



The Role of Ideology in Translation: A Study of the Kurdish Media

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It is believed that the term *ideology* was originally coined in the late 18th century, and “is normally attributed to Destutt de Tracy whose concern was with ‘the science of ideas’ which sought the origins of the ideas of human sensations” (Dant, 2011: 57)



So, the term *ideology* emerged with a quite neutral connotation. However, “this neutral use soon gave way to the (Napoleonic) negative, political sense and to the (Marxian) sense of false consciousness, which has persisted so much that ideology nowadays has a



Does ideology have anything to do with language and translation?

“Language is not used in a contextless vacuum; rather, it is used in a host of discourse contexts, contexts which are impregnated with the ideology of social systems and institutions”. (Paul Simpson 1993: 5)



Likewise, the British critical discourse analyst, Fairclough (2001: 2), asserts that “ideology is pervasively present in language”.

What can be construed from this quotation?



“any translation is ideological since the choice of a source text and the use to which the subsequent target text is put is determined by the interest, aims, and objectives of the social agent”. (Schäffner 2003: 23)



A: Ideology in translation at macro-textual level

The Kurdish media can be broadly classified into three major ideological orientations:

- (i) the authority-affiliated media;**
- (ii) the opposition media, and;**
- (iii) the independent (or so-called independent)**

Analysing a set of headlines:

- * **Kurdistan can be a model for democracy in a troubled region**
- * **Kurdistan Is Important for Reform In Iraq and Middle East**

- * **Hard times looming for Iraq's Kurds**
- * **Kurds angry at corruption they see in their own government**
- * **Why does Barzani oppose modern banking for Kurdistan?**
- * **Kurdish minister received UK market abuse emails**



B: Ideology in translation at micro-textual level

Ideology also plays a significant role at textual micro-level, which is mainly reflected in choosing between various linguistic alternatives at the lexicogrammatical level.

Schäffner (2003: 23) argues that:

“Ideological aspects can also be determined within a text itself, both at the lexical level (reflected, for example, in the deliberate choice or avoidance of a particular word) and the grammatical level (for example, use of passive structures to avoid an expression of agency)...”



Reuters (ST)

Kurdish minister received UK market abuse emails:
sources

Hawlati

رۆیتەرز "گەندەلییهکی" ئاشتی هه‌ورامی ئاشکرا ده‌کات

Lvinpress

ئاشتی هه‌ورامی له‌به‌ریتانیاش له‌گەندەلییه‌وه ده‌گیٲ

Kurdiu

رۆیتەرز: ئاشتی هه‌ورامی به‌رپرسیکی به‌ریتانی له‌گەندەلییه‌وه ده‌گیٲیت و

سزاده‌دریٲ

Payam

گەندەلییه‌کی دیکه‌ی ئاشتی هه‌ورامی ئاشکرا ده‌بیٲ



...KDP leader Masud Barzani has at long last acknowledged corruption is a problem. He, his nephew and current Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani, and former Prime Minister Barham Salih have all promised to tackle corruption. Rhetoric alone does not defeat *graft*. (American Enterprise Institute)

مهسعود بارزانی سەرۆکی پارتي ديموکراتي کوردستان دواچار سهلماندی...
که گهدهلی کیشیه. ئەو و برازاکی، سەرۆک و هزیران نیچرقان بارزانی و
سەرۆک و هزیرانی پیشوتر بهرهم سالح هه موویان بهلینی بنه پرکردنی
گهدهلیان داوه. لیدوان و رهوانبیژی بهتهنها ناتوانیت نادادپهروهری و
(Awene). ناپاکی لهناووبات



Its two main political *families* grow wealthier by the day on the oil riches. They build huge mansions back home with large staffs and private jets. They own radio and television stations and control the media. The Talabani and Barzani *families* have made a temporary peace as they divide up the riches of power... (DC Bureau)

ئەو دوو **بنه‌ماله** سیاسیه‌روژ به‌روژ ده‌وله‌مه‌ندتر ده‌بن له‌سه‌ر حسابی سامانی نه‌وت، ته‌لاری گه‌وره‌یان له‌و و لاته‌ دروست‌کردوه‌و فرۆکه‌و ستافی تاییه‌تیان هه‌یه، ته‌له‌فزیۆن و رادیۆیان هه‌یه‌و کۆنترۆلی میدیایان کردوه، **بنه‌ماله‌ی بارزانی و تاله‌بانی ئاشتی‌ه‌کی کاتیان ده‌سته‌به‌ر کردوه،** چونکه‌سه‌روه‌تی ئه‌و و لاته‌ دا به‌ش ده‌که‌ن... (Sbeiy)

“We were not politicians. We were just people with requests,” Mr Kamal said. Their demands included an end to corruption, the release of detained protesters, justice for the victims' families, an end to harassment of protesters and the withdrawal of the KDP and the PUK militias... from cities. (The National)

كاروان كه مالى پاريزهر دهليت... ئيمه سياسى نه بوين تهنها كو مه ليك خه لك
بوين كه داوامان هه بوو، داواكانمان برىتى بوون له كو تايى هيئان به گه نده لى و
ئازاد كردنى گيراوه كانى خو پيشاندا نه كان و دادپه روه رى بو كه سوكارى
قوربانىه كان دهسته به رى كرئى و كو تايه ئيان به سه ركوت كردنى خو پيشاندا ن و
كشانه وهى ميليشياكانى يه كيئى و پارتنى له شاره كاندا. (Sbeiy)



The examples above confirm that ideology, whether rightfully or (more possibly) wrongfully, “allows a certain degree of autonomy for the individual translator to operate according to his or her specific ideological or ethical beliefs and preferences” (Munday, 2007: 44).