THE ROUTLEDGE COURSE IN
TRANSLATION ANNOTATION

ARABIC-ENGLISH-ARABIC

ALI ALMANNA

The Routledge Course in Translation Annotation

The Routledge Course in Translation Annotation: Arabic-English-Arabic is a key coursebook for students and practitioners of translation studies. Focusing on one of the most prominent developments in translation studies, annotation for translation purposes, it provides the reader with the theoretical framework for annotating their own, or commenting on others', translations.

The book:

- presents a systematic and thorough explanation of translation strategies, supported throughout by bidirectional examples from and into English
- features authentic materials taken from a wide range of sources, including literary, journalistic, religious, legal, technical and commercial texts
- brings the theory and practice of translation annotation together in an informed and comprehensive way
- includes practical exercises at the end of each chapter to consolidate learning and allow the reader to put the theory into practice
- culminates with a long annotated literary text, allowing the reader to have a clear vision of how to apply the theoretical elements in a cohesive way

The Routledge Course in Translation Annotation is an essential text for both undergraduate and postgraduate students of Arabic-English translation and of translation studies.

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Arabic-English-Arabic

Ali Almanna

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Introduction

The Routledge Course in Translation Annotation: Arabic-English-Arabic is an academic textbook. The book is initially designed for those whose mother tongue is either Arabic or English and who have some knowledge in both linguistics and translation theories. As such, the intended readership for this book is postgraduate (MA and PhD students) and advanced BA students along with their translation instructors throughout the world. PhD students in translation and intercultural studies may also benefit from this book. Further, students of applied linguistics and contrastive studies may well benefit from the book. Nowadays, there are a great number of universities in the UK, United States, Canada, Australia and the Arab world that encourage MA students to translate and annotate their own translation in place of writing theses. The book is aimed at:

- raising awareness of the pitfalls specific to Arabic-English translation;
- increasing translators' competence in both translation practice and translation annotation; and
- developing and honing translators' competences (be they linguistic, translational, contrastive or evaluative).

The number of translation programmes grows exponentially worldwide at academic institutions, and teaching translation theories in a direct link with the actual act of translation (practice) has moved to centre stage in the translator education, particularly in the UK and the United States, but also worldwide. Despite this, translation students, in particular those who work on the language pair (Arabic-English), commonly complain about the scarcity of relevant translational data, in view of the fact that the entire Arab world often use one language pair (English-Arabic) in translation studies and translation practice. Further, despite the large number of translation programmes (at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels) worldwide, very few academic publications take the language pair (Arabic-English) as their focus. Here are some:

- *English-Arabic/Arabic-English Translation: A Practical Guide* by Basil Hatim published by Saqi Books in 1997.
- *Thinking Arabic Translation* by James Dickins *et al.* published by Routledge in 2002.

- *Translating Irony: An Interdisciplinary Approach with English and Arabic as a Case in Point* by Raymond Chakhachiro published by Sayyab Books Ltd in 2011.
- *Advanced Issues in Arabic-English Translation Studies* by Mohammed Farghal published by Kuwait University Press in 2012.
- *Arabic-English-Arabic Legal Translation* by Hanem El-Farahaty published by Routledge in 2014.

Unlike some of the publications mentioned, this book is in both directions (out of Arabic and into Arabic) and does not confine itself to a particular text type or a perspective. This book is different because it does not only conduct a linguistic analysis of translated texts at different levels, but it deals with theoretically informed perspectives from a practical point of view. That is, it employs current translation theories and other related perspectives and approaches to inform the actual act of translating based on ample textual data taken from authentic examples.

The idea of this book initially grew out of my students' clear need for a coursebook on translation annotation, as there is little published material on how to annotate their own translation and comment on others'.

