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*The Translation of Arabic Metadiscourse in  
“A handful of dates” into English*

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Abstract

This paper investigates the problem of multifunctionality of metadiscourse. It is still a fuzzy concept and its taxonomies contain many disparate elements. Linguistic and conventional differences between Arabic and English would make the problem more complicated when translation is involved. It is hypothesized that there is a similarity between Arabic and English metadiscourse items; and failing to grasp the function of these items leads to inappropriate renditions. The aim of this paper is of two folds: (1) proposing a classification system for Arabic metadiscourse and identifying the metadiscourse items in the source language (SL) and their renditions into the target language (TL), (2) analyzing the linguistic and rhetorical functions of metadiscourse items used in (SL) and to what extent that the translator successfully managed to render them into the (TL). The source text on which the study draws is taken from a short story entitled “A handful of dates” written by Tayb Salih and translated into English by Denys Johnson – Davies (1981). To make judgment on the appropriateness of metadiscourse renditions in the (TL), Nida's (1964) model is adopted. The paper revealed that Arabic makes use of metadiscourse as English does, though the classification system for metadiscourse in both languages are somehow different..

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### **1. The Concept of Metadiscourse:**

As a new concept in Arabic, it is appropriate to talk firstly about how this concept is perceived by English scholars and researchers. There is some confusion over the exact definition of metadiscourse. Split "metadiscourse" into two, we have "meta-", which means "above, higher than, or beyond", and "discourse", which means "language which has been produced as a result of an act of communication" (Richardson, 2000: 138-139). The term "metadiscourse" was first introduced by Harris (1970) to refer to discourse about discourse. In his argument, he states the following:

*i. The various sentences of a text differ in informational status, and even certain sentences which may be of interest to readers of the text may not be requested or useful in retrievals. These are metadiscourse kernels which talk about the main material.*

*ii. (ibid.: 466)*

The term metadiscourse can serve what Halliday calls the textual and interpersonal functions of language, as opposed to the ideational (the meaning or the content) function. Halliday (1973: 66) defines the textual function as "an enabling function, that of creating a text" and "it is this component that enables the speaker to organize what he is saying in such a way that it makes sense in the contextual and fulfills its function as a message". Of the interpersonal function, Halliday says that it includes "all that may be understood by the expression of our personalities and personal feelings on the one hand, and forms of interaction and social interplay with other participants in the communication situation on the other hand" (ibid.). In this sense, referential meaning is equivalent to what Halliday calls ideational meaning whereas metadiscourse conveys interpersonal and textual meanings.

Recent studies notice that any verbal communication includes two levels: the primary discourse/text level and the metadiscourse level. According to Williams (1981) and Crismore (1989), text producers usually have to write on two levels so that they supply information about the subject of the text and expand propositional content on one level (the primary level) and help their

readers connect, organize, interpret, evaluate, and react to this subject information, but without adding propositional material, on the other level (the metadiscourse level). In other words, the primary level is the subject of a discourse whereas the metadiscourse level is “talking about talk, writing about writing, it is a discourse about discourse, a text about a text, or talk about talk” (Harris, 1970; Williams, 1981; Vande Kopple, 1985; 1997; Crismore, 1989; Crismore et al., 1993; Mauranen, 1993; Craig, 2000). Characterized as discourse about discourse, metadiscourse refers to certain devices, which include words, phrases, clauses in a text that make coherent relations explicit, signal the text producer’s attitude or engage the reader. As a central pragmatic construct, metadiscourse helps text producers project themselves into text, arrange and organize the content to “influence readers’ understanding of both the text and their attitude towards its content and the audience” (Hyland, 1998: 437). Using metadiscourse, thus, means that text producer has foreseen the reader’s interactive frames and knowledge schemas, and that he/ she has made the necessary amendments and additions to the information flow (Tannen and Wallat, 1999).

Accordingly, different classifications have been proposed, most of them sharing a functional Hallidayian approach in that the taxonomies of metadiscourse are generally divided into two main categories: textual and interpersonal, according to the roles metadiscourse acts in the text. All systems proposed by the scholars and researchers offer a wide range of metadiscourse items that function to enhance and evaluate the text. Those scholars and researchers (Williams, 1981; Vande Kopple, 1985; Crismore et al., 1993; Longo, 1994; Hyland, 1998) have commonly, though different terms used, agreed that categories and subcategories could be illustrated in the following table:

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		Item	Example
		Textual Connectives	Additives
Adversatives	However, but, nonetheless		
Temporal / sequencers	Now, later, then First, second		
Causal	Therefore, thus, so		
Code Glosses		by this I mean	
Illocution Markers		I state again that	
Reminders		As I mentioned earlier	
Narrators		According to X	
INTERPERSONAL METADISCOURS	Hedges	may, perhaps	
	Certainty Markers	certainly, really, indeed	
	Attitude Markers	surprisingly, doubtfully	
	Commentary	You may not agree that	

**Table (1) Metadiscourse in English**

**3. Metadiscourse in Arabic:**

The linguistic phenomenon of metadiscourse was not explicitly identified by ancient Arab grammarians, linguists, rhetoricians and philosophers who mainly concentrated on syntactic properties and referential meanings of language. However, a survey of written texts reveals that Arab authors and scholars, writing in different periods, disciplines, and genres, implicitly showed a growing interest in the role of metadiscourse in their works. In a review of most Arab works, metadiscourse is frequently found in many books written by ancient Arab scholars specialized in various fields such as philosophy, rhetoric and linguistics (see, for example, Ibn Al-Atheer, 1990; Al-Jurjani, 1969; Al-Sakkaki, UD).

