

Remain as Stranger or Be Local?

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ABSTRACT

The entire world has witnessed the spread of COVID-19, starting from the end of the year 2019 in Wuhan, China, and is still affecting the population until now, the year 2022, although the infection is currently under control. In the beginning, it was identified as an epidemic but later was declared by the World Health Organization (WHO) in Mac 2020 as a pandemic. As a result, any information related to this disease is widely disseminated as health protection and procedure. Thus, acquiring of the knowledge of COVID-19 jargon is necessary to ensure mutual understanding. Failure to provide an adequate meaning will lead to misunderstanding regarding the implementation of health procedures in the language community. Therefore, this current paper carries out the study to identify technical terms related to COVID-19 in speeches of the General Director of WHO and explore the method applied in translating those terms from English into Arabic. The terms are unfamiliar in the target text, therefore the study explores the approaches used to convey the meaning, besides discovering whether the terms are remained with their features (foreignized) or adapted (domesticated) into Arabic. This is a descriptive study that applies the document analysis approach in collecting and analysing data. Based on the preliminary analysis, several types of technical terms related to COVID-19 are discovered and classified into different categorizations. The study contributes to uncovering the trend of translating COVID-19 terms into Arabic.

Contribution/Originality: This study contributes to the existing literature through the discovery of COVID-19 technical terms widely disseminated as health protection and procedure which must be taken seriously for the sake of saving lives. The identification of these terms is necessary as to ensure the presence of mutual understanding of COVID-19 jargon.

1. Introduction

Every single person in the world has been affected by Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) either related to health, economy, politics, education, or social activities. It is an infectious disease, caused by SARS-CoV-2 virus. Whoever is infected with this dangerous disease, the impact will be either get sick with COVID-19, become seriously ill, or die at any age. In the beginning, it was identified as an epidemic but was declared later by the World Health Organization (WHO) in Mac 2020 as a pandemic. As a result, any information related to this disease is widely disseminated as health protection and procedure which must be taken seriously for the sake of saving lives. Thus, a new scenario emerges where people all over the world need to acquire the knowledge of COVID-19 jargon to ensure the presence of mutual understanding. Moreover, the translation of this jargon into all languages needs to be done to provide necessary information to every single population. Failure to provide an adequate meaning will lead to misunderstanding regarding the implementation of health procedures in the language community. Therefore, COVID-19 has changed the lives of people from normal activities to new norm practices, and indeed the impacts can be seen throughout all aspects especially spreading the COVID-19 essential information across languages and borderless countries. The focus relates to the role of transferring and translating that information adequately and sufficiently.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Impact of COVID-19

COVID-19 was first detected in late December 2019, spreading all over the world with an outbreak of mysterious pneumonia characterized by fever, dry cough, fatigue, and occasional gastrointestinal symptoms. The virus happened to be spotted in a seafood wholesale wet market, Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market, in Wuhan, Hubei, China. After that incident, the market was shut down on January 1, 2020, after the announcement of an epidemiologic alert by the local health authority on December 31, 2019 ([Huang et al., 2020](#)).

Next, the episodes of the rampant spreading of the disease can be seen throughout the world until the year 2021, in every minute and everywhere, without any failure, and has caused a lot of death. The spreading of disease then gradually decreases from time to time towards 2022 with the implementation of effective and aggressive vaccination programs all over the world. Thus, herd immunity among world communities has been massively achieved.

However, the impact that the COVID-19 has created especially in contributing and developing new terminology, especially the health care and procedure technical terms should be taken into consideration. The terms such as social and physical distancing, self and home quarantine, double face mask, personal protective equipment (PPE), and hand and respiratory hygiene are among the examples of these new developing terminologies ([World Health Organization, 2020](#)). Such terminologies are also being translated and used in daily life in other languages as well, to deliver the same messages and information to people around the world who are infected and affected with COVID-19.

Many health organizations and institutions have played their important roles in offering the best services, such as decreasing the infection and combating the spread of COVID-19 either in terms of outlining the standard operation procedure (SOP), giving advice, or

assistance in any means of informative sources. World Health Organization (WHO) on its website has provided a lot of beneficial information regarding health care, procedures, and speeches related to COVID-19 for every single person all over the countries, from the youngest to the eldest on how to manage and deal with the COVID-19 pandemic situation. Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the WHO Director-General has spoken a lot about the issues of COVID-19, especially the health care and procedure perspectives, and his speeches have been translated into many languages such as Spanish, Arabic, and France on the WHO website.

Thus, as an effort to ensure the delivery of the messages relating to COVID-19 terminology are transferred and easily understood by people all over the world, the work of translating these messages and information either at word level, phrase level, or sentence level needs to be done effectively. Various translation procedures have been suggested by scholars in translation fields as the main key to transfer the messages and information into the target language successfully and adequately.