The key features of the book

- It provides the readers (be they translation students or translation researchers) with a theoretical framework for annotating their own translation.
- It links some translation theories with the actual work of translators (be they trainees or professionals).
- It strikes a balance between theory and practice by linking theoretical claims to authentic translational data, thereby helping translation trainees/students annotate their own translations.
- It provides the readers with precise definitions of the terms that focus on the various processes and stages of the mechanisms of annotation and their relation with other terms in the field.
- It provides the readers with a list of recommended readings and resources for each of the topics under discussion.
- It provides the readers (be they students or instructors) with a range of supporting exercises.

The organization of the book

The organization followed in this book is a top-down one, starting from the macro level (such as text type, genre, readership and the like) to micro level such as local strategies (Chapter 3), grammar (Chapter 4) and lexical and phraseological choices (Chapter 5). Due to the strong tie between some local strategies discussed in Chapter 3 (such as transposition, modulation reordering, and so on) and grammar, grammatical issues are discussed before lexical and phraseological issues. However, the organization of Chapters 5 through 9 is largely hierarchical. The discussion starts with issues such as lexical and phraseological choices (Chapter 5) and grows in complexity, thus discussing issues such as textuality (Chapter 6), register (Chapter 7),

pragmatics, semiotics and stylistics (Chapter 8) and culture and ideology (Chapter 9) – all these issues being viewed through the prism of translation. Finally, a text is translated and annotated (Chapter 10) in an attempt to provide the readers with a clear vision on how to annotate a whole text by integrating together and applying the theoretical elements presented in this book.

Notes on how to use the book

The book user, depending on his/her area of interest, expertise, research question(s) and so on, can select the chapters that respond to what they are looking for. For example, if they would like to translate a text from language *A* to language *B* and annotate it from, let us say, a pragmatic perspective, then they can go to Chapter 8 in this book and start familiarizing themselves with the area. However, sometimes translation students want to translate texts and annotate them from different perspectives, without confining themselves to a particular perspective. Then, in this case, they need to examine the entire book in search of forming a holistic picture on the main areas that may be annotated while translating.

Two key notations are employed when discussing translational data in this work:

- **comment**, which is used when commenting on others' translations (be they published or translated by others for the purpose of the current study);
- **annotation**, which is used to refer to the translations suggested by the author of this book.

The course is intended to fit into an academic timetable lasting 1 year. Each chapter needs at least 6 hours. Some of the assignments provided at the end of each chapter, apart from the first chapter as it focuses on defining the key terms, will be done at home whether individually or in group, depending on task *per se*. However, some other practical activities can be done in class under the supervision of the instructor. Instructors are also invited to adapt the examples and exercises that suit their individual purposes. Once a given topic is explained and understood, alternative texts can easily be used by both instructors and students.

Unless stated otherwise, the original texts and translations offered by others appear in the book in the way they do in the original publication, without any postediting on the author's part.

Each chapter has a wealth of features, such as an overview under the title *'In this chapter . . .'* outlining the main points and key terms as well as illustrative examples and some suggested activities.

The book does not confine itself to one direction but focuses on translations in both directions: translating from Arabic into English and *vice versa*. It features original materials taken from a wide range of sources, including:

- literary texts
- journalistic texts
- religious texts
- legal texts

- technical texts
- advertisements

Further, materials related to this course can be obtained directly from *The Routledge Course in Translation Annotation* website at www.routledge.com/cw/almanna. The materials include:

- PowerPoint slides
- Further reading links
- Further assignments
- More research questions
- Further annotated texts

Main abbreviations used in the book

SL	source language
ST	source text
SLC	source language culture
TL	target language
TT	target text
TLC	target language culture

Transliteration system

The following Arabic transliteration system has been consistently employed throughout this book:

Arabic	Transliteration	Arabic	Transliteration
ء	’	ط	*ṯ*
ب	b	ظ	<u>z</u>
ت	t	ع	‘
ث	*th*	غ	gh
ج	j	ف	f
ح	<u>h</u>	ق	q
خ	*kh*	ك	k
د	d	ل	l
ذ	*dh*	م	m
ر	r	ن	n
ز	z	هـ/ة	h
س	s	و	w
ش	*sh*	ي	y
ص	<u>s</u>	ا / ى	a
ض	<u>d</u>		