Arabic, being different from English in a number of ways such as grammar, syntax, style and culture, seems to adopt different types of rhetorical tools to use metadiscourse. In addition to those metadiscourse items used in English; Arabic can achieve metadiscourse in ways that suit its nature, culture and style. The

wide majority of ancient and modern Arab grammarians pay a great deal of attention to the form rather than to the function of Arabic language, and confined themselves to the boundaries of the sentence (see, for example, Sibawayhi, 1966; Ibn-Jinni, 1952). However, some ancient Arab linguists and rhetoricians, (see Al-Sakkaki, UD; Al-Jurjani, 1969; 1978; and Al-Qazwini, 1983) make an attempt to institutionalize norms and conventions of using language not as conveying information only (ideational meaning), but also affecting and convincing the audience through appropriate use of rhetorical devices (textual and interpersonal meanings). They believe that these rhetorical devices have functional meanings (interacting with and convincing the audience) and that the focus should not be placed on their grammatical correctness, but on their appropriateness to the co(n)text in which they occur. They stress the correlation between المقام، مقتضى الحال (utterance, discourse environment, and occasion) which might be equivalent respectively, in terms of English discourse and genre analysts, to setting factors, topic factors and audience appropriateness, i.e. the context of situation. It can be argued that the three correlates have been introduced by Halliday (1994: 390) in terms of the context of situation, or the “contextual configuration” of field, mode, and tenor.

In his book “دلائل الأعجاز” (Signs of Inimitability), Al-Jurjani(1969) puts forward his theory “نظرية النظم” which might be equivalent to (Systemic Theory of Meaning). This theory is a landmark of Arabic. Al-Jurjani perceives that the text producer conveys his message to readers by using the most appropriate devices that facilitate the process of understandability of the text that make it cohesive and coherent.

Regarding the textual analysis of discourse, Al-Jurjani argues that “النظم” is realized by “التعلق” (hanging [text] together). He (1978: 44) states that:

لا نظم ولا ترتيب في الكلام حتى يعلق بعضها ببعض ويبني بعضها على بعض (There is no texture [meaning] nor order in discourse unless the elements hang together, build on each other, and lead to each other). In this sense, texture of text, is based on textual relations. Confirming the semantic relation, he (1961:11) adds that:

”اللغة ليست مجموعة من الألفاظ بل مجموعة من العلاقات“ (language is not a [random] collection of expressions, but a combination of [textual] relations). He observes the roles of some connectives, and provides a discussion of connectives and of how elements in a discourse adhere. More importantly, he believes that language should go beyond descriptive cases of grammar, and this is why he introduces the term “معاني النحو” (functional meanings of grammar). Following his approach, it can be realized how well sentences and ideas are interwoven together and flow into each other. He concludes that the inappropriate use of “النظم” disturbs the lucidity of ideas in the text and blurs the intended meaning. Thus, we could argue that Al-Jurjani’s book دلائل الإعجاز (Signs of Inimitability) is a masterpiece of Arabic literature which needs a profound study and analysis on our part to envisage the concept of discourse and metadiscourse.

In this vein, some modern Arab linguists set out to deal with particles from a textual perspective. For example, Hassan (1973) considers these particles “أدوات” “tools” which are the most common cohesive ties that bring textual elements together. He (ibid.: 127) asserts that such tools should be interpreted in the light of their functional meaning (not the structural one) “لا بيئة للأدوات خارج السياق” (no environment for tools outside the context). Hassan’s approach has been adopted by other researchers such as (Al- Saqi, 1977; Faris 1979; Al-Batal, 1985; and Al-Maliqi 1985).

It seems that the Arabs’ approach is not systematically arranged in specifying and categorizing metadiscourse devices. Yet, ancient Arab rhetoricians implicitly give due significance to some linguistic phenomena which function as metadiscourse. They perceive that, in our term, metadiscourse is a rhetorical device and can work at textual level rather than word, phrase, clause or sentence levels. Also, they highlight the importance of the items that reveal the writer’s intervention in the text (interpersonal function). Drawing on the ancient Arab rhetoricians, *ad hoc* categories of metadiscourse elements can be categorized into three main headings: discourse connectives, circumlocution, and non-analogous and emotional appeals as illustrated below.

**3.1. روابط الكلام (Discourse Connectives):**

Arab rhetoricians make a distinction between الوصل و الفصل (syndeton and asyndeton), and this distinction has been voiced in the popular statement:

”البلاغة هي معرفة الفصل من الوصل“ (Al-Qazwini, 1983:246) (Rhetoric means discriminating syndeton from asyndeton). Those Arab rhetoricians believe that using the rhetorical device of conjunction in its proper place is an essential factor of impact on discourse. الوصل (syndeton) is coordinating between adjacent sentences using واو العطف (coordinate *and*) whereas الفصل (asyndeton) is determined by leaving it out. . A classical example often used to illustrate this rhetorical device has been taken from the Glorious Qura'n .

﴿وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَوْا إِلَىٰ شَيَاطِينِهِمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزِؤْنَ (١٤) اللَّهُ يَسْتَهْزِئُ بِهِمْ وَيَمُدُّهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ (١٥)﴾

(البقرة: الآية: ١٤-١٥)

*When they meet those who believe, they say: “We believe;” but when they are alone with their evil ones, they say: “We are really with you we (were) only jesting.” Allah shall mock them, and give them rope in their trespasses; so they will wander like blind ones (to and from).*<sup>(1)</sup> (Khan and Al-Hilali, 2011).

