both contexts; in literary translation English is the language of the receiving situation, while in localisation it is the language of the sending situation. Nevertheless, despite their differences, localisation is similar to literary translation in that, in a way, it serves Anglophone cultural, economic, and political agendas. Although these agendas might not be visible when localising to first tier markets, they are foregrounded when localising to a developing market.

The significance of studying Arabic localisation is that it pushes notions of domestication and foreignisation beyond the boundaries of their literary and localisation contexts and adds new

aspects to them. The Arabic market belongs to the category of developing markets, where technology is in high demand, and Anglophone companies, in this respect, face limited local competition. Such markets are known to “insist less on perfection, finding satisfaction in sincere, albeit sometimes mediocre, (localisation) efforts” (DePalma 2006, p. 31). When Anglophone companies penetrate the Arabic market, but fail to fulfil the localisation aim, linguistically and culturally facilitating their products to the target market, the situation is marked with a trade imbalance. The profits companies make from the Arabic market are not equal to the services they offer that market. The added value of applying Venuti’s theory of domestication and foreignisation to the context of Arabic localisation is that it raises complex questions about dominance and marginality in the business context, which yields significant findings.

In the context of Arabic localisation, there seems to be a high level of contrast in transparency between conveying messages serving Arabic users and those serving the company. In all case studies, the Arabic translation which is supposed to facilitate the products’ services to their target users seems to feature some degree of foreignisation which varies in hindering the message. In comparison, the only translated content which protects the company’s rights in the Arabic market, which was encountered in the *Knorr* website case study, is clearly communicated and domesticated. This allows us to observe foreignisation and domestication not as binary opposites, but as two sides of the same coin. Domestication and foreignisation, together, are a means of discrimination, discriminating between messages that are seen as worth the financial burden of being clearly conveyed, and messages that are viewed as opportunities for budget cutting. In this sense, they both contribute to the Anglophone hegemony in the financial/business domain.

In the Arabic context, technology and higher education are subject to a wide scale of foreignisation, where English is promoted as the language of prestige. The imposition of a foreign language on the Arabic market affects the ways in which localisation/translation is practised and consumed. Arabic localisation allows us to consider the personal aspect of foreignisation and domestication in addition to the textual aspect, and to acknowledge the target audience perspective as well as that of the translator. The unity of the Arabic market through language is negatively affected as the educated elite, by whom many others are influenced, adopts the

language of technology and education, English. This creates an inconsistent linguistic situation in the Arabic market, where the values of domesticating and foreignising translations become relative and subjective. Arabic users' perceptions of localised products as domesticated or foreignised are not static, but are based on each's linguistic situation and background. Therefore, it is difficult for localisation projects addressing technology and higher education to have a clear definition of what domesticating translation is for the Arabic market.

Hence, such localisation projects tend to adhere to the source text, which contradicts the aim of localisation of being a target-oriented translation. As a consequence of adhering to the foreign text, Arabic localisation tends to feature high levels of foreignising translation, which superficially fulfils Venuti's aim for translation being an "ethnodeviant pressure on those (cultural) values to register the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text" (2008, p. 15). I am saying superficially because, Venuti talks about textual foreignisation, whereas the academic and the technological foreignisation are both textual and contextual. The double foreignisation means that the textual foreignisation is offered as a payable service, when in fact it is not a service from which the majority of the target audience can benefit. Instead, the textual foreignisation is a service limited by its address to a specific audience, who is not influenced by the contextual foreignisation. In this sense, the foreignising translation does not encompass, as Venuti intends for it to be, but rather excludes. The exclusion of the foreignising translation is similar in nature to the domesticating translation which Venuti describes as configuring a hierarchy of dominance and marginality and creating a trade imbalance. The foreignising translation is dictated by the relationship of the Anglophone business with the developing market, where the translation serves an appropriation of the receiving culture (Arabic), for economic agendas in the sending situation (Anglophone). In addition, the foreignising translation of the academic and the technological domains inscribes a hierarchy of readership. Users of the Arabic translation are denied full comprehension of the foreign product's message, since the foreignising translation draws on marginal and nonstandard materials in the target situation, while users of the English content are permitted access to the product's services.

The scale on which foreignisation is practiced in Arabic localisation today signifies a change in the Arabic translation tradition. For centuries, Arabic translations were judged acceptable by their

fluency, marking domestication as an essential part of Arabic translation. The start of this tradition was witnessed in the 8th century, when the Islamic reign came in touch with other civilisations, and flows of translations into Arabic were taking place. The domesticating strategy was initiated in protection of the Arabic language and the common people's faith who were not seen intellectually ready for reading about polytheism (Madkur 1997; Asfoor 2009). Domestication became dominant in Arabic translation with the rising political power of the Arabic language. In the 14th century, Ibn Khaldoun wrote about the connection between domesticating translation and the hegemony of Arabic, the same way Venuti talks about this connection with English today (ibid). However, the extent to which foreignisation is practised in Arabic localisation indicates that the connection discussed by Ibn Khaldoun and Venuti is not stable, but changes according to the language's current position.

Studying Arabic localisation from a Translation Studies perspective foregrounds a network of abstract concepts: space, tangibility, motion and process. These concepts are illuminated by both disciplines and, in return, feed into them. In the course of the case studies, the concept of space is observed in the relation between translation and product tangibility. Translation, as understood in traditional terms, is a practice of language transfer fulfilled in the presence of key notions: the source and target languages, texts and readers. The results of this type of translations are tangible, completed works of translation that are read as such. Although the products discussed in this thesis have gone through processes of language transfer, they do not result in tangible completed works of translation. Instead, their results are rather intangible artefacts, which cannot be thoroughly read in a linear fashion, nor do they present concrete objects. The *Knorr* website and *Blackboard Learn* software cannot be held in their users' hands as a complete work of translation. Perhaps, the *FIFA 15* video game is the most tangible product, since it is contained in a box. However, the packaging is the only tangible part of the game, which conceals many other intangible parts, such as the game's menus, audio files, etc., that cannot be thoroughly viewed by a single gamer at a single point in time. Localisation features practices of language transfer, which involve different people/agents and process and are created for a broad audience, but the outcome is intangible. Hence, there is a space between the translation of localisation and the intangibility of the products produced.

