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Challenges and Solutions to Translating Multilingual Literary Texts between Identity Custody and Translators' Creativity: The case of Farah CHAMMA's Poem Translation 'I Am No Palestinian'

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In the modern world, Globalization, Colonialism, Technology, Politics and Economy have changed many cultural identities and contributed to the appearance of multilingual literature. Code-Switching could occur in different institutional languages, slangs, dialects, and sociolects; so, translators should find strategies to tackle this literary phenomenon and preserve the source text identity. But how could the translator (who is a reader and a transmitter at the same time) deal with these types of literary texts? And how could he/she produce a target multilingual text that preserves the identity and the magic expressed in the source text? The multilingual text is a specific genre of literature which combines two or more languages in the desire to express a multilingual and multicultural reality inherent to a particular group of individuals. Multilingual Literature appeared for the first time during the Middle Ages, but it was called originally Macaronic literature. The term 'Macaronic' is commonly used to indicate any hybrid language that mixes the vernacular with Latin. This mixture was frequent during the Middle Ages in all romance literature. Macaronic literature is therefore a phenomenon that represents the cultivated, highly educated and sophisticated categories of society like academics, novelists and poets. However, translators who used to identify the translation as an inter-linguistic transfer between two formal systems (source and target institutional languages) have faced obstacles in working with multilingual texts in which the author uses code-switching as an alternative to reflect the unfair categorization of people and registers in modern societies). This paper aims to examine the different strategies proposed by Venuti, Cincotta, Bojanin, Qoates and other scholars to transfer the code-switching device in the literary texts; and eventually proposes an integrated strategy that will preserve the code-switching aspect in the translation process, namely in Farah CHAMMA's poem 'I am No Palestinian'. Our strategy aims at creating such equilibrium between the translator's creativity and identity losses, which will allow the target reader to be an active participant in the understanding process and revealing the otherness of the source text. The poem of Farah CHAMMA is chosen as a case study in this research, because it reflects the human being struggle for independence and freedom. However, the independence in this context does not mean the liberation from the colonizer who enters with his armed forces and military weapons to your country, the colonizer nowadays enters your brain through globalization, migration, media, internet, and all these factors contributed to the fusion of the traditional notion of identities. The Islamic Arabic identity is contaminated by the French, English, Spanish, German, Italian, Christian and Jewish identities due to this kind of colonialism which destroys all the identity and patriotism fundamentals such as: ethics, religion, thought, and of course language. This is why Farrah writes in her poem that she had lost her language and all the Arabic Palestinian identity that comes with, she masters many foreign languages but her mother tongue. She thinks, acts and does like the British, the French, The Portuguese poets and artists do, but she just knows little tales about the Palestinian poet Ziad RAFFIF who defends the Palestinian issue in his literary works. So, the poet Farah Chamma used the multilingualism in her poetry to draw a picture of the struggle that exists within herself, and to show us how a language can embody an identity with all its features. The multiplicity of identities may create a new identity for the



writer of the source text. Thus, the translator will not deal anymore with all the different cultures that belong to the languages of the text, but he must instead, discover the new identity of this community that uses this kind of speech system i.e., the Code-Switching system.

Mots clés

Code-Switching,
Traduction,
Multilinguisme,
Multiculturalisme,
Identité, Sociolecte,
Dialecte,
Littérature
macaronique.

Résumé

Dans le monde moderne, la mondialisation, le colonialisme, la technologie, la politique et l'économie ont changé beaucoup d'identités culturelles et ont contribué à l'apparition de la littérature multilingue. Ce genre spécifique de textes littéraires combine deux ou plusieurs langues dans le but d'exprimer une réalité multilingue et multiculturelle inhérente à un groupe particulier d'individus. Par conséquent, les traducteurs qui identifiaient la traduction comme un transfert inter-linguistique entre deux systèmes formels (langues institutionnelles source et cible), ont repéré des obstacles en abordant des textes multilingues dans lesquels l'auteur utilise le Code-Switching comme une alternative pour refléter la catégorisation opprimée des populations et des registres dans les sociétés modernes (Sous-groupes et Sous-langues VS groupes et langues dominants). Le Code-Switching se concrétise dans différentes langues institutionnelles, argots, dialectes et sociolectes ; ainsi, les traducteurs doivent trouver des stratégies pour défier ce phénomène littéraire et préserver l'identité du texte source. Cet article vise à examiner les différentes stratégies proposées par Venuti, Cincotta, Bojanin, Qoates et d'autres chercheurs pour transférer le dispositif du Code-Switching dans les textes littéraires ; et éventuellement proposer une stratégie intégrée qui préservera l'aspect de ce phénomène dans le processus de traduction, notamment dans le poème de Farah CHAMMA "I Am No Palestinien". Notre stratégie aspire à créer un tel équilibre entre la créativité du traducteur et les pertes d'identité, qui permettra au lecteur cible d'être un participant actif dans le processus de compréhension et de révéler l'altérité du texte source.

1. Introduction

In a growing world, where people are relishing the impact of globalization, technological development and scientific flourishing on modern life, there is still a category of people who tries to track its origins and look after the different stories of race and inheritance. In the literary world, some novelists and poets decided to reflect on the psychological struggle from which a particular group of individuals suffers, and express the pain of lost identities through multilingual literary texts. Subsequently, the multilingual literary texts represent a natural phenomenon that echoes the coexistence of communities with different linguistic backgrounds, cultures, and religions, whether the coexistence was involuntary as in the case of colonization and immigration, or voluntary like in the linguistic exchanges among borderline communities. Regardless of the motives that push the author to use multilingualism in his writings, we cannot neglect the marvel aspect of this type of text and the comprehension difficulties that readers face when



reading these works. So, how could the translator (who is a reader and a transmitter at the same time) deal with these types of literary texts? And how could he/she produce a multilingual translation that preserves the identity and the magic expressed in the source text?