The clause of "الله يستهزئ بهم" (*Allah shall mock them*) not to be connected with "قالوا إنا معكم" (*We are really with you*), because, if it were, the property of mockery would be shared in a similar manner by Allah and the hypocrites. Thus, the omission of واو العطف (coordinate *and*) is a must. Here الفصل (asyndeton) implies an implicit rhetorical adversative relation between the propositions of the discourse. On the other hand "الوصل" (syndeton) is realized by marking واو العطف. Consider the following example taken from the Glorious Qura'n:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ (١١٩)﴾

(التوبة، الآية: ١١٩)

*O ye who believe! Fear Allah and be with those who are true (in word and deed)<sup>(2)</sup> (Khan and Al-Hilali,2011).*

In this case, the presence of *واو العطف* has the rhetorical function of connecting "كونوا" to what has been preceded (see Al-Hashimi, 1960; Faris, 1979 for detailed discussions of this linguistic phenomenon).

It is significant to note that connectives are regarded as textual metadiscourse elements rather than grammatical particles. In this study, these particles are termed "روابط الكلام" discourse connectives", because they reflect the semantic and pragmatic relations between the propositions in the text and may have rhetorical functions. Discourse connectives are also employed to signal the organizing framework of the text and their intertextual relations showing, for example, *العلاقات الاستدراكية* (adversative relations) such as *بل، بيد ، لكن، إلا أن* (but rather, yet, but, however) *ثم، بعد ذلك، أولا* (temporal/ sequential relations) such as *ف، لأن، لذلك* (causal relations) such as *لأن، لذلك* (then ,later, first) *العلاقات السببية* (causal relations) such as *لأن، لذلك* (for, because, consequently) ; and *علاقات العطف والإضافة* (coordinating and additive relations) such as *و، كذلك* (and , further) . Such connectives have multifunctional meanings and lean heavily on the co(n)text which determines their functional values.

### **3.2. الإطناب (Circumlocution):**

Ancient Arab linguists and rhetoricians (see, for example, Al-Sakkaki, UD; Al-Qazwini, 1983) identify other linguistic and rhetorical devices that can realize textual and interpersonal metadiscourse. They, for example, give paramount significance to the notion "الإطناب" which might be equivalent to (circumlocution), and consider it as a means of persuasion, clarification of the text producer's intended meaning, creation of a close relationship with the audience, interweaving the thread of discourse, and alerting the audience. Those linguists and rhetoricians differentiate between "الإطناب" (circumlocution) and "الحشو" (pleonasm). They define the first as *زيادة اللفظ على المعنى لفائدة* (the motivated employment of extra formal markers and elements in the expression of a given meaning) and, therefore, believe it is functional and useful in creating a text.

According to Al-Sakkaki (UD), it is a feature of rhetorical discourse that can be used in every discourse and that is determined by the context of situation, whereas the latter is زيادة اللفظ على المعنى بدون فائدة (the unmotivated employment of extra formal markers and elements in the expression of a given meaning) and therefore it is non-functional and redundant. In other words "الإطناب" is considered as a rhetorical device which adds supplemental meanings to the text, whereas "الحشو" is irritating and is a consequence of careless use of unnecessary repetition in expressing ideas.

In line with the above ancient linguists and rhetoricians and modern Arab linguists (see, for example, Al-Hashimi, 1960; and Shunnaq (1994), it is believe that "الإطناب" is a big part of metadiscourse as it is one of the most effective rhetorical device in a text. The main purposes of "الإطناب" are: mentioning a specific concept after a general one; clarity after ambiguity; the confirmation after warning; revealing the speaker's attitude; and drawing listener into implicit dialogue . Ancient and modern Arab linguists have pointed out different linguistic elements that, to our knowledge, realize metadiscourse via "الإطناب". However, they have not sufficiently categorized the linguistic elements of "الإطناب" which are related to metadiscourse. Thus, "الإطناب" can be divided into the following categories which function as metadiscourse elements. The following are amongst the main categories.

### 3.2.1. الاعتراض (Bracketing):

"الاعتراض" is defined as "an utterance which is introduced into a single or compound expression. If it is omitted, the meaning will not change" (Ibn Al-Atheer, 1990: 172), and its purpose is to improve, clarify and strengthen the discourse (Al-Zarkashi, 1972: 68), which is used during the speech or in between two clauses having different functions. Also, it may show the comment made by the speaker on the propositions addressed (for more details, see Al-Suyuti, 2006: 872). In this sense, it provides textual and interpersonal function in the discourse depending on the context. It seems that this category of metadiscourse covers two subcategories of metadiscourse items : commentary (comments by the writer) and narrators ( the source of information taken by the writer).

### 3.2.2. التوكيد (Certainty):

Metadiscourse is realized by certainty markers. Such markers are used to confirm and strengthen the informative meaning, and their omissions do not affect the original meaning ( Al-Suyuti, 1974: 337). The use of such markers, according to Al-Sakkaki's term (UD: 171), is determined by "اعتبارات خطابية" (discourse variables) that consider the state of the audience in a particular context خالي الذهن (open-minded) متردد (uncertain), or منكر (denier). In this sense, it could be argued that the criterion of employing metadiscourse depends heavily on context of situation.

Recent studies show that the frequent use of certainty markers can be distinguished by two main categories (cf. Farghal, 1991): grammatical items that include نون التوكيد، لام التوكيد، إن، أن، (really, truly, definitely) and lexical items that include (inclusion, oath, cognate object, emphatic adverbials), and أفعال اليقين (certainty verbs) such as أعلم، أجزم، أعتقد (believe, assure, know).