In localisation, the concept of intangibility can be observed in the translation process as well as its outcome. Within the dynamics of localisation, the existence of certain fixed notions of translation, such as the source text, is questioned, while the boundaries of others, such as the source author and the target reader, are blurred. In the cases of the *FIFA 15* video game and the *Knorr* website, parts of the products' Arabic localisation, the revoicing of the *FIFA 15* audio files and the *Knorr* recipes, lack a source text. In addition, the notion of the source author is lost in the plurality of the text types in the Arabic localisation of the *Knorr* website, where three different types of texts are featured: those locally produced (recipes), those translated from a source text (the legal content), and those translated from a middle version of a source text (*Your Kitchen Guide*). Although the Arabic localisation of *Knorr* website targets specific locales within the Arabic market, the cosmopolitan nature of the Gulf region, where different Arabic nationals work and live, makes the identity of the target audience indistinct. Furthermore, in addressing a hierarchy of users including university stakeholders, system administrators, lecturers and students, the target reader of the Arabic localisation of *Blackboard Learn* is blurry. The fundamentals of Translation Studies in localisation become difficult to pinpoint or identify, making them, in a way, intangible notions.

Furthermore, the concept of intangibility is observed in an additional aspect of the localisation process which is the constant motion of its translation. The translation of the products goes through a continuous process that does not seem to reach a point of completion. The translation of the *FIFA 15* video game is updated with each release, and gamers are presented with a content that is an accumulation of previous and present translations. Similarly, the content of the *Knorr* website is constantly changing, via recipe updates and/or new marketing campaigns. Users are offered a different content every time they access the website, and sometimes the content is changed altogether. In the case of *Blackboard Learn*, the translation process continues even after the product reaches its target users, as system administrators have the privilege of altering the translation as they find necessary. In the products' life span, there is no point where we can claim their translations to be completed. Localisation allows us to change our understanding of translation as a fixed process which is defined by starting and ending points, and to view it as an endless process of retranslations. Any given translation analysis of a localised product is not a

documentation of its permanent presentation, but a study of a version in that product's translation cycle.

Studying the processes of Arabic localisation not only allows us to discuss the textual aspect of translation, which is widely discussed in localisation research, but to discuss the personal aspect as well. To help identify the roles involved in the processes of Arabic localisation, Nord's theory (2007) is applied, and in light of the network of people involved, her theory is pluralised. The pluralisation of Nord's theory can be perceived on both ends of translation process, its creation and consumption.

On the translation creation side, the plurality of the translator is salient in the collaborative work of translation. Throughout the case studies, the translations analysed are not viewed as a work completed by a single translator, but the work of a team of translators. The multimodal nature of the *FIFA 15* video game, the in-game text and the audio files, requires different types of translations, written and voiced, and different translators for the Arabic localisation of the game to be delivered. Moreover, the multi textual nature of the *Knorr* website, recipes, kitchen tips and legal content, entails specialised and non-specialised translators for the website to appear as a unified work of translation. In some cases, the plurality of the translator is due to the industry's practices, and not to the nature of the product. The time pressure under which localisation projects are delivered requires a team of translators to work on the product's textual files simultaneously. Furthermore, the localisation of each product's release is not necessarily handled by the same team of translators. Therefore, setting up a terminology list for each localisation project is essential for avoiding a patchwork translation. However, when the localisation guide is not followed, the collaborative work of translation becomes visible. In the menus of *FIFA 15* video game (Gameplay), the same phrase is translated in different Arabic versions, because each translation belongs to a different release. Similarly, some items on the *Blackboard Learn* menu appear in other locations with different translations, because the textual files were translated by a number of translators.

The collaborative translation which characterises Arabic localisation postulates a sense of invisibility, which is interpreted differently from Venuti's discussions of this term. Venuti (2008) observes the concept of invisibility in the illusionistic effect of transparency in English

translations, created by the translator's intervention to give the translation the look of an original work. However, that transparency imprints the translated work with English cultural values, and provides the target readers with "the narcissist experience of recognising their own culture in the cultural other" (ibid, p. 13). Nevertheless, in Arabic localisation, invisibility is observed as a layered concept featured in the translation process and product. When textual elements are extracted from the product's source code and are arranged in spreadsheets or translated in text editors, the context becomes invisible to the translator(s). In localisation terms, this practice is known as the translator's isolation and is one, if not the main, reason for conveying incommunicative messages. Invisibility of the context creates a situation in which translators lose sight of the meaning they are commissioned to convey. Both the invisibility of the context and the collaborative nature of translation result in the translation being clearly visible to the target reader. The incommunicative Arabic translations of the *FIFA 15* menus, the *Knorr* tips and the *Blackboard Learn* user interface are traces leading to the translators' visibility. The act of translation is visible, but the identity of the translators remains invisible, a means of "cultural marginality and economic exploitation that...translators have long suffered, their status as seldom recognised... whose work nonetheless remains indispensable because of the global domination of British and American" business (ibid, p.13).

On the translation consumption side, application of Nord's theory emphasises the plurality of the target users' role. The processes of localisation allow Arabic users to cross over from consumers of translation to creators of their own translated experience. Users of localised products are not passive receptors of translation, but are active agents in the localisation process. This signifies the continuum of the translation process, and its motion, after the localised products reach their target audience. The case studies highlight the ways in which users can be 'double agents': a source author, a content developer or a translator in addition to being users. Apart from that, users are in control of linguistically shaping their own experiences, by rejecting the linguistic version which they deem less communicative and selecting their language of choice.

Trying to understand how Arabic localisation is perceived by its users is an attempt to highlight the end point of Arabic localisation. However, reaching this end has proved to be a difficult task. By following both qualitative and quantitative approaches, exploring online gaming fora and

setting a questionnaire, the case studies gave only glimpse into the vast sphere of the Arabic audience. The challenge faced made me question the possibility of quantifying an audience or its response to a certain translation. In addition, highlighting the identity of the audience targeted by Arabic localisation was not an easy task either. The Arabic market is complex due to its multiple locales and multiple linguistic structures, including Modern Standard Arabic and regional dialects. The case studies show that although Arabic localised products are available to users who can afford them, whether individuals or institutions, their localisations are not always addressed to the breadth of the Arabic market. Some locales are key players, and, hence, are specifically targeted, while the dialects of others are widely appealing, hence, utilised in the localisation process without their locales being tangible targets. The Tunisian dialect is used in revoicing the audio files of the *FIFA 15* video game due to its popularity in football commentary. However, the main target of the game's Arabic localisation are the locales with the highest GDPs in the Arabic market, namely the Gulf region. This highlights a double ethnocentric violence in Arabic localisation, where companies use the dialects of some locales for the entertainment of others to ensure higher revenues.