2.2. Strategy of translation

Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) have divided translation procedures into two main domains which are direct translation and oblique translation. The focus is on the translation of words, phrases, and sentences levels. Borrowing, calque, modulation, and equivalence are among the suggested translation procedures which can be applied to the health care and procedure terminologies related to COVID-19. Meanwhile, Nida (1964) has discussed the techniques of adjustment which include additions, subtractions, and alterations when dealing with transferring messages from the source text to the target text. The main purpose of these techniques is to produce the same level of equivalence when transferring the messages from the source language to the target language. Thus, the translator has various choices in selecting the suitable approaches and techniques when dealing with those terminologies.

Next prominent scholar who has also suggested the translation procedures is Newmark (1988). He has provided certain guidelines and procedures when dealing with transferring cultural elements into the target text. Among those procedures are transference, neutralization, label translation, and componential analysis. The benefit of these procedures is bridging the cultural and language gaps that existed in both source and target texts. In addition, Hervey and Higgins (2017) have also suggested certain procedures of translating culture by giving the degrees of inclination in translating procedures starting from exoticism, calque, cultural borrowing, and communicative translation to cultural transplantation. The suggested degrees can guide the translator to what extent he or she wants to foreignize or domesticate the transferring messages of cultural elements into the target language. In other words, these procedures determine the tendency of whether the translation inclines towards the source language or the target language.

Every translation has its direction and orientation which are decided by a translator as the decision-maker. Foreignization and domestication are both notions in the translation field and were emphasized by Venuti (1995), an American scholar, which was extended by Friedrich Schleiermacher in the early 19th century. Furthermore, he is the one who puts the issue to light (Susan Bernofsky, 1997). Foreignization is defined as a source-culture-oriented translation that strives to translate the source language and culture into the target one for the sake of preserving a kind of exotic flavor (Feng, 1993). Furthermore,

Schuttleworth and Cowie (1997) have defined foreignization as a term used by Venuti to represent the strategy type of translation in which a target text is produced that deliberately departs from target conventions by keeping something of the foreignness of the original. In other words, the translator brings the target reader to the original text by preserving the foreignness in the translated text.

On the other hand, domestication refers to the translation, which is oriented to the target culture, and in which unusual expressions to the target culture are transmuted and changed into familiar ones, to make the translated text easy to be understood by the target readers. Moreover, Schuttleworth and Cowie (1997) have defined domestication as a term adopted by Venuti to describe the translation strategy in which a lucid, fluent style is used for minimizing the foreignness of the foreign text (source text) for target language readers (in target text) (ibid). Venuti (2004:49) has also quoted Schleiermacher's words on the concepts of foreignization and domestication as "either the translator leaves the author in peace as much as possible and moves the reader toward him, or he leaves the reader in peace as much as possible and moves the writer toward him". Thus, both two possible strategies for translation can be applied to translate terminology related to COVID-19. The translator has the decision either to foreignize or domesticate those terms to achieve understanding and spread the messages to the target readers.

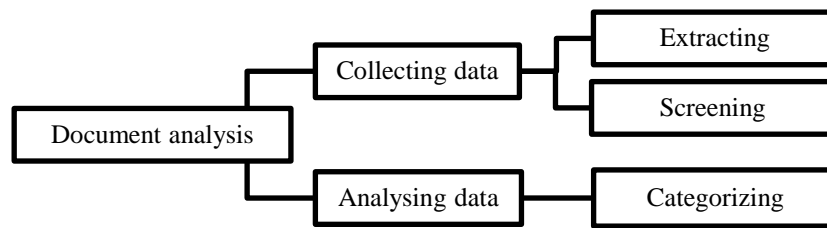
3. Methodology

This descriptive study applies a document analysis approach in collecting and analyzing data. The primary data of the study are COVID-19 terms in English, as the source language (SL), and secondary data are its translation in Arabic, as the target language (TL). These data are extracted from the speeches of the General Director (GD) of WHO, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, that had been published from 5th to 29th January of 2021 on the WHO website itself. The purpose of selecting speeches within the stated period is to navigate the developments of COVID-19 terms in its year two, 2021, meaning that after the pandemic outbreak. It is believed that there are some new terms emerged based on the current scenario in the world.

Extracting the data of COVID-19 terms has been accomplished after identifying which speech would be selected for the investigation of the study. There are several types of speeches delivered by GD of WHO on the website, such as keynote, address, remark, and statement. However, the study only chose speeches or remarks which were published on the website in January 2021. The reason behind this choice of lexical is the importance of the remarks in addressing the issues and solutions to overcome the pandemic, besides spreading this information to the population all around the world. This information is necessary and crucial because there is an urgency and need to disseminate the information to secure their safety and save their lives.