### **3.2.3. الاحتراس (Hedging):**

"الاحتراس" (may be equivalent to hedging) is used when the text producer withholds commitment to the statement in such a way that he can soften the speech. This metadiscourse element is widely used in Arabic (Al-Hashimi, 1960: 232). In Arabic, it is realized by what may be termed softeners or hedging devices such as قد، ربما، (may be , perhaps, some )and أفعال الظن (uncertainty verbs) such as ظن، حسب، (think, fancy) which indicate that the addresser is not certain about the truth value of the propositions, and which may represent effective techniques to build up interest in the point he wants to make. Such devices may convey interpersonal meaning as they reveal the addresser's attitude towards the content of the message and the addressee. The main purpose of this phenomenon is to soften the discourse and show doubtfulness.

However, it is not necessarily that the above elements are always used as hedging elements since metadiscourse is context-dependent. Similar to certainty devices, hedging provides interpersonal meaning as they reflect the addresser's attitude towards the proposition and the addressee.

### **3.2.4. الأسئلة الحجاجية (Rhetorical questions):**

These questions are defined as questions which one does not expect the audience to reply to. The main function of such a

question is as an indicator to direct the discourse flow and the audience toward a certain trend that meets the author's aim and plan (Al-Zarkashi,1972: 334-335). Rhetorical question can be considered as a significant tool that is frequently used to ensure that the readers answer themselves by actively making inferences and by accessing their prior knowledge about the question. Ibn 'Asur (UD.) points out that the author, using rhetorical questions, does not expect the audience to reply to them. However, the audience must be well aware of such questions as they are also useful to get them to think about what the speaker has said and about his/her response to the questions. Rhetorical questions, thus, maintain interpersonal function.

The preceding linguistic phenomenon is termed "الإطناب" because we can leave them out and maintain the propositional content of the text intact. However, they are communicative, i.e. functional and furnish the Arabic discourse with textual and interpersonal function. Once they are communicative, they have intended functions planned by a text producer.

### 3.3. الخالفة (Non-analogous) and Emotional Appeals:

As it has been stated earlier, most modern Arab grammarians have based their grammatical theory on the works of medieval Arab grammarians, focusing on the syntactic properties of Arabic and the governing powers they exercise over verbs and nouns (see, for example, Hasan, 1964; Abdul-Qadir, 1988). Hassan (1973), however, adopts a new approach. Unlike the traditional category of parts of speech (verbs, nouns, and particles) presented by those scholars, Hassan concentrates on another part of speech, suggested by a group of Arab grammarians and linguists, termed الخالفة (non-analogous) and argues that it should be additional part of speech since it formally and functionally differs from nouns, verbs and particles. Hassan (ibid.: 113) states that "الخالفة" is a word or expression uttered by speaker to express emotiveness and action after being affected by a certain situation. Hassan also argues that "الخالفة" is the nearest equivalent to an exclamation in English. The term "الخالفة" can be expressed by various linguistic devices such as praise verbs حبذا، حسن rebuke verbs such as لئيت، هلا forms of wishing such as بئس، لاحبذا، ساء forms of expressing wonder such as آه (Oh) واأسفاه (Alas!),and

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vocative such as يا (Oh) (see, for more details, Hassan, 1973; Al-Saqi, 1977; Al-Sanjary, 2002). It is to be noted that the common feature of these forms is that they have an expressive function rather than an informative one. The main purpose of uttering such forms is not to provide information but to express emotional appeal and interpersonal intrusion of the speaker towards a certain stimulus. Thus, it could be argued that "الخالفة" constitutes a significant part of metadiscourse since it reveals speaker's attitude towards the propositional content. However, it could not cover the whole area of metadiscourse.

In the light of the linguistic and rhetorical devices stated above, the categories of "روابط الكلام" (discourse connectives) "إطناب" (circumlocution) and "خالفة" (non-analogous) are perhaps the main three categories that best help define and illustrate the general concept of metadiscourse in Arabic. They constitute an important part of metadiscourse. However, claim may not be made that metadiscourse is confined to the linguistic phenomena mentioned above as metadiscourse refers to any means or pointers the text producer uses to shape the formal architecture of discourse or to express his attitude towards the subject and reader through intervention in the discourse.

To sum up, Arab rhetoricians and linguists are well aware of the significance of metadiscourse which can be realized by various linguistic devices. They implicitly indicate that metadiscourse is as important as the propositional content. However, these devices, which may be termed "الادخالات الخطابية", are scattered and need a more systematic study. The present study is expected to be an attempt towards the systematic study of metadiscourse in Arabic. This is a tentative attempt to show that Arabic uses metadiscourse as much as English does, and provide partial evidence for the universality of metadiscourse (Crismore et al., 1993; Hyland, 1998). Following Hallidayan functional approach, Arabic metadiscourse could be illustrated in the following table supported by the examples which are mostly taken from the data of this study :

TS	T A	Item	Example
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INTERPERSONAL METADISOURSE	Discourse Connectives		Additives	كذلك، و	
			Adversatives	لكن، الا ان	
			Temporal/ sequencers	الآن، ثم اولاً، ثانياً	
			Causal	لذلك، لان	
	Circumlocution	Hedges		Grammatical items	ربما، قد
				Lexical items	ظن، حسب
		Certainty Markers		Grammatical items	إن، لام التوكيد
				Lexical items	لا شك، حقا
		Bracketing		Commentary	اظن جدي كان يؤثرني دون بقية احفاده، ولست الومه،
				Narrators	هكذا قالوا لي
			Rhetorical questions		هذا الحقل الواسع الا تراه؟
		Non- analogous And emotional appeals		Wondering	العجيب، فجأة
				Praise verbs	نعم، حبذا
				Rebuke verbs	بئس، ساء
			Vocative	يا	
			Exclamation	ما اجمل، اجمل -	
			Wishing	ليت	