Vowels

Arabic		Transliteration
— َ–	fat<u>h</u>ah	a
—ِ–	kasrah	i
—ُ–	<u>d</u>ammah	u
١	alif	ā
َي	yaa'	ī
ُو	waaw	ū

Notes

- In the case of (—ّ–) *shaddah,* a consonant is doubled.
- The names of Arab authors whose works have been published in English are spelled as they appear on the publication without applying this transliteration system.
- Any Arab names that appear in quotations follow the transliteration system of the reference quoted and not the one listed here.
- Some names remain as they commonly appear in English and are not transliterated to avoid confusion: Mahfouz, Mohammed Choukri and so on.

1 Annotation – defining matters

In this chapter . . .

In this chapter, an attempt is made to reach a precise definition of the term 'annotation' focusing on the various processes and stages of the annotating mechanisms and such related terms as 'commenting', 'assessing', 'revising', 'editing', 'proofreading' and so forth on the one hand and placing the terms concerned in their right place according to Holmes's map. Further, another attempt will be made to show that annotation, like other translation activities, is characterized by subjectivity. The question that will be implicitly addressed in this chapter is: Can subjectivity be kept to a minimum?

Key issues

- Annotation
- Assessment
- Comment
- Criticism
- Evaluation
- Reviewing
- Revision
- Subjectivity
- Textual profile

Place of annotation and related issues

The whole discipline is divided into two main branches, viz. 'pure translation studies' and 'applied translation studies' (Holmes 1970/2004: 172–185; also discussed in Toury 1995; Baker and Malmkjær 1998; Munday 2001/2008/2012; Hatim 2001; Hatim and Munday 2004; Chakhachiro 2005 among others). The former deals with theoretical and descriptive studies, whereas the latter focuses on issues, such as translator training, translator aids and translation criticism. The

Translation Studies

'Pure'   'Applied'

Theoretical   Descriptive

General Partial   Product Process Function   Translator   Translation Translation

Oriented Oriented Oriented   Training   Aids   Criticism

Medium   Area   Rank   Text-type   Time   Problem
restricted   restricted   restricted   restricted   restricted   restricted
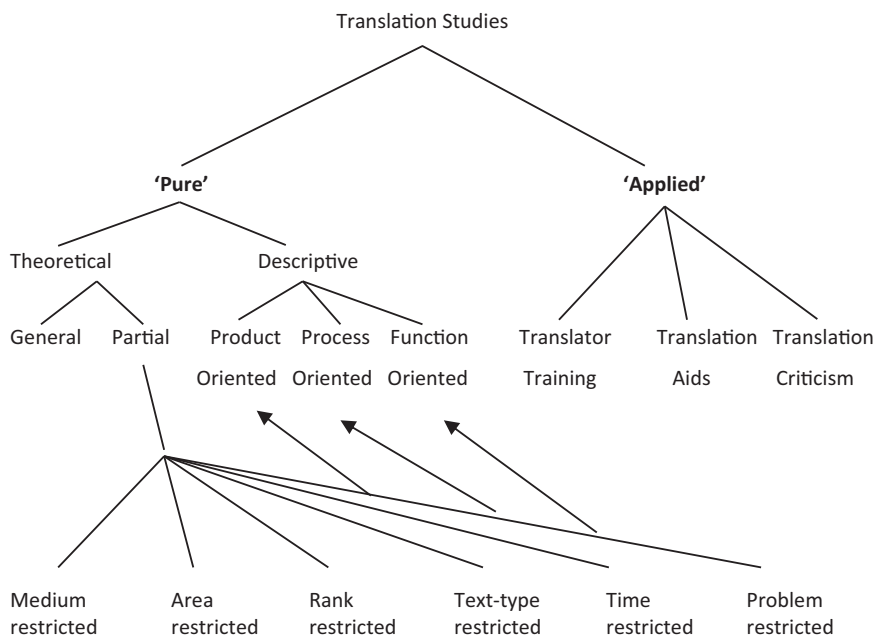
Holmes's basic map of translation studies (Toury 1995: 10)

figure above, received later from Gideon Toury (1995: 10), clearly shows these categories.