This paper aims to limelight the challenges that face the translator while dealing with multilingual texts, especially poems (our case study), and proposes a translational strategy that will maintain the phenomenon of Code-Switching and uphold a certain parallelism between the source text and the target one which allows a better reflection and interpretation of the author's soul and identity. First, we give an overview of the multilingualism system in literary writings using a psychological approach to seeing why this category of writers chooses this system in the literature. Then, we examine the definition of translation according to Derrida and Lewis to understand how a translator treats a multilingual text when he is transferring two (or more) languages in a target language. Finally, we suggest solutions for the translation of multilingualism (the code-switching) in the selected poem by using Venuti's 'foreignization' in order to achieve a similar effect in the target text and a better understanding of the code-switching phenomenon in the source text and what this operation entails.

2. Multilinguality, Multiculturality, Sociolects and Identity

All humankind was communicating in the same language until they decide to build a big tower that would reach heaven and challenge God; so the latter decides to confuse and mix their languages so that they cannot understand each other. That was the Babel Tower myth which explains the diversification of the languages. Nevertheless, as translators, we do not need to know how or why languages are dispersed; but we need to know how to deal with these differences and this multilingualism.

Multilingualism refers to an "active, completely equal mastery of two or more languages" (Braun, 1973). But the concept itself of 'mastery' is ambiguous, because it is a relative thing. The definition and the degree of fluency and understanding are different from one person to another. Franceschini defines multilingualism as "the product of the fundamental human ability to communicate in several languages. The operational distinction may then be drawn between social, institutional, discursive, and individual multilingualism." (FRANCESCHINI, 2011) In this definition, he distinguished between the different types of multilingualism and showed the strong relationship between language and society. Although Franceschini has made a distinction between social, individual, formal, and informal registers of language, we find that all these elements are connected in one way or another because the society in which individuals live is the cradle of languages. Society is also the moderator of thoughts and discourse; it is the one who decides what is formal -institutional- and what is informal -discursive- and that is what we call Arbitrariness.

Arbitrariness is the fact that a group of individuals in a society agrees to give an appellation or a designation to a sign or a concept. "In human languages, the most of signs used are neutral rather than motivated by the nature of the meanings they communicate"



(Arnonin & singleton, 2012, p. 12) For example, Arab people decided to give the appellation “بدر” to designate the full moon. Nevertheless, since language is a complex human activity, we have different uses of the same sign depending on extra linguistic elements such as cultural, civilizational, historical, and religious backgrounds. Thus, Arab people use also the word ‘بدر’ to speak about beauty so they say: بدر البدر أو جميلة مثل البدر.

But Arab people in the Egyptian society use another expression to speak about beauty; they say (قمر 14). This means the full moon too. So, here we can speak about sociolects which is a variety of vernaculars in the same language (Arabic in this case). The Arab culture has also a religious background for the word ‘moon’. It is the moon split phenomenon (حادثة انشقاق القمر) which is one of the miracles of the prophet Mohamed (peace be upon him).

According to Durrell, a sociolect “involves both passive acquisition of a particular communicative practice through association with a local community, as well as active learning and choice among speech or writing forms to demonstrate identification with particular groups.” (Martin, 2004, p. 200) Therefore, all those extra-linguistic elements (such as culture, religion, history, sex, age, etc) which belong to a specific society, create what we can call ‘Sub-languages’ that contain different dialects and accents in the same mother language. Each sub-language will characterize a minority of people in the big community.

From this standpoint, each minority could help in the enrichment of the mother language by producing new words and notions by using human creativity; creativity which “enables us to produce and understand an indefinite number of utterances which we may have never heard, read or used previously and which have a flexible relationship to stimuli and contexts.” (Arnonin & singleton, 2012, p. 13) Whilhem Von Humboldt had presaged Chomsky’s previous sentence when he said: “Language makes infinite use of finite media.” (Pinker, *The Language instinct: How The Mind Creates Language*, 1995, p. 84)

Chomsky had also spoken about multilingualism and associated it with multiculturalism; he said: “To say that people speak different languages is a bit like saying they live in different places or look different.” (Chomsky, 2000, p. 43) This implies that a language is a place, a language is a history, and a language is a way of life; in summary, language is culture. The culture “allows the speaker to learn the language from oral expression in the environment and the usage that follows cultural rules- we learn not only to speak but also who can or cannot say what, when, and where.” (Filep, 2009, p. 1)

Thus, the multilingual individual should not master only the rigid linguistic system of language, but he must learn the languages in their contexts which means; with all their cultural codes and devices.

Hence, multilingualism requires multi-communicative competence in all the language components including the cultural context. So, we must understand that “what is appropriate for a situation in one culture may not be so in another; indeed, it is important



to recognize the different sources of situations that exist across cultures.” (Hornberger & McKay, 2006, p. 90) Those cultural situations could also be influenced by the process of taboo contamination. Researcher Ouahmiche said “The process of taboo-contamination participates in one way or another in the disappearance of the innocent or non-taboo sense of a word.” (Ouahmiche, 2002, p. 74) Thence, multilingualism necessitates multiculturalism. And since each culture has a specific identity, we can easily establish the relationship between the aforementioned duo and the multiple identities.