Table (2) Metadiscourse in Arabic

#### 4. The Model Adopted:

The theory of equivalence has been studied by several scholars and researchers of translation (see, for example, Nida, 1964; Catford, 1965; Nida and Taber, 1969; and Munday 2001). An

extremely interesting discussion of the notion of equivalence can be found in Nida (1964). He argues that there are two types of translation equivalence : formal and dynamic equivalence. For him, formal equivalence "focuses attention on the message itself ,in both form and content" (1964:159).Dynamic equivalence ,on the other hand, is based on what Nida calls the principle of equivalent effect. He (1964:95) adds that dynamic equivalence is “reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the message of the source language”. For Nida, Dynamic Equivalence “is achievable when the message and response which is evoked in the receptor of (ST) and (TT) should be the same” (ibid.) .

Following dynamic equivalence , Nida (1964) puts forward three procedures of adjustments to solve the problem of finding (TL) equivalence . The procedures are additions , abstractions and alterations. Addition is used for some cases in which the addition is necessary such as clarifying elliptic expressions, disambiguating the lexical item in the (TL) , and explicating implicit elements. subtraction is used when it is required by the (TL): unnecessary repetition, specified references, conjunctions and adverbs. Alteration means changes that have to be made because of incompatibilities between the (SL) and (TL). These changes are due to structural differences between the (SL) and (TL) ; and due to semantic misfit. These procedures ,thus, are used for adjusting the linguistic form of the related item to make it appropriate for the (TL); producing structures that are semantically equivalent to the (SL) texts; and producing the same communicative effect of the (SL).

### **5. Data Collection and Analysis Procedure:**

The data of this study draws on a short story entitled “ A handful of dates” written by Tayb Salih, a well-known Sudanese writer ,and translated into English by Denys Jobnson-Davies (1982), who has enormous works of translation in Arabic literature. One of the major steps in text analysis is to determine a procedure for segmenting the text into parts. Researchers are concerned with unit analysis, when they investigate their data under study, such as clause, T. unit, sentence, utterance. Such units may not be applicable

to investigate metadiscourse (for more details, see Schiffrin, 1987; Crismore et al., 1993).

In this study, however, the most important criterion for the analysis is to make a decision whether a linguistic expression is an instance of metadiscourse or a propositional content. It seems that inclusion and exclusion of metadiscourse items are still questionable. However, one method suggested here is that each linguistic material is examined in terms of theme or the topic, termed in Arabic as (المسند اليه) which functions as “announcing the topic rather than offering new information about the chosen subject matter” (Lautamatti, 1978: 72) and the rheme or predicate termed in Arabic as (المسند) which adds new information about the theme. This identification of theme and rheme makes it easier for us in some cases to identify Lautamatti’s (1978) topical subjects and non-topical subjects or the metadiscourse in the texts. Based on Lautamatti’s (1978) procedure, the following excerpts from the short story, in this study, provide examples of the identification of the metadiscourse and the theme and rheme. The metadiscourse is underlined, and the theme and rheme are classified separately as shown below:

لا بد ان السبب انني كنت سريع الحفظ

**The reason was, no doubt, that** I was quick in learning by heart.(p.21).

العجيب أنني لم أخرج ابدا مع أبي ولكن جدي كان يأخذني معه حيثما ذهب

**The strange thing was that** I never used to go with my father, rather it was my grandfather who would take me with him wherever he went.(p.21).

The underlined items mentioned above show that “لا بد ان” (The reason was, no doubt, that), and “العجيب” (The strange thing was that) are non topical subjects. Whatever followed are a part of the topic, i.e. discourse. In this case, the underline items are considered metadiscourse. After identifying the realization and function of metadiscourse items in (SL), the realization and function of (TL) metadiscourse items rendered by the translator are identified and analyzed to make judgment on appropriateness of his renditions .

The following cases of analysis will consider the function of identified metadiscourse items in (SL) and their renditions in (TL).

### **5.1 Discourse Connectives**

This category of textual metadiscourse is employed by the writer to indicate the progression of the discourse content and signal how the parts of the discourse are connected. Connectives included in this subcategory are adversatives, causals, additives and temporals. A close examination to the connectives in the (ST) reveals that they constitute a problematic area for the translator because of the multifunctionality of Arabic connectives (e.g. the frequent recurrence of “و” and “ف”. Arabic also tends to rely heavily on connectives which perform different functions at syntactic , semantic, stylistic, and discoursal levels. This is partly due to the absence of a well-established punctuation system and to the use of punctuation according to flexible rules on the part of the Arabic writers.

Therefore, it is expected that the translator, in several cases, could not successfully render the connectives in the source text. Consider the inappropriate renditions of adversatives, causals, additives and temporals respectively made by the translator below.

#### **5.1.1. Adversatives:**

The basic meaning of adversative relations is unexpectedness, In this sense, adversatives signal contrasting and/or unanticipated ideas. Consider the following example:

١- لست اذكر كم كان عمري تماما، و لكنني اذكر ان الناس حين كانوا يرونني مع جدي كانوا يربتون على راسي و يقرصونني في خدي.