As the central focus of this study is on annotation, comment and other related issues, such as reviewing, assessment, evaluation and so on, attention is intentionally centred on applied translation studies, in particular translation criticism in the sense Holmes (1970/2004: 181–183) uses the term. As far as translation criticism is concerned, it is further subdivided by Holmes into revision, evaluation and reviews of translation. What is of greater importance, here, is that translation criticism (be it revision, evaluation or review) is retrospective in nature, and so are annotation and comment our main concern in the current study. Translation criticism utilizes principles of contrastive analysis, yet it is not aimed at studying differences between two languages. Rather, it focuses on equivalence or 'matches' and 'mismatches' between the source text (ST) and target text (TT). In spite of using similar principles and concerning themselves with the relationship between the ST and TT, the use of revision is concerned with the 'whys', whereas translation criticism concentrates on the 'whats' and 'hows' (Chakhachiro 2005: 227–228).

Building on the premise that translation criticism is conducted retrospectively, one cannot avoid adopting parameters that may be considered mainly subjective when conducting annotation, comment or comparative analysis (cf. Lauscher 2000; Reiss 2000; House 2001; Chakhachiro 2005). However, the reviewers' comments

and translators' annotations need to be systematic in order to control their own subjectivity and achieve consensus about an outcome.

Annotation is different from revision, reviewing, proofreading, editing, assessment or evaluation in the sense that annotation is conducted by the translator him/herself while facing a particular problem. The purpose of annotation is to defend the choices made by the translator; hence the importance of sensitizing trainee translators to the existence of such controversial issues and the local strategies that may be invoked to accommodate them. In the main body of the translation, the ST and TT can appear on facing pages, with notes at the bottom of the page (footnotes) or at the end (endnotes), but they do not have to. It seems likely that the majority of the notes will be on the translation side (be they on translation strategies, language role, aspects of pragmatics, aspects of textuality, cultural aspects, stylistic aspects or semiotic aspects; see next chapters in this book). However, the original text may be annotated also, especially with regard to grammatical difficulties or ambiguities.

When the text has already been translated, especially if it has been translated more than once, the annotations may also provide examples of the other translated versions. It is entirely appropriate to refer to translation theories where this provides a clue to the justification of a certain approach. An annotated translation should have a brief introduction presenting the text, indicating its interest and explaining what kinds of difficulties it might present. Getting this introduction just right is important: A short background to the original text and its author needs to be given by the translator prior to embarking on the actual act of annotating. Further, when the ST is in any way uncertain, an explanation needs to be provided of which text has been used or how it was determined. This applies particularly to older texts but not exclusively so. The introduction might well address the problem of what a translation is, dealing with some theoretical points and suggesting particular problems inherent in translating between the two languages concerned or dealing with the text type (for more details, see next chapter).

Annotation and related issues

Linguistically speaking, annotation derives from the verb 'annotate', which means to add explanatory notes, supply a work with critical commentary or explanatory notes or provide interlinear explanations for words or phrases. Its synonyms include 'comment' (cf. Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English 1987/1995: 33). However, in this study, a distinction is made between the term 'annotation' and its synonym 'comment'. While 'comment' is used when commenting on others' translations, 'annotation' is used to refer to the critical notes offered by translators on their own translations. Further, annotation should not be confused with a translation with a lot of footnotes and/or endnotes. As such, annotation can be envisaged as a reflection. To sum up, annotation for translation purposes is used to explain the decisions taken by the translator. Obviously, therefore, they should not be used sparingly in this case, as the absence of a note might be taken as indicating that a difficulty or obscurity had not been properly understood.