Halliday proposed a functional approach to language; thus, he sees that “every text created by a language user involves interpersonal, ideational, and textual functions... These functions have to do, respectively, with social relationships and individual identity.” (Halliday, 1970) Therefore, the multilingual speaker must juxtapose the different identities of the several languages that he uses to well command Code-Switching in his communicative process. Thus, if we deal with 3 languages (Arabic, English, and French as in our case) in code-switching, we must not only master the grammar and the syntax of those three languages; but we should act, think, and do as the people of those different societies do.

3. Challenges of Translating Multilingual texts

Multilingual Literature appeared for the first time during the Middle Ages; but it was called originally Macaronic literature. The term 'macaronic' is commonly used to indicate any hybrid language that mixes the vernacular with Latin. This mixture was frequent during the Middle Ages in all romance literature. Macaronic literature is therefore a phenomenon that represents the cultivated, highly educated and sophisticated categories of society like academics, novelists and poets. This Elite tried to create a magic language “Une langue abstraite, fabriquée de toute pièces, mais suivant des règles rigoureuses”. (Garavini & others, 1982, p. 40) The process was not a rough improvisation, but a conscious artistic form of communication and identification.

The macaronic phenomenon takes its origins in Northern Italy in 1519, where people used to speak a lot of kinds of languages: the mother language (langue de chair) Italian, the **Tuscan**¹ (which was the language of art and literature at that time), the Latin language, and other dialects that reflected the local culture of each region in Italy. (Garavini & others, 1982, p. 41) This amalgam of languages helped the flourishing of the multilingual literature and its expansion all over the other European countries especially France where ‘Molière’ has presented a macaronic work titled ‘Le Malade Imaginaire’ as ‘Michel Beaujour’ has done also in his work ‘Le jeu de Rabelais’.

If the macaronic literature was concerned with mixing the Latin language with the dialects of the country, the multilingual literature nowadays deals with different languages and dialects at the same time. Thus, it shows more complicated artistic pieces that challenge the translator who aims to transfer those works into other target languages.

¹ **Tuscan** in French language ‘Toscane’ : une région du centre de l’Italie, sa capitale est Florence, abrite une partie de l’art et de l’architecture de la renaissance la plus reconnaissable au monde.



Derrida was the first theorist who raised the problem of translating multilingual texts when he asked the question: “How is a text written at a time in several languages to be translated?” (Chan, 2008, p. 50) Derrida (1985) realized that understanding a source text written in multiple languages is a very tough operation since it reflects many aspects of identity, ethnicity, religion, politics and so on. So, how could the translator undertake this responsibility and produce a target text which echoes the source one with all its characteristics?

Derrida noted that “translation can do everything except mark the linguistic difference inscribed in the language... at the best, it can get everything across except this; the fact that there are, in one linguistic system, perhaps several languages or tongues.” (Derrida, 1985, p. 100) In the following section, we spotlight some of the different challenges that face the translator whilst dealing with multilingual texts.

3.1. Challenge 1: different natures of communicative systems

Language is a whole framework that relies on specific linguistic elements such as sounds, rules of grammar and syntax, images, etc. and extra linguistic elements like culture, religion, race, history, civilization and so on. So, speaking about languages is speaking about worlds that the translator must discover before starting the translating process.

Linguistics “deals mostly with so-called natural languages. A natural language is phonemic language, using the possibilities of respiration, larynx, tongue, oral and nasal cavity to produce articulated sequences of notes and sounds that can be received by the ear and processed by the brain.” (Werlen, 2002) Consequently, the translator, naturally, is not apt to well receive all the sounds and process them in his brain. As an example, the sound ‘قاف’ in the Arabic language could not be reproduced in any other language. The problem is not just in the capacity of reproducing or imitating sounds because each sound evokes a souvenir or a specific image or feeling in the reminiscence of the speaker and that is called ‘Onomatopoeia’.

The Letter ‘قاف’ in the Arabic language, for example, evokes cruelty, strength, hardness, and callousness. All the words that contain this letter in Arabic evoke emotions of pain, problems, torment, anguish, misery, or stiff actions. As expressed in the following words: (قبر، قمع، قصف، قر، قضم، قضم، قرع، ...)

Ibn Djenni (a famous philosopher of the Arabic language) said:

“إن مقابلة الألفاظ بما يشاكل أصواتها من الأحداث لباب عظيم واسع، ونهج متلئب عند عارفيه مأوم، وأنهم كثيرا ما يجعلون أصوات الحروف على سمت الأحداث المعبر بها عنها، فيعدلونها بها ويحتذونها عليها وذلك أكثر مما



نقدره وأضعاف ما نستشعره... فنستعمل القضم للصلب اليابس والخضم للرخو الرطب² (ابن جني، الخصائص، 1/509)

Therefore, how could the translator find equivalents to those words which reflect the power of the letter 'قاف' that does not exist in any other linguistic system? The feeling of a Palestinian person who describes his pain and injury from the Israeli aggression with the Arabic words (قع وقهر وقصم وقصف) can never touch an English or French person if we translate those words into their languages. As perceived in Chamma's poem (أنا مش (فلسطيني) -who is a young Palestinian multilingual poet-, she could not explain why she is not Palestinian, why she is not Arabic although she masters both English and Arabic languages. So, she decides to show us how she cut (قصمت) her mother tongue in half, in the Arabic language. نصبت المبتدأ ولعنت أبو الخبر/ قصمت الضمة التي ضمت ما بيننا.

**I am not courageous,
Fearless, valorous, gallant,
Proud, adventurous,
Selfless patriot
I am a soul in exile
Expressing my thoughts in
All languages but mine
" Hi...I am Palestinian"
" Salut...Je suis palestinienne"
"Oi! Eu sou Palestina!"
I cut my mother tongue
In half
نصبت المبتدأ ولعنت أبو الخبر
قصمت الضمة التي ضمت ما بيننا**

The word (قصمت) is used also in the Holy Quran, with the same meaning in the poem.