1- **While** I do not remember exactly how old I was I do remember that when people saw me with my grandfather, they would pat me on the head and give my cheek a pinch.(p.21).

The textual metadiscourse item (لكن) indicates unexpectedness. It was inappropriately rendered due to the shift from paratactic (coordination) to hypotactic (subordination). Being so, the subordinating conjunction (while) has a syntactic function rather than metadiscoursal because it “cannot be omitted without destroying the well-formedness of the dependent clause” (Crismore

et al., 1993: 49). Further, the subordinating conjunction (while) is considered adversative contrast marker, rather than concessive contrast marker (Farghal, 1992:47). The translator inappropriately opted for structural alteration and ignored the rhetorical function of this metadiscourse item. To grasp the function of (لكن), as a metadiscourse item, it could be rendered into (yet) as a concessive marker because the connecting device (yet) is an appropriate equivalence used to express the occurrence of a “positive assertion” when the preceding proposition, as shown in the example, implicates a negated consequence (van Dijk, 1981:12).

### 5.1.2. Temporals:

The presence of the temporal connectives suggests time order of events, actions, or states. It is not surprising that the frequency of this sub-category of textual metadiscourse is dominant in the narrative discourse as shown in the (ST). Consider the following example:

٢- واجتمع التمر اكواما عالية، ثم رايت قوما اقبلوا واخذوا يكيلونه بمكاييل ويصبونه في اكياس.

2- The dates were collected into mounds.---- I saw people coming along and weighing them into measuring bins and pouring them into sacks.(p.27).

It is clear that the connective item (ثم) indicates elapse of time; its function is to sequence events in order of time. The translator, however, subtracted it. So, he inappropriately opted for dynamic equivalence. The appropriate rendition could be (Then) .

### 51.3. Additives:

It seems that the rendition of additives is not so challenging for the translator. However, a distinction was not made between additives which have stylistic function and those which have a metadiscourse function. This can be illustrated below:

٣- اغلب اندادي كانوا يتبرمون بالمسجد و حفظ القران و لكنني كنت احب الذهاب الى المسجد، لآبد ان السبب انني كنت سريع الحفظ و كان الشيخ يطلب مني دائما ان اقف و اقرا سورة الرحمن كلما جاء زائر.

3- While most of the children of my age grumbled at having to go to the mosque to learn the Koran, I used to love it. The reason was, no doubt, that I was quick at learning by heart **and** the Sheikh always asked me to stand up and recite the Chapter of the Merciful whenever we had visitors.(p.21).

As it can be seen, there is no relationship between the two propositions connected by (and). In fact, the underlined (و) is a stylistic device rather than metadiscoursal used to satisfy what is traditionally termed “polysyndeton” to maintain the conventional way of presenting content and the flow of discourse. Thus, it should be left out as zero equivalence. The translator ,however, inappropriately rendered it ,and opted for formal equivalence .

#### **5.1.4. Causals:**

Causal connectives are usually employed to put together ideas that lend themselves to the cause-effect and /or effect-cause relationships. The translator successfully managed to render such metadiscourse items which are rarely used in the (ST). See the example below:

٤- كانت هذه حقيقة مثيرة بالنسبة لي، فقد كنت احسب الأرض ملكا لجدي منذ خلق الله الأرض .

4-This was new to me **for** I had imagined that the land had belonged to my grandfather ever since God’s Creation.(p.25).

In his rendition, the translator grasped the function of (ف) as a causal connective. The appropriate rendition was made as the translator opted for formal equivalence.

#### **5.2. Certainty and Hedging:**

The subcategory of certainty markers is closely related to the sub-category of hedges due to the fact that the items belonging to certainty markers also can express the degree of the writer’s commitment to the truth-value of the propositional content but at the opposite end scale (Crismore et al., 1993: 52).

The items of certainty increase commitment to the truthfulness by emphasizing the conviction the writer holds for the proposition. Some items make the text evaluative rather than neutral because they reveal the writer’s judgment on the question addressed. A close examination to the (SL) reveals that the writer has employed various devices of certainty markers. The translator managed to render some of them. Consider the following example:

٥- لابد انني كنت صغيرا جدا حين ذلك.

5- I **must have been** very young at that time. (p.21)

The writer used (لابد) as lexical item functioning a certainty metadiscourse. The translator appropriately captured this device by

opting for grammatical alteration - the model verb (must have been). In other words, the item (لابد) is a lexical one whereas the realization is a grammatical. However, the translator managed the same function by opting for dynamic translation.

On the other hand, inappropriate renditions were committed due to the confusion between hedging devices and certainty ones. Consider this case below:

٦- اظن جدي كان يؤثرنني دون بقية احفاده، و لست الومه، فاولاد اعمامي كانوا اغبياء و كنت انا طفلا ذكياً، هكذا قالوا لي.

6- **I think** I was his favourite grandchild: no wonder, for my cousins were stupid bunch and I- so they say- was intelligent.(p.22).

Considering the context of (ST), the writer employed the verb (اظن) as a certain device which shows his emphasis on the propositional content. However, the translator did not pay attention to the function and force of this verb; he hedges the proposition by using the verb (I think) which provides a tone of hedging rather than certainty. So, the translator opted for formal equivalence by realization of linguistic form that could not capture the contextual function of the verb (اظن). The appropriate rendition could be (I believe).