When doing translation-oriented analysis in order to annotate one's own translation or comment on somebody's translation, one needs to distinguish between obligatory features and optional features. Obligatory features involve choices that must be followed by the translator in order to satisfy the rules imposed by the target language (TL) system, without which the translation will be ungrammatical. However, optional features represent cases in which the translator can exercise real choice by deciding on one translation option rather than another/ others. Annotation is needed by translators when translating a segment that leaves them with more than one option to follow. In this case, the translator starts a series of actions, including analyzing the ST, highlighting the elements that need to be reflected in the TT and prioritizing among the competing elements. Hence the need for annotation to persuade their readers that they are aware of other options but opted for this particular local strategy or a combination of many local strategies in rendering the text at hand for a particular reason. Annotation is a common method of reflection.

With regard to revision, scholars' views on revision can be reduced to two main perspectives:

1   the revision should be conducted by a person other than the translator (cf. Dickins *et al.* 2002; Samuelsson-Brown 2004; Chakhachiro 2005; British Standards Institution; Mossop 2007a, 2007b; Robert 2008 among others) and
2   the revision should be conducted by the translator him/herself (cf. Sedon-Strutt 1990; Sager 1994; Yi-yi Shih 2006; Mossop 2007a among others).

Building on the assumption that everybody agrees a translator has to check his/ her own work before submitting it to a client and/or translation project manager, this binary subdivision is rather fake and ambiguous.

As for identifying the *persona* of the reviser, it is strictly connected to identifying the moment in time at which the revision process has to be carried out; in other words 'who' is the reviser also depends and is interrelated with the discussion on at 'which level' of the translation process revision is expected to take place. According to the BSEN15038:2006 standard (British Standards Institution 2006: 11), revising translation is a compulsory stage in a professional and quality-oriented translation process at its macro level, and it should be conducted by a person other than the translator. Mossop (2007a: 6) speaks of two types of revision: unilingual and comparative revision. When conducting a unilingual revision, the reviser focuses on the TT as a text in its own right in order to determine any unidiomatic and incorrect use of language, any textual errors and the like and only checks with the ST occasionally. This procedure is similar, to a certain degree, to what an editor does (see editing later in this section). When conducting a comparative revision, the reviser, however, checks the TT in terms of accuracy and completeness by comparing it with the ST (cf. Rasmussen and Schojoldager 2011: 90). When the procedure is conducted by the translator him/herself, it is not revision anymore; it

is named checking by BSEN15038:2006 standard (British Standards Institution 2006: 11):

> On completion of the initial translation, the translator shall check his/her own work. This process shall include checking that the meaning has been conveyed, that there are no omissions or errors and that the defined service specifications have been met. The translator shall make any necessary amendments.

Checking, in the sense BSEN15038:2006 standard uses the term, is labeled 'self-assessment' by Santos and Gomes (2006) and 'self-revision' by Mossop (2007a, 2007b). Santos and Gomes (2006: 49) stress: "In essence, every individual performs self-assessment"; here they talk about self-assessment that is conducted by the person on his/her work, so the level of the process is a micro level. This ability of self-assessing, as they indicate, "may contribute to the self-construction of a trajectory that allows him/her to overcome obstacles". Self-assessment "is a competency that is worth constructing" in order to sidestep a "spontaneous assessment" with a view to having "an intentional control system regarding one's performances" (Santos and Gomes: Ibid.).