(وكم قصمنا من قرية كانت ظالمة وأنشأنا بعدها قوما آخرين) (الأنبياء 11)

² (Ibn ġinī , 1913, p. 509/1)



والقصم في اللغة العربية: قصم الشيء حتى يبين قصمه، يقصمه قصما، فانقصم وتقصم، كسره كسرا فيه بينونة. فهو أبلغ من الكسر، وللقاف مع الصاد سر عجيب. إنهما تدلان على الكسر والمحق والاهلاك³. (محي الدين درويش. إعراب القرآن الكريم وبيانه. 10/5)

In this circumstance, the poet has used the perfect Arabic word in the perfect place to describe the status of the Arabic language and the Arab people at the same time. We can never -as Arabs - disregard the dissection of Arabic countries and the detachment from the Arabic language. In this context, any translation of the word (قصمت) which corresponds to the word (Break) will betray the source text and the original feelings evoked in the Arabic verses of this poem.

3.2. Challenge 2: Multiple Identities or a Unique Disordered Identity?

We have already mentioned above that there is a strong relationship between multilingualism, multiculturality and identity. But we did not define if the multilingual text contains multi-identities or just a magic, creative, disordered identity. In their conventional conception of translation as an inter-linguistic transfer between two formal systems governed by particular and exclusive sets of rules, most translators have seen an obstacle in working with literary texts that combine two or more of these systems uttered by one or different characters within the same speech. This phenomenon of the juxtaposition of speeches belonging to different systems is known as Code-Switching, which is related to and indicative of group membership in particular types of bilingual speech communities. (Auer, 1998)

Therefore, the multiplicity of identities may create a new identity for the writer of the source text. Thus, the translator will not deal anymore with all the different cultures that belong to the languages of the text; but he must instead, discover the new identity of this community that uses this kind of speech system i.e., the Code-Switching system.

Henry Meschonnic (1999) said: "Une traduction d'un texte littéraire doit faire ce que fait un texte littéraire, par sa prosodie, son rythme, sa signifiante, comme une des formes de l'individuation, comme une forme-sujet. Ce qui déplace radicalement les préceptes de transparence et de fidélité de la théorie traditionnelle, en les faisant apparaître comme les alibis moralisants d'une méconnaissance dont la caducité des traductions n'est que le juste salaire" (Meschonnic, 1999, p. 16).

In an effort to produce the same effect of the bilingual source text, the translator should have a new perception of language; because "no language represents an intact, unified system unaltered by other languages". (Derrida, 1985, p. 122)

Colonialism, Globalization, migration, wars, media, Internet, all these factors contributed to the fusion of the traditional notion of identities. The Arab identity is

³ (darwīš, 1992, p. 10/5)



nowadays contaminated by the French, English, and Jewish identities due to colonialism. Therefore, we cannot talk about Arabs Identity, but rather, about Algerian identity (which is a mixture of Arab and French culture), Egyptian identity (which is a mixture of Arab, Pharaonic, and English cultures), and so on.

Hence, when the translator tries to transfer a multilingual text written in Arabic and French, for instance, it is no need for him to learn about the Arab culture or about the French one to detect the identity of the text. But he must discover the Algerian identity which is neither Arabic nor French. The Algerian individual loves to mix some French words with his speech (because this reflects high social educated and wealthy class); but at the same time, he curses French politics, culture and history. The Algerian, hurries to the mosque to pray and worship God, as he hurries to the confectioner's to obtain the French pastry (la buche) on New Year's Eve. Thus, The Algerian Arab has a specific culture and a unique identity; he uses the French with arrogance even though he does not master either French or the Arabic language. The translator in this case, should adapt the target text to all these cultural features. "Adaptation is a very important translation technique. It is necessary when something specific to one language culture is expressed in a totally different way that is familiar or appropriate to another language culture. It is a shift in cultural environment." (F.Faniran, Oyeniya, & Olusanya, 2022, p. 316)

According to Stratford (2008), "A l'air de la mondialisation, les populations se mélangent, les frontières s'effacent et les littératures se diversifient au rythme des migrations." (Stratford, 2008, p. 459) Thus, effectively we can speak about a disorder that affects the communities' identities. This disorder lets the individual torn, disoriented, bamboozled and perplexed regarding his real identity, roots and origins. Since we have accepted – voluntary or not- to live in this world that has undergone aggressive changes as a cost of globalization and colonialism, we must assume that these changes will also affect our literature, civilization, history and so our identity.

3.3. Challenge 3: Great Languages and Sub-languages

The human kind uses language to communicate and establish such coexistence among dissimilar populations throughout the world; that is 'initially' the primary aim of using language. Nonetheless, this dissimilarity of tongues creates categorization in language. So, if many famous scientists belong to or write in a particular language, we attribute this fame and this scientific character to their language and we tag it as a 'scientific language' such as in the case of English. On the other hand, if there are some 'religious' persons who speak the same language, we also tag their language as a 'religious language' as in the case of the Arabic language. Also, we tag the French language as a literary language because there are many famous written pieces from the old ages in French, though science, literature and religion are found everywhere and speak all languages.