The linguistic relation between the multiple locales of the Arabic market brings us full circle, as it presents another side of the concept of space. The Arabic market is unified by a single linguistic form, Modern Standard Arabic, which makes it easy for localisation projects to address the entire market as a whole. This is usually the case for tradition-free products, which facilitate human-machine interaction, and "whose main selling point are based on performance" (Ortiz-Sotomayor 2005). However, cultural-bound products, which are "deeply rooted in national, local or sub-cultural traditions" (ibid), require more focused localisation projects and an additional level of domestication. Accordingly, regional dialects offer a more appropriate medium for localisation which invalidates the linguistic unification created by Modern Standard Arabic.

The findings of this thesis can be further developed in future research on Arabic localisation following similar or different approaches. Undertaking more case studies, based on product-oriented research from a functionalist perspective, will help confirm or argue the findings of this thesis. In addition, Arabic localisation can be examined from an opposite direction, or what can be described as reversed localisation. This means studying localisation projects performed by

local Arabic companies in the service of the Arabic market. These projects move from Arabic to English and cater for non-Arab speakers within the borders of the Arabic market, the majority of whom are not native English speakers but use English as a mutual language of communication. In addition, these projects potentially cater for international companies seeking partnerships with local Arabic companies. This type of research will highlight the effect of local Arabic localisation on the English language. The English produced in the Arabic World is not assigned to a specific English culture. It cannot pass as American, British, Canadian or Australian, because the targeted locale is not clearly defined since it is either cosmopolitan or international.

7 Appendix.1 Transcription of Analysed FIFA 15 Commentary

Real Madrid vs. Barcelona: against computer

First Half

Martin Tyler: this is the Real Madrid line up

Castilla starts in goals

Sergio Ramos plays with Pepe in central defense

Luka Modrić starts alongside James Rodriguez in the middle of the park

Karim Benzema is the lone striker today

Gareth Bale

Benzema

France with Benzema very much to the fore, got of course to the quarter finals of the world cup

Well, the referee has blown for the free kick. I don't think he's gonna produce the yellow card

Xavi

I think for Xavi and the other Spain players, it must've been very hard to work out what went wrong! having lost the lead against the Dutch and then being out maneuvered by Chile and then they were out

And the ball is headed on away from danger

On my final thoughts on that disappointing Barcelona season of 13-14 and the Tata Martino saying good bye, when he got another year in his contract was the way their fans stayed and supported Atletico Madrid or at least appreciated Atletico Madrid who took the title from their grasp in that extraordinary last day

Alan Smith: no

Tyler: it's great sportsmanship

Smith: wasn't it just and... and to see that happen

Tyler: it got to be! Good work by the goal keeper

and Real Madrid get the corner

Oh, in goes the cross! They defended well. It was good looking attacking play too

Big game this for Barcelona! When they want to win, but they know they'll have to give it their all to get that win

That's a decent challenge by the opponent

Corner then for Barcelona! and that's a chance again let's have a quick look at it , we can squeeze it in the save

Smith: oh, there is nothing like seeing a top class save like that

Tyler: if he wants support, he certainly got it in this attack

Well now it's Barcelona's ball with Messi. Got the ball away from the opposition, got to keep it now

Gareth Bale

Bale

The challenge at the back from Mascherano

Gareth Bale

and that has gone out of play with the deflection

Switch for Barcelona and its only because of the injury

Neymar

Not really happened so far for Barcelona

Sergio Busquets

Modrić

Toni Kroos

His 50th cap for Toni Kroos came in in that seven-one win against Brazil and of course he marked it by scoring a couple of goals, exceptional day for him personally and for his country

Piqué

Pedro

He's won possession!

That's good support play from his teammates

It's Rodriguez

Sergio Busquets

Oh, worth the try, looks great when they do come off

Kroos coming in from Cristiano Ronaldo

Very straight forward for the goalkeeper

So, it's half time and we're still waiting for that first goal

Well that has been a long 45 minutes. Not too many goal chances and not too many real passages of play

Second Half

Tyler: let's look at the first half Allen and think of it as a bit of sparing between the teams they've got to get to the nub of the matter now, and it's gonna hot up surely

Smith: Well if these teams want to win this game, yeah they've gonna have to show the hand a little bit more and I think now what'll happen is this half progresses

Tyler: they'll need to try to get the ball back now

And now Iniesta

Looking for Lionel Messi! Here's the chance! And he scores!

Smith: a goal for Messi! Well I've missed a few of these in my time, it isn't as easy as it looks, but he made look easy there, I've got to say

Tyler: but that could change things. The goal we felt we needed has come along.

Smith: it's been a bit dull, a bit dial at times, but goals do change matches. Let's hope for everybody's sake, that's the case here

Tyler: Modric

Good tackle, Dani Alves

And now Messi

Sergio Ramos

kroos keeps it going well

Close, got to be, and there is the goal that puts them level

Smith: a goal for Modric, and what a finish! Hit with real pace into that bottom left

Tyler: Oh, I want to see this again, this goal

Well, we're back at level pegging again at 1-1

Neymar

It's won back

Support arriving to the left

Xavi

and that's a turnover in play

and it was an easy interception

Neymar

and in goes the cross

and it's out of harm's way

in midfield, they've got it back via an interception

Gareth Bale

Substitute ready to come on for Barcelona

Cristiano Ronaldo

Toni Kroos

That's very well read and that's a very good interception

and he's jumped over that sliding challenge

Good strong challenge

Looking for Iniesta.

well, some of the fans there thinking that should be corner. But it's a throw

well when we look back on the game, this will be a key moment. It could work for them, it could work against them this change

Coming up again now Allen, Modric's goal

Rodriguez

Rodriguez, good movement to get to it. But still nothing between these two teams they've given us a great contest here. the next few minutes could be decisive

Looking down at that bench, Barcelona want to make a change now

Toni Kroos

Kroos

Keeping the move going

Brilliant opening, in with a chance

And he's put it into the bottom corner

Smith: a late goal for Benzema and how's about that for composure just dropping his shoulder rolling it into the bottom left

Tyler: so, Barcelona has gone behind

and they've got their new man ready Barcelona to make the change

Barcelona want to do something need to do something now

Smith: well the manager on the side lines has made his intentions clear

Tyler: well that will be a free kick against Barcelona

Iniesta... is off

Kroos

the lead is still intact but only just the fans and a mixture of nervousness and support

here he is with a chance, got to be

still in play here

Defender's done really well to clear that

and that's gone out for a corner for real Madrid. Another chance may be in these late moments

and he's up to head it away

he's lost the ball. and a foul by the Real Madrid man

Well the ref has given a foul here and its bad one yellow

Smith: yeah, no surprise there at all

Tyler: referee has blown his whistle, 2-1 the final score

Well they got there in the end. mighty mighty close! but the right result

Smith: yeah I think that's true Martin yeah they contributed plenty, scored a few goals and just edged it for me.