Regardless of the term used, there are two different procedures at the macro level of the translation process: one is conducted by the translator him/herself and the other is conducted later by a person other than the translator. In translation studies, a variety of terms have been used to refer to these two procedures. The former has been termed 'checking' (Graham 1989; Samuelsson-Brown 2004; British Standards Institution 2006), 'self-revision' (Sedon-Strutt 1990; Yi-yi Shih 2006; Mossop 2007a, 2007b), 'self-correction' (Mizon and Dieguez 1996) and 'self-assessment' (Santos and Gomes 2006), while the latter has been termed 'revision' (Sager 1994; Brunette 2000; Lauscher 2000; Dickins *et al.* 2002; Chakhachiro 2005; Yi-yi Shih 2006), 'other-revision' (Mossop 2007a, 2007b), 'bilingual revision' (Horguelin and Brunette 1998 cited in Robert 2008) and 'revision of translation' (Sedon-Strutt 1990). However, in the current study, they are termed 'checking' and 'revision', respectively.

The processes of revision, whether conducted by the translator him/herself, that is, checking, or conducted by other than the translator, that is, revision, involve a qualitative, heuristic decision making (cf. Wilss 1996; Chakhachiro 2005).

Having distinguished between revision (i.e., a procedure conducted by someone other than the translator) and checking (i.e., a procedure conducted by the translator him/herself), now let us turn our focus of attention towards other terms, such as 'assessment' and 'evaluation'. 'Assessment' and 'evaluation' have been used by a great number of scholars as synonyms of each other, although this has not been clearly indicated (cf. Maier 2000: 137). Lauscher (2000: 162) roughly defines "evaluation as a procedure in which an evaluating person compares an actual target text to a more or less implicit, 'ideal' version of the target text, in terms of which the actual target text is rated and judged". In the light of the definition provided by Lauscher, this procedure "consists of three elements which influence judgement: the evaluating subject, the object, the model target text" (Ibid.).

Annotation, revision and evaluation/assessment share the fact that they are all bidirectional and, also, require the person who annotates/comments/revises/assesses to comprehend the content of the ST, identify the challenges that a translator may face and be aware of the available local strategies that a translator may opt for.

However, they differ in their own purpose. The purpose of annotation, as stated, is to defend the choices made by the translator. However, the evaluation/assessment seeks "to measure the degree of efficiency of the text with regard to the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic function of ST within the cultural frame and expressive potentials of both source language and target language" (Al-Qinai 2000: 499). Revision, for its turn, is part of a quality-control process, aiming at ensuring translation quality (cf. Chackachiro 2005: 225). Also, revision differs from assessment/evaluation in the sense that revision always occurs during the translation process at its macro level, while assessment/evaluation may happen during the translation process at its macro level or at times after submitting the translated text to the translation teacher, translation project manager, client and so on. When the client him/herself evaluates the TT by comparing it with the ST, the process is called validation (cf. Robert 2008). The text can only be validated if it has been assessed and evaluated as 'fit for purpose', 'adequate', 'appropriate', 'faithful' or in line with the specs for the job as commissioned.

Further, revision, proofreading and editing are different in the sense that revision is a bidirectional process on bilingual texts while both proofreading and editing are unilingual. Proofreaders normally concern themselves with language-related issues, such as spelling, punctuation, grammar and so on. By contrast, what concerns editors is how to achieve the "optimum orientation" of the proofread and revised TT to live up to the target reader's expectations (Graham 1983: 104) by exploiting the lexical, syntactic and stylistic norms of the TL to the fullest. In this regard, Mossop (2007a: 120) lists four criteria that should be taken into account by translation editors. They are posed in the form of questions that editors should ask themselves:

1   Are there some parts of the text which will not be of interest to the target readership?
2   Do several paragraphs have to be eliminated to make the text fit into the allotted space?
3   Is the writing lively and interesting? A translation may be accurate, idiomatic and authentic, but nevertheless make for rather dull reading.
4   Is the content appropriate to the genre? (Mossop 2007a: 120)

In his list of criteria, in particular the first one, it seems that Mossop, focusing on the translation of governmental papers to be used in the workings of institutions and departments, does not concern himself with literary texts. However, in an attempt to distinguish between editing and rewriting, Mossop (2007a: 30) rightly comments:

> When editing, you start from an existing text and make changes in its wording. Sometimes, however, the existing text is so badly written that it is easier