So, we can say that the human being has stereotyped language as if thought dependents always on words. "Do people literally think in a language... Or our thoughts



are couched in some silent medium of the brain- a language of thought, or Mentalese?" (Pinker S. , 1995, p. 56)

Mentalese, which means thoughts are represented in the mind without words, evokes the concept of language equality. Lewis (2003) argues that "...the notion of language equality, which originated in western civilizations – Latin served as a model for the standardization of languages such as Spanish and French." (Lewis, 2003) But, since Latin faded away and four diversion languages have appeared (French, Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese), we cannot speak any more about that unified language, nor about equality; because now we face four different identities, cultures and histories which have been developed and flourished in different circumstances and environments. These different circumstances have created diverse levels of economy, wealth, and scientific progress. Even geography (we mean by that, the borders of countries that have been changed due to colonialism) had a great impact on the categorization of languages.

Referring to Soja's definition of mental space of cognition or representation, "geographical names, for instance, should also tell us something about the construction and representation of territorial identities. This is highly interesting in multilingual or multicultural regions, where the reconstruction of linguistics, culture and ethnic or national differences is manifesting itself geographically. (Soja, 1989) Therefore, geography could have a delicate role in establishing language categorization when the naming of a space or a place has political significance and expresses power relations amongst neighbouring countries or between majority and minority populations in a specific area. That is why Chapdelaine and Lane-Mercier argue that "Sociolects are definable by sociable, cultural, economic, and institutional criteria." (Chapdelaine & Lane-Mercier, 1994, p. 7)

Indeed, we speak about great languages and sub-languages. This fact depends on how greatly the country is powerful, rich, developed or not. In these circumstances, the most powerful language is the greatest and the dominant one in a specific area, the other languages used in the same space are sub-languages or just considered as sociolects. For instance, in the USA the dominant language is English, and Spanish is regarded as a sublanguage. In France, French is the dominant language but (Corse, Basque, and Breton) are sub-languages. In Algeria: Arabic is the dominant language, and languages of Amazigh people like (الشاوية والقبائلية والتارقية والمزابية) are considered as Sub-languages.

When dealing with Code-Switching, the translator must know all the sublanguages that exist in the dominant language of the source text and the target one (which is a very hard challenge) in order to find a loophole to transfer a multilingual text.

"Il s'agit de rendre compte des valeurs, des croyances, des constructions identitaires, des compétences et des pratiques qui, connotés par l'emploi de telle unité linguistique non standard, signalent l'appartenance à un (sous) groupe précis...(ils) témoignent en même temps de l'inscription de sujet parlant/écrivain dans son époque- c'est leur dimension historique-, de leur proximité plus ou moins grande par rapport à la



langue officielle et, partant, aux instances de pouvoir- c'est leur dimension institutionnelle-, des fluctuations axiologiques, éthiques, identitaires que son aptes à subir les unités linguistiques d'une langue donnée selon qu'elles sont employées par un locuteur de tel ou tel (sous) groupe- c'est leur dimension fonctionnelle." (Chapdelaine & Lane-Mercier, 1994, pp. 7-8)

4. Potential Solutions for Translating a Multilingual Text

It is obvious that the translator of a multilingual text will face a lot of challenges as stated in the aforementioned section, and of course, the solutions "of the translator's dilemmas are not to be found in dictionaries, but rather in an understanding of the way language is tied to local realities, to literary forms and changing identities. Translators must consequently make decisions about the cultural meanings which language carries, and evaluate the degree to which the two different worlds they inhabit are 'the same'." (Simon, 1996, pp. 137-138)

The decisions that the translator should take while translating a multilingual text vary from one theory to another. This paper tries in the section below to highlight the different solutions given by translation theorists to preserve the characteristics and the identity of the multilingual sauce text.

4.1. Cincotta's Solutions

Cincotta (1996) argues in her research paper "that there are 'of course' only four possible solutions to translate code-switching:

- Make no distinction between the two different source languages and keep the entire text in the same target language.
- Keep the transfer in the original source language, i.e., the original second source language.
- Use a slang or colloquial form of the main target language.
- Find another language or dialect, i.e., a 'second' target language for the passage." (Cincotta, 1996, pp. 2-3)

Although Cincotta proposes four alternatives to translate the Code-Switching, she preferred to use the fourth solution to preserve the text identity and the author's intention: she said: "the fourth solution keeps the code-switching and it is not limited to a particular linguistic register or geographical manifestation of the target language itself, it can respect the intention of the author himself when he chose to make use of a linguistic transfer." (Cincotta, 1996, p. 3) Therefore, Cincotta wants to respect the intention of the source text author, who chooses the use of multilingualism to convey the pain of a minority (un sous groupe) who lives within a majority (Groupe dominateur), and she gives total freedom to the translator and his creativity through her four suggested solutions to create a mirror target text.



There are other theorists who followed Cincotta's point of view such as Hervey, Higgings, and Haywood who proposed to reproduce a mirror effect of the source text by keeping the code-switching device. They see that "at all events, it would be more effective, if possible, to reproduce source text code-switching by code-switching in the target text. (...) Code-Switching is a strategic device used by the author and also by distinguishing the variety of languages used by code-switchers - dialects, sociolects, and even distinct languages. " (Sandor, Higgings, & Haywood., 2008, p. 115)

Nonetheless, Cincotta falls in contradiction when she said: "the target text must depict a difficult balance between faithfulness and creativity." (Cincotta, 1996, pp. 3-4) The four translational suggestions proposed by her cannot uphold faithfulness towards the source text. Also, the strategy of Hervey, Higgings, and Haywood seems to be a negative and weak strategy. Because it does not give real solutions for the translator; it just invites him to use his creativity and preceding acquisitions about the different languages identities to reproduce a target text that resembles the source text, no matter the losses that will affect the target text. Afterward, they advise the translator to reconcile himself with the idea of 'losses' and 'sacrifices' that must occur in any translational process. "When faced with apparently inevitable, yet unacceptable, compromises, translators should choose the strategy of compensation, which will make up for the losses of important features in the source text by replicating these effects approximately in the target text by means other than those used in the source text." (Sandor, Higgings, & Haywood., 2008, p. 28)

If Cincotta's strategy seems to give the translator a loophole through which he can use his creativity and ingenuity while translating multilingual texts, it remains a limited strategy because it does not deal with texts where one of the source languages should be translated into the principal language of the target text. For instance, the case of Shamma's poem (our case study poem) written in English and Arabic and to be translated into Arabic. So how can the translator tackle this problem?