ريال مدريد ضد برشالونة: ضد الكمبيوتر

الشوط الأول

عصام الثوالي: تتوغل في ثرة مع الوري في سد بني لكرة القدم ليغا اليوم نعرض من خلالها مباراة قمة فهذه تحياتي
عد لم لثولي و لي جاني عبد الحربي

على سحر كرة القدم على روعة الفوت بول الليلة مباراة ليست ككل المباريات معركة هي أم المعارك الحرب

الضروس في عالم الجلد المدورين كبوهم الوسا و بين الكبو في مدريد

بني فقد .. اه ما الي سد يفعله هنا

أوه ما أروع افتكك الكرة هذه

ليو ميسي

بيدرو

الكرة معهم في نصف الملعب

في مكان مناسب للتمرير و الفرصة ما يضيعهاش

مطالبة بركنية لكن الحكم يقول 6 أمتار

قرار مية في المية صح أوف سايت

كريستيانو رونالدو

مدريد بطل أوروبا تشامبونز ليغ 2014 بعد ما انتصر في الفينال برباعية كاملة في ليسبون على فريق الأتليكو في

أول ديربي بنهائيات أبطال أوروبا

عبد الحربي: جلم ذلك طيد ابا ضافة إلى تحقيقه للقب كأس الملك و بالتالي جمع لقبين مهمين بالنسبة له لكنه أيضا يتطلع

في الموسم القادم إلى تحقيق الكثير من الألقاب على المستوى المحلي و تحديدا لقب الدوري

الشوالي: كورة أوت و تعود من ضربة مرمى

الفريق هذا كأنه يقدم الهدايا لخصمه يقوله ما نحبش نلعب خذ الكورة

كأنك في حضرة تنازع حقيقي على الكورة

مارسيلو .. عالية نحو كريستيانو رونالدو

محاولة و تسديدة قوية فرصة ما زالت متاحة رغم تصدي الحارس

فرصة بس توصل الكورة منطقة المرمى، كورة لولبية في ستة أمتار من منطقة مفتوحة

كورة برة الخط ستعود على التماس

جاريث بال

شرف المحاولة نجاح و التسجيل هو أكبر نجاح

تمريرة عرضية و أعلى

يجب أن تكون التميرة

سهلة العرضية اللي كانت للمدافع

هجوم رائع ينتج عنه تمرير عرضي للكورة

لحظات و يتنفذ التماس

تونكيروس.. الخسة ساخنة للتميرة.. يلوم التميرة. هناك عيبين في تمرير جيد لكن قطع الكورة يمنع الفرصة

توني كروس.. كورة تخرج برا الأمان بتعود من سدنة لمتل شو فوا في عادة كيفية إخراج الكورة من المرمى

الحربي: رائع جدا كان في إبعادها

الشوالي: أووه مل الكرة

دفاع حاليا بامتياز

فرصة جيدة لتمرير عرضية أفضل

تسديدة و كورة تمشي في اتجاه المرمى

ضربة ركنية مدريد

ووو

يا على ضياع التميرة كانت كورة في متناوله برفو الحارس

هذا اللاعب متميز ببيل مجهود و علي فتكاك الكرة و استعدادتها

نهاية الفترة الأولى بالتعادل

إن نتيجة للوسط لأول تنتهي على تعادل و الحقيقة إنه فريق من ال

الشوط الثاني

الشوالي: الخمس و الأربعين دقيقة الثانية نتمنى أن تكون ممتازة

كريم بن زيمة

جاريت بيل

جيمس رودريجز

توني كروس

أكيد لدينا فرصة هنا

لعب ساحر جميلة جدا

تمريرة خلفية للحارس

سيرجو راموس

بيبي .. كورة ممتازة يسلم و يستلم مرة أخرى

و كورة ستعود من الركنية للبرصا

الحربي: عرضية جيدة..

الشوالي: تبعد مرة أولى لكن ما زات الكورة في الميدان

حقيقة ملاحظة الفريق يخسر بسهولة كورته

هنا جراءة الحارس و قراءته للعب و الموقف بتاع الكورة خرج في الوقت المناسب من ورا منطقة الجزاء و سبق المهاجم

الحربي جالس رمى □□ يملك للجدولة □□ يجب أن يحمي عرين أي فريق، استم

الشوالي: المدافع يغير اتجاه الكورة و يغالط مرماه .. الجمهور غاضب بعد هذا الهدف أوه جول ضد مرماه حقيقة غضب

جماهيري كبير

كريم بن زيمة

لوقا مُدريتش

جيمس رودريجز

□□ ستحواذ يتواصل على الكورة في كورة ثنائية

أوه ما أروع افتكاك الكورة هذه

مارسلو

لوقا مدينتش

جميس رودريجز

كورة ممكنة

الحربي: أوه الدفاع كان ضعيف

الشوالي: من هذه المسافة يحاول يسجل جول يتقدم يسجل هدف التعادل

أخيرا سَجل هدف بعد جملة من المدوّات و التسديدات عالمرمى

الحربي عمّر ائعة جداول حة محاولتهم .. ان لفظ لحو الُ يدتثرو اهذه المدوّات و يسجلون الهدف

الشوالي: إنيسنا

توني كروس

جميس رودريجز

يجتهد للحفاظ على الكورة لكن الصراع قوي

سيرجو راموس

تسليم و استلام و الكورة يبدأ فيها أتاك

لوقا مدينتش

توني كروس... بيبي

ممتازة كانت الكورة يبدأ فيها هجوم

كريستيانو رونالدو

شرف المحاولة نجاح و التسجل هو أكبر نجاح

خرجت للكورنر و ربما هي لحظة الحسم

محاولة و تسديدة قوية كورة ممتازة يوقفها الحارس

ما زال البرصا حريص على التقدم في النتيجة

ملغ و و مشكل الكورة عند الحارس

الحربي: الدليس يدفع لويقه ثمن نتصار في تصديه لأهم الكرات

الشوالي: جيمس رودريجز

كريم بن زيما

توني كروس

في وقت قاد الهدف يساوي انتصار

بعد شوط عظيم يأتي وقت الهدف

الحربي: كنا نلملم الأوراق على الأهداف المقسمة بين الفريقين

الشوالي: أخيرا تبوح المباراة بكل أسرارها

Manchester United vs. Manchester City: against a friend

First Half

Martin Tyler: Manchester is lined up today

Joe Hart stars in goal

Aleksandar Kolarov stars with Pablo Zabaleta in the full back positions

David Silva plays today with Samir Nasri looking to provide width

In attack Sergio Agüero joins up front with Edin Džeko

This is then the Manchester United line up.