The inclusion of the term hedge is restricted in the analysis to linguistic items that the writer used in the (ST) to lessen his commitment to the truthfulness of what he is saying. Considering the translation of hedges in the (ST), the translator appropriately rendered some of them. Let us consider the appropriate one as shown in the following example.

٧- وأظنني قبل ان يتوفاني الله سأشترني الثالث الباقي ايضا.

7- **I think** that before Allah take me to Him, I shall have brought the remaining third as well.(p.25).

The translator successfully grasped the function of the verb (وأظنني) as a hedging item as the speaker neutralizing the propositional content. It is clear that the rendition of (ظن) is not challenging for the translator because there is an equivalent between the form and function. In this sense, formal equivalence (I think) is successfully adopted.

## 5.2. Bracketing:

The items included in this subcategory are used to provide the reader with explanation, elaboration and, more importantly, comments on the propositional material made by the writer to his reader. Inappropriate renditions were made by the translator when he did not differentiate between metadiscourse items and propositional ones. Consider this case below.

٨ - واعطاني جدي قبضة من التمر فاخذت امضغه، ورأيت مسعودا يملأ راحتيه من التمر ويقربه من انفه ويشمه طويلا ثم يعيده الى مكانه ورأيتهم يتقاسمون، حسين التاجر اخذ عشرة اكياس، والرجلان الغريبان كل منهما اخذ خمسة اكياس، وموسى صاحب الحقل المجاور لحقلنا من ناحية الشرق اخذ خمسة اكياس وجدي اخذ خمسة اكياس، ولم افهم شيئا. ونظرت الى مسعود فرايته زائغ العينين.

8- My grandfather gave me a fistful which I began munching. I saw Masood filling the palms of both hands with dates and bringing them up close to his nose then returning them. Then I saw them dividing up the sacs between them, Husain the merchant took ten; each of the strangers took five, Mousa the owner of the field next to ours on the eastern side took five, and my grandfather took five. **Understanding nothing**, I looked at Masood and saw that his eyes were darting.(p.28).

The underlined metadiscourse item used between two commas (bracketing) provides the writer's comment on the propositions that preceded it. However, inappropriate rendition was committed by the translator when he could not differentiate between the metadiscourse item and the propositional material. In this case, the metadiscourse item was depleted and inappropriately combined with the adjacent proposition by rendering it as a subordinate clause. Being so, the translator could not grasp the function of the item because he resorted to structural alteration. So, dynamic equivalence made by the translator was not successful. The appropriate rendition could be (I understood nothing) preceded by comma to show the writer's comment on the propositions stated. On the other hand,, the translator appropriately rendered some bracketing items used as a metadiscourse Consider the following example:

٩- اظن جدي كان يؤثرني دون بقية احفاده، ولست الومه، فاولاد اعمامي كانوا اغبياء و كنت انا طفلا ذكيا، هكذا قالوا لي.

9- I think I was his favourite grandchild: **no wonder**, for my cousins were stupid bunch and I- **so they say**- was intelligent.(p.22).

As it can be seen, the writer used two subcategories of bracketing items: the first one is commentary and the second one is attributor/narrator. In this context , (لست الومه) was used as a comment on the propositions in between. In this sense, the writer shows his attitude towards the propositions addressed. The translator successfully grasped the function rather than the form of this metadiscourse item through semantic alteration . Thus, he opted for dynamic equivalence . By the same token, the writer used (هكذا قالوا لي ) as a narrator item to tell his readers who said the opinion. Formal equivalence is appropriate rendition as the translator did .

### 5.3. Rhetorical Questions:

This subcategory of interpersonal metadiscourse is mainly used to steer the listener (as in our case) in (ST) towards the speaker's intention and goal. The speaker may create a dialogue and engage the listener's attention through the use of rhetorical questions or phrases that create an interaction between them, as shown in the following example:

١٠ - فأطرق جدي برهة ثم قال لي: أنظر الى هذا الحقل الواسع، الا تراه يمتد من طرف الصحراء الى حافة النيل مائة فدان؟

10. My grandfather lowered his head for a moment, then looking across at the wide expands of field, he said: '**Do you see it** stretching out from the edge of the desert up to the Nile bank? A hundred fadans.(p.24).

It seems that the speaker is so keen to interact with his listener by addressing him with the rhetorical question frequently collocated with the verb (انظر). In his rendition to (انظر), the translator did not address the reader directly as the speaker did in the (SL). Rendering (انظر) into (then looking across) , the translator would detach the listener and make less intimate. By the same token, the rhetorical question (الا تراه) which was rendered into (Do you see?) is used to create a close relationship between the speaker and listener as the co(n)text reveals. However, the translator inappropriately used syntactic alteration rather than rhetorical question into yes/no question which was not intended by the speaker. In both cases, the translator inappropriately opted for dynamic equivalence . To grasp

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the rhetorical function of these devices, the rendition of (انظر) could be ‘look at’ and (ألا تراه) could be ‘Don’t you see!’ .

**5.5. Non-Analogous and Emotional Appeals :**

Items included in this subcategory like expressions of wishing and wondering are used to reveal emotional appeal that the writer has towards propositional content. Consider the following example:

١١- لست ادري لماذا احسست بخوف من كلمات جدي وشعرت بالعطف على جارنا مسعود، ليت جدي لا يفعل!

11- I don’t know why it was I felt fear at my grandfather’s words and pity for our neighbours Masood. How I wished my grandfather wouldn’t do what he’d said . (p.25).