4.2. Coates' solution

Coates proposes a solution to translate multilingual texts by keeping the code-switching and giving more explanation to the target reader to make him familiar with the strange and foreign items of the source text. Coates explains his approach while translating the novel *General Sun* by this saying:

"My solution (if it can so be named) in *General Sun* has been to clarify the tension between the two principal languages intermingled in the novel. The major portion of the text (narrative and dialogue) that is clearly in standard French has been translated into English. The words and expressions that are Kreyol have been kept in Kreyol, changing Alexis's gallicized orthography to standard Kreyol orthography. This is, of course, already an intervention of the translator in that, for Alexis and Haitian readers, it is normal to switch from one level of discourse to another, even in the middle of sentences or clauses, sometimes without even being conscious of the code-switching or mixing...here the strategy of making the Kreyol obvious has the inconvenience, for readers, who are not at



home in the language, of requiring reference to the glossary for individual words and short expressions, or to the footnotes for proverbs and songs. The glossary also includes translations for words in Spanish and Taino” (Coates, 1999, pp. xlvi- xlvi)

Coates (1999) preferred to keep the foreignization of the text expecting that his translation does the same effect as the source text. But at the same time, he does not assume his choice when he decides to add a glossary to his target text to explain the foreign and the odd matters. Coates, himself, recognizes that “the glossary included in his translational solution is ‘somewhat cumbersome’ and it is likely to discourage some readers.” (Coates, 1999, p. xlvi)

4.3. Bojanini’s Solution

Bojanini proposed her solution for translating multilingual texts, while she was translating ‘Nicholasa Mohr’s Rituals of Survival: A Woman’s Portfolio’. She states that the text is multilingual but “it does not present too much code-switching, and when this appears in the text is to remind us of the ‘division cultural de Los personajes’.” (Bojanini, 2008, p. 28) Bojanini admits to the untranslatability of this kind of text due to the presence of code-switching. She explains that ‘it is difficult to reproduce the code-switching in the target text.’ (Bojanini, 2008, p. 28) Thus, she did tackle the challenge of translating the multilingual text by switching to a monolingual text. She translated all the Spanish words that contain the source text into English.

Certainly, Bojanini was ‘disloyal’ when she opted for a monolingual solution and imposed her intervention in the translated text. Thus, she did not allow the target reader to be aware and discover the odd culture and the foreign identity of the source text. She instead, did the job in his place and decided to erase the sub-language (Spanish in this case) with all its significant characteristics which the author of the source text decided to use for a special intention that she claimed to know in her first above-mentioned saying.

4.4. Venuti’s Solution

According to Venuti (1998), “translation is summoned to address the linguistic and cultural difference of a foreign text.” (Venuti L. , 1998 , p. 68) This concept is called ‘foreignization’; it is defined in translation as the transfer of the text preserving all the cultural differences that distinguish languages and differentiate identities. Thus, according to Venuti, the translator should preserve the tang of the source text with all its foreign components, to allow the receiver in the target language to discover the peculiarities and be an active part of the understanding process.

In this regard, Venuti suggests that a “translation should never disregard the ‘dissimilarities’ - a translation must be the place where linguistic and cultural differences are somehow signalled” (Venuti L. , 2008 , p. 246) This implies that Venuti invites the translator to be invisible and not to interfere in the translation process because he will contaminate the source text, the source identity and also the intention of the source author.



The translator, according to Venuti, could never unite the different languages nor tie the divergent cultures; that is why he encouraged the translator to “make the reader discover the gains and losses in the translation process and the unbridgeable gaps between cultures.” (Venuti L. , 2008 , p. 246)

Therefore, the translator of multilingual texts should keep the code-switching device, and assume his choice of Foreignization. He ought not either to give a hand to the target reader to understand the peculiarities as did Coates by his glossary or erase the sub-languages of the source text as Bojanini did in his monolingual solution. “The translator of such a project (that limits the ethnocentric movement inherent in translation) contrary to the notion of ‘loyalty’ developed by translation theorists like Nord, is prepared to be disloyal to the domestic cultural norms that govern the identity-forming process of translation by calling attention to what they enable and limit, admit and exclude, in the encounter with foreign texts.” (Venuti L. , 1998 , p. 83)

So, Venuti prefers that the reader of the translated text (the target text) has the chance to understand (on his own) the story, the characters, the politic, the culture and all the other components of the text in their full linguistic and aesthetic dimensions. Therefore, the translator could keep the strange words or registers of the source text to create the same bizarre feeling through the target text and stimulate the reader’s curiosity to learn about the other. “As for the translation itself, it is possible to follow Christianne Nord’s advice and shift registers. But keep in mind that some foreign words can be intelligible if they are retained in the translation. Words like *bonjour*, *merci*, *adios*, *hasta luego*, *ok*, *good morning*, and many others, some much less common, are understood by readers of translation. It is possible to retain a number of these to suggest the code-switching in the source text.”⁴

5. Translating Farah CHAMMA’s poem ‘I Am No Palestinian’ as a Case Study

This research aims to highlight some strategies to translate code-switching in literary texts. We have chosen **Farah CHAMMA’s** poem ‘**I Am No Palestinian**’ as a case study because first, it is a multilingual text in which the author switches between English, Arabic, French and Portuguese languages. Secondly, the poem debates the key problem of any multilingual writer, which is the loss of a stable identity.