David de Gea starts in goal... a heads it... off target

They'll get it back here, and Evans... Sergio Agüero

If Sergio Agüero hadn't picked up an injury during the competition, just think that maybe Argentina would had a little bit more to offer

In with a chance

Made the save, but the ball is still there

Oh.. that's an own goal

Alan Smith: Well, it comes territory doesn't it when you're in that kind of position

Tyler: Well, we restart here with a post-mortem still going on at the back having considered their own goal.

Fernando... and now he'll get it back again

Nasri

Manchester city winning the league in 2012 and they were new kids on the block then, Allen, and perhaps in 2014 they did very well 'cause more was expected of them

Smith: Well, yeah that comes with territory to what Manchester United across the town have coped with all these years under Sir Alex Ferguson and what you have to do if you want to dominate, and they've certainly got the funds to do that. They're gonna be around the top of their game now, I think, for many years to come

Tyler: And now across from Samir Nasri

And the player hasn't had to move very far to get that ball

Touré...

Kolarov...

Manchester United have won the ball back here

And he has a go, it's not a decisive save

Well, he saw the guy could switch the play to, and came up with a pass as well. Excellent!

Challenged quickly by the opposition and that is now a goal kick

Wayne Rooney...

That's offside and the referee has acknowledged that fact

Silva... Well they've got to keep the ball better than this because that's just a giveaway to the opposition

And by Manchester United's high standers this hasn't been a great start

Here is Rooney.

It's big time for Wayne Rooney now, disappointed of course to be part of that England failure in the world cup of 2014

Johnny Evans... And over the bar with the header

Smith: Well, unlucky! He's not missed by much, but it was a chance for him

Tyler: Wayne Rooney

Kolorav

Here is van Persie

Fellaini

What a chance here, here is shot

In midfield, they've got it back via an interception

Yaya Touré

Samir Nasri has played it waywardly here it's cut out easily

Shaw

Ander Herrera

Fernando

It's a return ball

Silva

They will be trying to put those couple of weeks out of their minds the Spain players like David Silva, in Brazil in the world cup finals

Wayne Rooney

Demichelis

Silva

Fernando

Here is van Persie

Wayne Rooney

Well, the referee has signaled for half-time and it's one nil here

Second Half

Tyler: And setting the ball rolling for the second half Manchester United

Sergio Agüero

Mata

Yaya Touré

They've set it up well for the cross

Touré

And the shot is on, oh got in the way... great block

Fellaini

Here is Rooney

This could be a chance, got to be! and they score the equaliser.

Smith: An equaliser from Juan Mata and talk about placing it. He knew exactly what he wanted to do with it

Tyler: Well, we're back at level, begging again at 1-1

Sergio Agüero

Mata

And now, it's with Wayne Rooney

Trying to find Fellaini... chance for him

Fernando

And he's dispossessed

Goodness! They needed him then to clear that

Shaw

Referee says play on, gives Manchester United the advantage

Silva

Agüero

Fellaini

Edin Džeko... and he gets it back again quickly. Opportunity here! And they've scored! It's no goal, the flag is up

Smith: It's certainly a well worked move, but denied by the assistant

Tyler: Jones

Fellaini

Robin van Persie

Now Rooney... That's a poor touch and the possession is gone away

Out wide at the moment is van Persie

Good tackle

Touré... That's a real tassel for the ball

Pablo Zabaleta

Fernando

He's controlling the play here. His teammate just borrowed the ball

Got to be! Still a chance after the save

Nasri

Real thrills in this match and we might have one more decisive thrill to come. Five minutes left

We're in the dying embers of the game, but it's still anyone's match

Smith: Well, he's walked around that defender without trying

Tyler: And he can take possession in his own half

Mata

Dangerous to the defenders, it's Robin Van Persie

Here is the chance!

Agüero

Well, the 90 min is up now, and the scores are level.

مانشستر يونايتد ضد مانشستر سيتي: ضد صديق

الشوط الأول

عصام الشوالي:محدثكم همد لم لثو لي يكلمكم و يعطى على مبل اة بلد تد □□ اتحاد

يعود الدربي من جديد، دربي الشمال، دربي مانشستر

اليونايتد، جولدن سيتي، في مباراة من نار و كسر للعظام بين الكبيرين

ع بد□ □ الحربي: دربي مشتعل في هذا المساء

دربي كبير جدا لمدينة مانشستر بشيقتها الأحمر و الأزرق

الشوالي: كل شي جائز

كل شي في بواذر□□نطلاق و اللحظة تنطلق المباراة

الحدث المباراة المرتقبة نتمنى نستمتع بماتش من أعلى طراز

واين روني

ألكساندركو□□روف

مارتن ديميكيليس

أغويرو

يايا توريه

ألكدانر كو□□روف

طبعا مانشستر سيتي هو بطل إنجلترا، مرتين ياخذ... قلة تركيز أول المباراة و ضربة مخالفة في مكان صعب

الحارس يتألق في إرجاع المخالفة

الضغط متواصل، ركنية

كورة كانت قريبة جدا من دخول المرمى و تجاوز خط النهائي للمرمى

أليس كلك ع بد□ □؟

تكنولوجيا خط المرمى يمكننا التأكد بأن الكرة لم تعبر الخط في اللعبة الحربي: صحيح عصام كانت قريبة جدا لكن بفضل
الماضية

الشوالي: غيرك ما يلزمنيش

غيرك مافيش

منك اثنين ما شفناش

مش ممكن

حللى و□□ أروع

أندير هيريرا

ماتا

فينسنت كومباني

بابلو زاباليتا

يايا توريه

إيدين دزيكو

تسديدة عرضية

حارس يتصدى لكن الخطورة مازالت قائمة

حقيقة لعب ذكي و لعب تكتيكي عرف كيف يعترض الكرة الأخيرة مش يفكها

واين روني

روبن فان بيرسي

أندير هيريرا

كرة في ... فان بيرسي

ماتا

تسديدة و كورة تمشي في اتجاه المرمى

بابلو زاباليتا

دافيد سيلفا

يايا توريه

الفريق هذا كأنه يقدم الهدايا لخصمه يقوله مانحيش نلعب خذ الكورة

سمير نصري

فينسنت كومباني

هذا □□ عتراض قد يخفف...