The Figure 1 illustrates the general procedure conducted in collecting and analyzing the corpus of the study and it is explained as follows:

Figure 1: Procedure of the Study



As shown in Figure 1, the study carries out a document analysis approach in collecting and analyzing the data. Those data as aforementioned previously are terms related to the COVID-19 pandemic in English and Arabic. These terms are considered technical terms for their specification in COVID-19. Since the terms are widely spread in English, in describing the virus, procedures, measures, tests, and vaccinations, the unfamiliarity of terms affects the dissemination of information among the Arabic native speakers, besides it clouds their understanding of the issues, situations, and solutions. Therefore, the study ran the process of extracting and screening the terms based on a determined or specific criterion, later analyzing the terms to discover the method applied in translating them from English to Arabic.

Apart from that, the Table 1 demonstrates the flow of procedure in collecting data that involves two phases as follows:

Table 1: Procedure of Collecting COVID-19 Terms

Procedure 1	Phases of analysis	
Collecting the terms	Extracting	Speeches of GD of WHO COVID-19 terms
	Screening	Noun Contexts

In the phase 1, the study extracts COVID-19 terms from the selected corpus which are speeches of GD of WHO in both languages, English (SL) and Arabic (TL). In the phase 2, those terms are screened based on several criteria: (1) noun and (2) aspect/context. The selection of nouns as language items excludes other types of language items such as verbs, adverbs, adjectives, and so on. While the context, in this sense, means the selected nouns in the study are related to health, vaccination, test, and procedure. It is because these contexts are broadly spread and frequently used across the globe that the human population is trying to comprehend the consequences implicated by the disease, and at the same time they are still struggling to fight the virus.

The procedure employed in the study to analyze the data of COVID-19 terms in English and Arabic is demonstrated as follows:

Table 2: Procedure in Analyzing the COVID-19 Terms

Procedure 2	Phase of Analysis		
Analyzing COVID-19 terms	Procedure Hervey & Higgin	Calque Exoticism	Foreignization

Referring to the [Table 2](#), the process of analysis involves the identifying of methods to discover means applied in translating the terms. In this context, the study identifies that method used in conveying the meaning of COVID-19 terms is faithful translation. Adopting procedures developed by [Hervey and Higgin \(2017\)](#), the translation method employs two procedures: calque and exoticism. Both procedures are associated with the foreignization strategy which emphasizes bringing the readers close to the author.

On the other hand, this explains that the procedure adopted in the translation uncovers that the terms in the target text become strange and unfamiliar. This may suggest that the terms are weird and alien to the target readers. However, it demonstrates that the meaning of those terms and their foreign values remain in target text (TT), and it helps the readers to comprehend adequately the meaning value of COVID-19 terms. Therefore, in the case such, this foreignization strategy can provide a better understanding of the meaning of those terms.

4. Result

After analyzing the COVID-19 terms in English and Arabic, the study manages to discover the solutions required to answer the objective of this study. The first objective is to identify the COVID-19 terms used in the remarks' speech of GD of WHO as the corpus of study. The study identifies 104 terms related to COVID-19. While the second objective is to determine the method employed by the translator in conveying the meaning of those terms in Arabic. It is concluded that the translation method is literal/ interlinear translation and there are two procedures employed namely calque and exoticism. Since the COVID-19 is a new disease spread widely throughout the whole globe and is inevitable, so dissemination of knowledge regarding this disease is indeed crucial and necessary. Therefore, the study on the translation of terms related to this disease is significant.

In the context of the study, the [Table 3](#) presents the findings that resolve the objective of the study as follows:

Table 3: COVID-19 Terms, Translation Procedures, and Types of Meaning

Quantity of COVID-19 terms	Procedures of Translation	Types of Meaning
104 terms	78 terms 26 terms	Common Meaning Enhanced Meaning

[Table 3](#) presents the results of the data found in the analysis. The total of terms related to COVID-19 is 104; 78 terms are categorized as common meanings and the other 26 terms are considered as enhanced meanings. This categorization is resolved according to the procedure applied during the process of transferring the meanings into TL. Based on the analysis conducted on these terms and their meanings, it can be concluded that the methods applied in the translating process are calque and exoticism.