The poet declares that she used code-switching to show how the Palestinian identity is lost nowadays since teenagers master the English language and maybe other European languages while they forget to speak or read in their mother tongue. Finally, we find in this poem the majority of translational problems raised by translation theories aforementioned in transferring the code-switching. For the purpose of our paper, we will regard the mixture of languages expressed in the Code-Switching (English, Arabic, French and Portuguese) and try, while translating the poem into Arabic, to preserve the poet’s intention, already declared, by using the Code-Switching.

⁴ Venuti. Enquiry. « Message to the author. 21 November 2008 (E-mail)



I Am No Palestinian

I am no courageous,
 Fearless, valorous, gallant,
 Proud, adventurous,
 Selfless patriot
 I am a soul in exile
 Expressing my thoughts in
 All languages but mine
 "Hi... I am Palestinian"
 "Salut... Je suis palestinienne"
 "Oi! Eu sou Palestina!"
 I cut my mother tongue in half

نصبت المبتدأ ولغنت أبو الخبر

قصمت الضمة التي ضمت ما بيننا

Palestinian poet
 Rafeef Ziadeh was right when
 She said:
 "Allow me to speak my Arab tongue
 Before they occupy my language as well"
 Well... to that I must add
 Allow me to be the Arab
 That I am
 Allow me my right
 To learn, to travel, to pray
 Allow me to walk through any
 Foreign street without having
 To feel this shame
 Without having to think twice
 About my clothes, my face, my name
 Or the visa
 The goddamned visa
 I had to work
 Day and night for the claim
 Because at the end of the day
 I am not the one to blame
 I am not the one to blame
 For Bin Laden, or 9/11, and all your
 Other schemes and games
 I am just a soul in exile
 I am in no hall of fame



I have to opt to be
 Someone I am not
 Just to fit in your frame
 Despite the agony, I went through
 Despite the struggles I overcame
 Despite the diplomas, the degrees,
 The awards I acclaim
 I am still no Palestinian
 I am still no Palestinian
 No matter how many
 "I love Palestine" stickers
 I stick on my car
 No matter how many times
 I cry over Gaza
 And argue over the Israeli settlements
 No matter how many times
 I curse the Zionists, blame the media,
 And swear at all the Arab leaders
 I am no Palestinian
 Even if I memorize the
 Names of all the Palestinian cities
 Even if I recite Mahmood Darwiche's
 Poetry and draw Handala on my walls
 And even as I stand here today
 In front of you all
 I am no Palestinian
 أنا مش فلسطينية
 And I might never ever be
 And that's exactly what
 Makes the Palestinian
 In me...

4.5. Our translation of Chamma's Poem

أنا لست فلسطينية
 أنا لست بالشجاعة ولا المقدامة ولا الجريرة
 أنا لست بخورة ولا مغامرة
 لا وطنية ولا أنانية
 أنا روح منفية



أعبر عن فكري بكل اللغات عدا لغتي
 "Hi...I am Palestinian"
 "Salut...Je suis palestinienne"
 "Oi! Eu sou Palestina!"
 قصمت لساني العربي إلى شطرين
 'رديت المبتدأ منصوب ونحيت جد الخبر'
J'ai brisé l'étreinte qui nous réunissait
 لقد صدق الشاعر الفلسطيني رفيف زياد حين قال:
 "دعوني أتكلم لغتي العربية قبل أن يحتلوها هي كمان"
 كمان... يجب أن أضيف
 دعوني أخرج العربية التي بداخلي
 دعوني أمارس حقوقي
 أتعلم، اسافر وأصلي
 دعوني أتجول في أي مكان غريب
 دون أن أنجل
 دون أن أفكر وأفكر وأفكر
 بخصوص ثيابي ووجهي واسمي
 بخصوص الفيزا
 اللعنة عليك يا فيزا
 علي أن أعمل ليلا نهارا
 كي اكتسب حق المطالبة
 لأنه في آخر النهار
 لأنه في آخر اليوم
 لست أنا من تلوم
 لست أنا من تلوم
 عن بن لادن أو 11 سبتمبر
 وكل مخططاتك والأعييك
 أنا فقط روح منفية



لست في ساحة الشهرة أظاهر
 لكنني أجبرت على تغيير المظاهر
 فأظهرت شخصا غيري أنا
 فقط كي تتوافق الصورة مع إطارك
 رغم العذاب الذي رأيت
 رغم المحن التي هزمت
 رغم الشهادات والافادات
 والجوائز التي قُدت
 لازلت غير فلسطينية
 لازلت غير فلسطينية
 لا يهم كم أحب ملصقات فلسطين
 التي أدبتها على سيارتي
 لا يهم عدد المرات
 التي بكيت فيها غزة
 وجادلت فيها حول المستوطنات الإسرائيلية
 لا يهم عدد المرات
 التي لعنت فيها الصهاينة وألقيت فيها اللوم على الاعلام
 وقسمت فيها على كل القادة العرب
 أنا لست فلسطينية
 حتى وإن حفظت
 أسماء المدن الفلسطينية عن ظهر قلب
 حتى وإن قرأت شعر محمد درويش ورسمت حنظلة على جدران
 حتى وإن وقفت هنا اليوم
 أمامكم كلكم
 فأنا لست فلسطينية
 أنا مانئش فلسطينية
 وقد لا أكون أبدا



وهذا بالضبط ما يصنع
الهوية الفلسطينية
بداخلي...