شرف المحاولة نجاح و التسجيل هو أكبر نجاح

هدف رائع

مازال السكور في فريق اليونانيد

مارتن ديميكيليس

ألكس انتر □□ روف

مروان فيلايني

روبين فان بيرسي

ماتا

صراع ثنائي كبير على الكرة

يايا توريه

أندير هيريرا

إيدين دزيكو

دافيد سيلفا

روبن فان بيرسي

بابلو زاباليتا

اعتراض في منطقة الوسط

أوه صل

يايا توريه

لويس أنطونيو بالينثيا

ماتا

واين روني

□ □ على روعة التسجيل

هدف فيه برشا هدوء فيها برشا ثقة في إمكانياته

حتى الكورة بعيدة عن الجول كبير

الحربي: لن أقول ذكاء بل أقول خبث كروي في التعامل مع هذه اللقطة من اللاعب، يا أخي وش تبيني أقول

الشوالي: فيرست هاف ينتهي على أفضلية مانشستر يونايتد

هدف مهم جدا خارج الديار

الفوق □ □ ن بلس تو

الحربي: و هذا يعطيهم أفضلية مطلقة بصراحة في شوط المباراة الثاني إنهم يتراجعون للدفاع و يحافظون على هذه النتيجة

الشوط الثاني

الشوالي يحكم المبل اتصيد و للشوط الثاني يبدأ □ □ ن

سمير نصري

كان تَخلو الكورة و ترجعله يبدا الهجوم أون دوس

أغويرو

ماتا

أندير هيريرا

مروان فيلايني

واين روني

من هذه المسافة يحاول يسجل جول

مش ممكن... بكل بساطة رائع جدا

هذا هدف بالفعل جيد يا بدي □ □

الحربي: من الصعب جدا على حارس المرمى أن ينقض مرة أخرى على الكرة لذلك قام بالتصدي في المرة الأولى و لكن في المرة الثانية عليه أن يرى الكرة تسكن شباكه

الشوالي: واين روني

مروان فيلايني

الكرة معهم □ □ ن في نصف الملعب

ألكساندر كوكوف

تركيز مميز و الدفاع يقطع الكرة

مروان فيلايني

يبدا فيها هجوم لوندو ممتازة كانت الكرة

مروان فيلايني

يجتهد للحفاظ على الكرة لكن الصراع قوي

لما قتل الكرة كل في محله ظل انه سيخفف سد ببطء على فويقه و □ □ عبيه

كرة في الرواق

رؤية و تمرکز رائع من اللاعب □ □ عتراض الكرة و افتكاكها

محاولة للتسديد تبعد مرة أولى لكن مازات الكرة في الميدان

تسرّع و الكورة في الزاوية

ألكساندر كوكوف

روبن فان بيرسي

تسديدة و كورة عالجول

كورة في [1] وت بعد ما ضربت في اللاعب
ركنية جديدة لفريق مانشستر
كورة ضربت فيه و خرجت تماس
عشاق مانشستر يونايتد يضمنون الفوز لفريقهم الليلة
نعم في ر لبي ع [2] تشجيع جماهير الشياطين الحمر كك من لبل [3] نتصار اليوم
الحربي [4] أستبعد أن للجمهور أثر كبير على نتيجة المباراة على إثر أنه شجع باستمرار في طوال دقائق المواجهة لذلك تمكن
المانو من أن يحرر [5] نتصار
الشوالي هذا اللاعب متميز بيل مجهود و علي [6] فتكالك الكرة و استعدادتها
كورة برة الخط ستعود على التماس
أندريه هيريرا
في مكان مناسب للتمرير و الفرصة ما يضيعهاش
دفاع أمامه و يسدد
كورة ضربت بالقائم و خرجت برة
أغويرو
مروان فيلايني
تم اعتراض الكرة في وسط الملعب
ماتا
وضعية مناسبة و سانحة للتسديدة
ضربة ركنية من أجل هدف آخر
نهاية اللقاء على فوز المانيو
إذن في أعقاب مباراة قوية و قوية جدا
مبلاة ينظرها للجمهور كل سنة مرتين من خلال النهل و [7] ياب
أظن هذا اللقاء أعاد فيه الكلمة الأخيرة للفريق.

Al Hilal vs. Al Etihad: against a friend

First Half

Martin Tyler: Well this is how the home team shape up

And the first half is underway here

That's the kick-off

Didn't hesitate, did he with that challenge

Here's the chance

And that was just bubble on through to the goalkeeper

Al Qahtani

Excellent positioning, and the interception is made

Al Qahtani

Attacking now

Got to be

He scored

Alan Smith: What a first-time finish that is! Really did swing he's boots at it

Tyler: Well, that's the first goal of the game

It's one-nil

Diakité

Fallatah

Al Dossary

Al Qahtani

Diakité

Ah, beautifully done the back heel

They tried to steer it in with a volley

And the goalkeeper very much on his game today

In midfield, they've got it back via an interception

Got passed his man

Al Qahtani

And quickly back to his feet
Shot's on here
And they celebrate an equaliser here
An important goal for them here
They are level
We're all level again
One-one the score
Unmarked now, he's lost his marker
Well, they're in a good position here
Al Shamrani
And it was an easy interception
He could be in
That's how to tackle
Thiago Neves
He's got space... in with a chance
That was an easy decision for the assistant...
It's offside... he's gone too early
Al Shamrani
Makes a challenge here
Keeps it going
Chance for it... got to be
Oh, miss!
Al Qahtani
Thiago Neves
Well, that's a clever pass
This could be a chance
Here's the chance
Oh, fantastic goal

Smith: And that's a wonderful sight, for he knew exactly where the keeper was and in fact he couldn't get there

Tyler: Well now it's 2-1

Al Shamrani

And that is half time, and we've reached it at 2-1

It was very well contested first half...

Second Half

Tyler: and now the second period, the second half is on the way

Get his foot in there

Al Qahtani

Smith: It was an easy save, because he was able to plot the path of the ball all the way into his hands.