The writer employed two metadiscourse items as underlined above that both reveal the attitude of the writer towards the event contained in the propositions. The translator successfully managed to render the two items by opting for formal equivalence. However, the translator depleted some emotional expressions used by the writer in the (ST). Consider this case below:

١٢- بدأ جدي يواصل الحديث، نعم يا بني، كانت كلها قبل اربعين عاماً ملكاً لمسعود، ثلثها الان لي انا.

12- My grandfather then continued: “Yes, my boy, forty years ago all this belonged to Masood – two thirds of it is now mine”. (p.25).

It is clear that the writer used the underlined item mentioned above as a bracketing metadiscourse, including vocative (يا) which, in this context, addresses the listener and reveals the speaker’s intention to build a close and intimate relation with him as a participant in the discourse. In his rendition, the translator could not capture the function of this emotional item because he used subtraction procedure . The appropriate rendering may be (dear boy).

The following table shows a summary of the analysis and discussion mentioned above .

**Table (3):A Summary of Analysis and Discussion**

Considering the renditions of (SL), the table shows that the

No.	SL item	TL item	Function of SL	Function of TL	Type of equivalence	App
1	لكني	While	Adversative	Subordinator	Dynamic(alteration)	-
2	ثم	-----	Temporal	-----	Dynamic(subtraction)	-
3	و	And	Stylistic	Additive	Dynamic (addition)	-
4	ف	for	Causal	Causal	Dynamic(alteration)	+
5	لا بد	Must have been	Certainty	Certainty	Dynamic(alteration )	+
6	اظن	I think	Certainty	Hedging	Formal	-
7	اظني	I think	Hedging	Hedging	Formal	+
8	الا تراه	Do you see?	Commentary	Propositional	Formal	-
9a	لست ادري لماذا	I do not know why	Emotional appeal	Emotional appeal	Formal	+
9b	ليت	I wished	Emotional appeal	Emotional appeal	Formal	+
10	يا بني	My boy	Emotional appeal	Propositional	Dynamic (deletion)	-
11	ولم افهم شيئا	Understanding nothing	Commentary	Propositional	Dynamic (alteration)	-
12a	لست الومه	No wonder	Commentary	Commentary	Dynamic (alteration)	+
12b	هكذا قالوا لي	So they say	Narrator	Narrator	Formal	+

translator successfully managed to render several metadiscourse items whereas he could not appropriately render others. The main problematic areas that led to inappropriate renditions of these items on the part of the translator were:

- 1- Confusing between the categories and subcategories of metadiscourse items in the (SL).
- 2- Non- establishing correspondence between the linguistic form and the rhetorical function of the metadiscourse items in the (SL).
- 3- Deleting and/or adding metadiscourse items in the (TL).
- 4- Making no distinction between metadiscourse items and propositions in the (SL).
- 5- Opting for dynamic equivalence and formal equivalence is context-bound .

## **6. Conclusions:**

Metadiscourse is still a gnarled area but very important part of language in use. It should be seen as important as the propositional material to create textness and produce effect on readers in the (SL) and (TL). Comparing the metadiscourse items used in the (SL) and their renditions into the (TL), it is found that metadiscourse used in the (SL) does not seem to be much different from the (TL) when appropriately rendered, though there are some differences in the renditions of some categories of metadiscourse items. When appropriately rendered, the translator could establish the intended relationships supposed to serve the (SL) writer's purposes. However, inappropriate renditions of metadiscourse would deplete and blur the rhetorical function of the narrative discourse. The analysis of (SL) revealed that metadiscourse is an important rhetorical device in the genre of Arabic narrative discourse. The writer made use of almost all categories and subcategories of metadiscourse items suggested in this study, though with different degrees and ways.

Finally, this study is a call to pay much attention to the study of metadiscourse and strategies for its use in different genres. Metadiscourse, which is a crucial feature in any discourse, has almost been untouched in most materials dealing with translation research and teaching translation.

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## ترجمة الادخالات الخطابية في (حفنة تمر ) الى اللغة الانكليزية

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### مستخلص

يتناول هذا البحث ترجمة الادخالات الخطابية من اللغة العربية الى الانكليزية والتي تعد مفهوما غامضا نظرا لاحتوائها على الكثير من التصنيفات المختلفة ، و الامر الذي يجعل مشكلة الترجمة اكثر تعقيدا هو الاختلافات اللغوية والثقافية بين اللغتين اثناء عملية الترجمة . اصف الى ذلك فان تعدد وظائف الادخالات الخطابية يشكل تحديا كبيرا للمترجم . وتفترض الدراسة ان هناك تشابه بين الادخالات الخطابية في اللغة العربية والانكليزية وان الفشل في ادراك وظيفة هذه الادخالات يؤدي الى ترجمة غير ملائمة . وتهدف الدراسة الى اقتراح نظام تصنيفي لهذه الادخالات وتحديداتها في لغة الاصل وترجمتها الى لغة الهدف . اضافة الى تحديد الوظائف اللغوية والبلاغية لهذه الادخالات المستخدمة في لغة الاصل وما مدى النجاح الذي حققه المترجم في لغة الهدف . وقد اعتمدت الدراسة على ترجمة القصة القصيرة للكاتب السوداني الطيب صالح (حفنة تمر) والتي ترجمها المترجم البريطاني دينيس ديفيز . وتبنت الدراسة نموذج نايدا (١٩٦٤) للحكم على ملائمة الترجمة . واطهرت نتائج البحث ان اللغة العربية تستخدم الادخالات الخطابية كما هو الحال في اللغة الانكليزية رغم بعض الاختلافات . كما تم تحديد المشكلات الرئيسية التي ادت الى الترجمة غير الملائمة .