4.6. Our Translation Strategies

We have proposed a translational strategy to maintain the Code-Switching phenomenon in Chamma's multilingual poem 'I am no Palestinian' written in four languages (English, Arabic, French and Portuguese). We tried first of all to identify the different types of language in the poem; we found that English was the dominant language and the others were just sub-languages. We have also depicted the use of slang or colloquial language (the Palestinian dialect). This poem is a multilingual piece that collects all the code-switching elements. Then, we identified the target readers, in our case, it is the Algerian audience. The identification of the target reader is primordial to choosing a dialect in Code-Switching while translating a multilingual text.

We decided to keep the foreign sub-languages as they are when translating the first part of the Code-Switching:

"Hi...I am Palestinian"

"Salut...Je suis palestinienne"

"Oi! Eu sou Palestina!"

So, we have opted here for Venuti's solution, since we have some words (Hi, Salut, Oi) that can, according to him, be intelligible if they are retained in the translation. Probably, they are understood by readers of translation everywhere, especially in Algerian society which uses French as a first foreign language and English as a second foreign language. Also, we have the sentence (أعبر عن فكري بكل اللغات عدا لغتي) which prepares the reader to receive the code-switching in different languages.

The poet Chamma has used her Palestinian dialect in this verse (نصبت المبتدأ ولعنت أبو) (الخبر) to show how much she is angry and upset about not mastering her mother tongue. Because the Palestinian dialect is used by Palestinians to reveal intimate issues and show a sense of communitarianism and belonging to this society, as scholar B. Hamamra has stated in his research entitled: *Functions and Translation of Palestinian Dialect in Ibrahim Nasrallah's Time of White Horses*.

"Two language varieties are used in the source text, namely, standard and dialect. Most of the characters use both varieties; they switch between the two varieties depending on various factors. For example, Hajj Khalid and other male characters use both varieties in different situations and with different people. In other words, male characters' use dialect to address women only when they are addressing their family members (a mother,



wife, daughter, aunt, sister, niece, etc.). However, when these men speak to women who are not part of their families, they never use the Palestinian dialect. Thus, Palestinian dialect is used to show an intimate and informal relationship between the characters.” (Hamamra, Qabaha, & Awwad., 2022, p. 294)

Thus, we have chosen Cincotta’s fourth solution in which she advises finding *another language or dialect, i.e., a ‘second’ target language for the passage*. So, we have translated this sentence into Algerian dialect (رديت المبتدأ منصوب ونحيت جد الخبير), because, in the Algerian culture, people cursed the grandfather who is the symbol of the origins and the race to express their anger. We have also translated the sentence (أنا مش فلسطينية) written in Palestinian dialect to the Algerian one (أنا مانيش فلسطينية) to show to the target Algerian reader that the poet has emphasized really that she is not Palestine. That is why she tells the sentence in her dialect rather than the institutional language.

However, when the poet used her Arabic tongue (institutional language not colloquial one) as a sub-language, while the target language is also Arabic (the case that Cincotta has denied in her solutions), we decided to translate the verse (قصمت الضمة التي) into French (j’ai brisé l’étreinte qui nous réunissait) because French is a sub-language for the Algerian people as academic Arabic is a sub-language to the poet who masters the English language as a mother tongue.

Finally, we argue the translation choice for the word ‘visa’ by a transliteration in Arabic (فيزا) instead of the Arabic word (تأشيرة) because, in the Algerian society, people are used to calling it the French word, even uneducated people do not use the word (تأشيرة). Besides, the context in which the poet used the word ‘visa’ is full of fear and anxiety. And that this reflects exactly how most of the Algerian people feel when they apply for a visa to European countries, especially France because they are afraid to be rejected due to political policies.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

To translate a multilingual text which reflects a specific and weird behaviour of the author who wants to express a specific message through his literary work, the translator should opt for a strategy that allows the receiver of the target text to have an active participation in the understanding process and revealing the otherness and the peculiarities of the source text. “In fact, translators are constantly involved in a decision-making process to decide which strategy is appropriate to use. Choosing the right strategy is by no means an easy task for translators.” (Chouit, 2019, p. 80)

As explained in the above section about the solutions to translating a multilingual text, no theorist has a perfect solution. However, if we combine all the efforts made by Venuti, Bojanini, Qoates, Cincotta, Hervey, Higgings, and Haywood, we can obtain an integrated theory that helps in the transfer of multilingual texts which used to be



untranslatable texts. To succeed in the transitional process, the translator of the multilingual text could use the following strategies:

- Define the different languages (dominated and sub-languages) and dialects existing in the source text, to make a choice and choose the right equivalent code-switching.
- Define the target reader or receiver of the text, to choose the right sociolect or sub-language when proceeding to the code-switching process.
- Translate the dominant source language by a dominant target one.
- Translate the source sub-language by an equivalent one in the target language. This depends on the target culture, history, civilization, and the target receiver.
- Translate the source dialect by an equivalent dialect or sociolect to preserve the code-switching in registers of the source text.
- Keep the code-switching language when translating words that are understood by readers of translations such as: Hi, bonjour, adios, hello, ok, شكر، السلام عليكم, and so on.

Finally, the translator must take decisions and make choices but also assume the results. Any translation is a transformation that changes the source text. So, all the target texts must undertake a loss in shape and content even if they are transferred by talented translators: “Translators are social beings and their social affiliations have a significant impact on how they work and how they understand and use language. It is increasingly essential that we learn to integrate the two basic sides of the translator’s work, the linguistic and the social, the textual and the professional in order to be able to respond to the increasing demands of the translator’s profession.” (Saridaki, 2021, p. 146)



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