Tyler: Tiago Neves

Al Dossary

Tiago Neves

It's a chance, and here's a shot

And it's off the post and behind

Al Qahtani

And in he goes with a tackle

That's a real tussle for the ball

In with a chance

Yes! The equaliser

Smith: And that's wonderful, wonderful technique to just feather it into the bottom of the line

Tyler: Superb game! This is what, really from the neutral point of view, we always want to see. Who knows who's gonna win this now!

Well, this attack has a bit of a menace to it

Giving the ball away now

Al Shamrani

And he's dispossessed

Diakité

He might be through

Got to be

He might be needed again the goalkeeper

Now, that will be a corner

Diakité

In no danger is the goalkeeper, he can just come out and pick this up

Marquinho

Here's the cross

I think we've got the possession stats so far for you coming up on the screen

Smith: nothing just slip the two sides, this is when you're looking for somebody to pick up a hole, create a pass, create a goal

Tyler: Al Shamrani

no advantage here, the referee stopped it for offside

they've got the ball in the middle of the pitch here

Al Shamrani

and that's got to have a bit of a word from the referee, Alamour

Al Dossary

Nice back heel then

Time is ticking away, and it still could go either way..

He could be in

He's in here, here's a chance

It's a chance well taken

And they now lead the game

Smith: And he would have enjoyed that. Don't think he scored many better. The composure to place it to the left

Tyler: And that's a goal well worth analysing again

3-2 on the score board now

It could be dangerous

Time is ticking on

Dangerous moment... in with a chance

And there it is! Late on, but it is the equaliser

3-3 on the score line.

الهلال ضد د [] اتحاد: ضد صديق

الشوط الأول

عد لم للسولي : للحكم يوشر إلى انطلاقة المباراة إلى الكيف في لقله منظر جملة و ملائنة هنا في مدرجت [] ستاد و بالتالي ننظر الوجبة و [] ثارة هذا ما نتمناه

صراع قوي على الكرة

فهد المولد

أحمد عسيري

كرة سهلة و بالتالي استخلاصها يكون أسهل

حصلوا على الكرة [] ن شوتها على المرمى

فرصة و جوروول

بداية بقبلة أولى أول تسديدة و جول

ع ب [] : لعبها لب فوق حارس المرمى إلى الزاوية البعيدة و ارتدت من القائمة للشباك

عصام: مازال التقدم في السكور للهلال

تياجو نيفيز

أووه ما أروع افتكالك الكورة هذه

مختار فلاتة

كرة ممتازة يسلم و يستلم مرة أخرى

تسديدة و كورة عالجول كورة و تسديدة بعيدة عن القائمة

ع ب [] : صحيح بالها من مهارة، فعل الأشياء الصعبة و حينما أتى الشي السهل أخفق فيه

عصام: سلمان الفرج

ظن قورا الدليس بالخروج من مظقة الجزاء [] رجاع الكرة كان قرار جريء و شجاع

ع ب [] : بالفعل عصام أتفق معك قرار في غاية الجرأة و الشجاعة و جاء مناسب في الأخير

عد لم: هذا هو الهلال ع ب [] الفريق الذي تأسس ألف و تسعمئة ... يحتاج ديم الكرة خاصة تسديدة عالمرمى تبعد مرة أولى

لكن مازالت الكورة في الميدان

تسبل لخر يتنفذ □□ن

تياجو نيفيز

ياسر القحطاني

كورة تقطف في نصف الميدان

بلمتيل الدفاع الهجوم □□ يسجل

ياسر القحطاني

مختار فلاتة

فهد المولد

تياجو نيفيز

ناصر الشمrani

فهد المولد

كأنهم يقدمون الكرة هدية للفريق الخصم

يوو قد يكون لدينا فرصة هنا

فهد المولد

كورة سنلعب من الركنية للإتي

شو فوا نخدوا □□ علاة □□ن الهدف المميز اللي اتسجل

من ركنية قد يأتي الجديد

كانت في طريقها للكورنر لكن الحارس استبعدها من الزاوية

لقد ذهب

أحمد عسيري

تياجو نيفيز

كورة ثنائية سلم و استلم مخالفة موجودة و الحكم يقرها

كورة مخالفة و تنفيذها بسرعة

ناصر الشمrani

فهد المولد

ياسر القحطاني

شرف المحاولة نجاح و التسجيل هو أكبر نجاح

بعد 45 دقيقة أولى ننتهي أصدقائي المشاهدين

الشوط الثاني

بداية الشوط الثاني

أحمد عسيري

محمد نور

ممكن يفكر بالتسديد من هنا

تياجو نيفيز

مواجهة كبيرة جدا من أجل الكرة

تسديدة تعلق العارضة

خطأ قاتل من الجول كبير هدية تالك

محمد الشلهوب

محمد نور

تياجو نيفيز

إنه باتجاه المرمى

فرصة مازالت متاحة

الحكم يشير إلى نقطة الحداشر متر

ضربة جزاء محتسبة

الحكم يعلن القرار لدير البينالتي و القرار التأديبي الرد كارد و بالتالي بتلعب منقوصة عدديا و ممكن تقبل هدف و بالتالي أمل العودة يظهرلي شوية صعب

عبدالله: و أنا طدق ذلك ياخذ لم كل آخر عاب حظه سيء طرد و ضربة جزاء

عصام: التنفيذ يتقدم و يسجل

ركلات الجزاء كما تعرف مش بكل مباراة يحصلها الفريق لذلك استغلالها كان مطلوب و اللاعب ما عندوش مشكل في النجاح في البينالتي

عبدالله: تمكن من تحقيق مقولة 99% من ضربات الجزاء كهدف و استطاع أن يسجل

عصام: أسامة الحربي

عبد الفتاح عسيري

ناصر الشمراني

كورة في حيلة نلي اتحاد

عبد الفتاح عسيري

كورة تمشي باتجاه الحارس كانت كورة في متناوله برافو الحارس

حقيقة ملاحظة الفريق يخسر بسهولة كورته

كورة مميزة إلى العرض

أحمد عسيري

محمد نور

تياجو نيفيز

ياسر القحطاني

فهد المولد

وحده منفرد

رؤية و تمرکز رائع من اللاعب □□ عتراض الكرة و افتكاكها

تسديدة و قوية كانت لكن فوق العارضة

كان يمكن أن يكون هدف من بعيد و لكن خائته شوية الدقة

ع ب□ □: كورة كانت قوية لكنها ذهبت عالية جدا

عصام: قراءته الكورة كانت ممتازة هذا اللاعب رائع يعجبني

تسديدة و كورة عالجول التسديدة لم تكن موفقة و الكورة في البرة أوت ضربة مرمى

محمد نور

عبدالفتاح عسيري

ياسر القحطاني

شكلى □□ صابة فيها تمزق عضلي

أکید لن يكمل المباراة إذا بالحق تمزق عضلي

...كان ممكن يكون

انتهت المباراة إذن صافرة الحكم تنهي الماتش المثير هذا المساء

الفوز ع ب□ □ بنقص عددي هل نعتبره بطولة

ع ب□ □: بكل تأكيد لأنهم قدموا ملحمة في هذه المواجهة

عصام: بعد مباراة شيقة كالمعتاد اتقم بالكر لعبدا □ حتى المرة القلمة هذا عهد لم للدولي يد تودعكم □ □ و يقولكم

إلى اللقاء.

8 Appendix.2 Blackboard Learn Questionnaire

This questionnaire is part of a PhD research conducted at Cardiff University, the school of Modern Languages. This is a short questionnaire which requires few minutes to complete.

1. The questionnaire aims at understanding the linguistic environment in which lecturers/students use Blackboard Learn. Your consent on participating entails answering questions about your linguistic choices when using the software, your opinion on the clarity of its message/meaning and your linguistic background. The information provided will be used for academic purposes only.
 - I agree to participate.
 - I do not agree.
2. Have you received training on using Blackboard Learn?
 - Yes.
 - No.
3. What was the language in which the software operated during the training session?
 - Arabic.
 - English.
4. Do you use Blackboard Learn as part of your academic communications with your students/lecturers?
 - Yes.
 - No.
5. Why yes?
 - Its use is compulsory.
 - It is easy to use.
 - It presents an organised and documented tool for communication.
6. Why not?
 - It is difficult to use.
 - I prefer face-to-face communications.

7. When did you start using Blackboard Learn?
- This is my first year.
 - Two years ago.
 - Three or more years ago.
8. How often do you use Blackboard Learn?
- Very often (almost every day).
 - Often (three to two times a week).
 - Moderately (once a week).
 - Rarely (less than once a week).
9. How do you describe your competency in using Blackboard Learn?
- Expert (perform sophisticated tasks without assistance).
 - Intermediate (perform basic tasks but need assistance for sophisticated ones).
 - Beginner (I almost always need assistance).
10. In which language do you operate Blackboard Learn?
- Arabic.
 - English.
 - Both.
11. Why do you choose this language?
- It is the language of my modules.
 - It is the official language of Blackboard Learn in my university.
 - I prefer to use this language.
 - English is the lingua franca.
 - This is the language I use for studying.
 - This is the language in which I can understand the content of Blackboard Learn.
 - The text books are offered in one language but the teaching is in another.
 - The Blackboard learn content is partially translated into Arabic.
 - Using this language allows me to practice it.
 - Other
12. In case you face a technical problem while operating Blackboard Learn, do you read the

instructions provided?

- Yes.
- No.

13. If yes, rate the clarity of the instructions provided?

☆☆☆☆☆

14. If no, why not?

- It is difficult to find where the instructions are located.
- The instructions are not clear.
- It is easier to ask for assistance from a friend or the Blackboard Learn team.

15. What is your role in your academic institution?

- Lecturer.
- Student.

16. Which of the following Blackboard Learn functions do you find the most difficult to use?

- Create learning module.
- Create calculated column.
- Needs grading.
- Goal performance.
- Grading schemas.
- Import package/view logs.
- Other.

17. Why do you find it/them difficult?

- It is difficult to operate.
- I can't find its settings.
- I don't often use it.
- Its instructions are not clear.
- The term used to describe it does not clearly refer to its function.
- I don't understand the stated functions because I use the software in English.
- Other.

18. Which of the following Blackboard Learn functions do you find easy to use?

- Assignments.
- Announcements.
- Discussion board.
- Performance dashboard.
- Send email.
- Course copy.
- Course reports.
- Other.

19. Why do you find it/them easy?

- It is easy to operate.
- I often use it.
- The term used to describe it clearly refer to its function.
- Its instructions are clear.
- Other.

20. Which of the following Blackboard Learn functions do you use more often?

- Create item.
- Create learning module.
- Create lesson plan.
- Course copy.
- Move files to create files.
- Announcements.
- Assignments.
- Tests, surveys and tools.
- Course reports.
- Other.

21. Does the system allow you to change the terms you find ambiguous with clearer or common ones?

- Yes.
- No.

- I can discuss them with the system administrator because s/he is the one entitled to do such changes.
22. Do you understand the following phrases: book marks, high contrast, filters?
- Yes, they are clearly referential.
- Not quiet, they don't have clear meanings but I acquired them from operating the software in Arabic.
- I don't understand their meanings but I associate them with their functions.
- I don't understand these terms because I operate the software in English.
23. Can you differentiate between: module structure and module themes?
- Yes.
- No.
24. Do you understand the following phrases: notification settings, high contrast, starter posts?
- Yes, they are clearly referential.
- Not quiet, they don't have clear meanings but I acquired them from operating the software in Arabic.
- I don't understand their meanings but I associate them with their functions.
- I don't understand these terms because I operate the software in English.
25. Do you know which tools is referenced by the term: glossary?
- Yes.
- No.
26. Can you differentiate between download and upload?
- Yes.
- No.
27. In general, do you find the language in which you operate Blackboard Learn communicative?
- Yes.
- No.
28. If yes, rate the clarity of Blackboard Learn content?

☆☆☆☆☆

29. If no, why?

- I am not used to operating software in this language.
- Some words are ambiguous or uncommon.
- The sentences are poorly structured.
- The meaning is not clear.
- Other.

30. Can you differentiate between link and link? (the two Arabic versions of the term)

- Yes.
- No.

31. Can you differentiate between total and weighted total?

- Yes.
- No.

32. Do you understand the following phrases: package, view, set?

- Yes, they are clearly referential.
- Not quiet, they don't have clear meanings but I acquired them from operating the software in Arabic.
- I don't understand their meanings but I associate them with their functions.
- I don't understand these terms because I operate the software in English.

33. Your mother tongue is:

- Arabic.
- English.
- Other.

34. The language in which you completed your education:

- Arabic.
- English.
- Both.
- Other.

35. Academic discipline:

36. They type of your university:

- Public.
- Private.

37. Your age:

38. Gender:

- Male.
- Female.
- Other.

39. City:

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