5. Discussion

As aforementioned discussion, the selected terms of COVID-19 are translated into Arabic using calque and expansion approaches. A calque is an approach proposed by [Vinay and Dalbernet \(1995\)](#), in which the structure of the source text is adopted in the target language. It is also classified as one of the methods of foreignizing the source text into the

target language by translation scholars (Behtash & Firoozkoohi, 2009). In the sense of study, this approach manages to provide the equivalents without reducing the impact of meaning in Arabic as well as bring the value of those scientific terms close to the readers of Arabic text. Using the translated word in the same form e.g., فاشيات الأمراض for **disease outbreaks** in English shows that calque as a method can afford to sustain the impact of meaning. This means that disease outbreaks; noun phrase in plural form, which is translated into the same level of language item in Arabic as فاشيات الأمراض, does not reduce the intended meaning. This method is applied to 78 terms out of 104 in total. The Table 4 below presents 20% of samples of translated terms into Arabic using calque:

Table 4: Calque as Procedure of Translation

No.	Source Text	Target Text
1	pandemic	الجائحة
2	public health crisis	أزمة صحية عامة
3	disease outbreaks	فاشيات الأمراض
4	global solidarity	التضامن العالمي
5	essential services	الخدمات الأساسية
6	global health strategy	استراتيجية صحية عالمية
7	infectious disease	الأمراض المعدية
8	noncommunicable diseases	الأمراض غير السارية
9	new infectious virus	فيروس معدي جديد
10	risk of dying	مخاطر الوفاة
11	health conditions	اعتلالات صحية
12	epidemiological situation	الأوضاع الوبائية
13	health systems	النظم الصحية
14	critical period	الفترة الحرجة
15	isolate	العزل
16	health tools	الأدوات الصحية

Based on the equivalents of COVID-19 terms in Table 4, it can be affirmed that calque as a procedure of translation manages to draw the equal meaning in Arabic namely common meaning. This is because this procedure imports the English verbatim into the Arabic. By using the calque procedure as a method in translating, it also proves that the terms are foreignized skillfully in the target language where the meaning of equivalent given can be understood to the same degree. This reality shows that the COVID-19 terms remain strangers which convey its specific characteristics and foreign values in the target text. However, it can be concluded that those foreign values are understood by target reader because; not only they are facing reality currently, but the translated terms also supply sufficient meaning. Foreignization as a strategy applied by the translator manages to sustain the intended meaning in the target text. Therefore, Behtash and Firoozkoohi (2009) affirm that foreignization can best preserve the difference and the otherness. Thus, those terms in Arabic are indeed strangers, yet not jargon to deal with.

The latter approach in translating those COVID-19 terms is exoticism. The meaning that are rendered into Arabic by using this procedure is namely enhanced meaning. This is because exoticism imports linguistic and cultural characteristic wholesale from English into Arabic with minimal adaptation such as expansion/addition. This procedure

indicates that the equivalent is biased toward the target text for its purpose is bringing the readers close to the author. Therefore, it is characterized by foreign values of the source text in the target language. It often transfers the meaning of the source text with some expansions or additions to provide a better understanding of the meaning among target readers. It consistently uses grammatical and cultural features imported from the source text with minimal adaptation, thereby constantly signaling the exotic source culture and its cultural strangeness (Hervey & Higgins, 2002:36). Basically, in translation, the equivalent needs expansion when it is found that provided meaning could not be comprehended clearly or does not reflect equal meaning in the target language. The following are the COVID-19 terms translated into Arabic using the exoticism procedure (Table 5).

Table 5: Exoticism as Procedure of Translation

No	Source Target	Target Text
1	quality health services	خدمات صحية عالية الجودة
2	new variants	الأنواع المتحورة الجديدة
3	quarantine	الحجر الصحي
4	high-risk populations	المجموعات السكانية المعرضة لخطر شديد
5	well-ventilated room	تهوية الغرفة
6	limiting transmission	الحد من انتقال العدوى
7	potential source of infection	المصدر المحتمل لإصابة الحالات الأولى بالعدوى
8	transmission risk	خطر انتقال العدوى
9	community level	مستوى المجتمع المحلي
10	vaccine equity	للإنصاف في مجال اللقاحات
11	Essential Diagnostics List	قائمة وسائل التشخيص الأساسية
12	widespread transmission	انتشار على نطاق واسع
13	vaccine nationalism	إضفاء النزعة القومية على اللقاحات
14	be vaccinated	تَلَقِّي التَّطْعِيم
15	ventilation	تهوية جيدة
16	vaccine-preventable	الوقاية باللقاحات
17	economic and employment recovery	الانتعاش في مجال الاقتصاد والعمالة
18	life-saving diagnosis	التشخيصات المنقذة للأرواح
19	widespread transmission	انتشار الفيروس المستجد على نطاق واسع
20	zoonotic disease	مرض حيواني المصدر

6. Conclusion

This study highlights several vital points of research findings in this section as follow:

- The technical terms related to COVID-19 are divided into health, vaccination, test, and procedure. Referring to the theory developed by Dickins et al. (2017), they are all translated into Arabic using faithful translation by applying calque and exoticism approaches/procedures.
- The calque (former) is capable to convey the equal meaning as intended in the Arabic language. Thus, the meaning rendered using this procedure is namely common meaning because it imports the English verbatim into Arabic. Since the calque is categorized under the foreignization strategy (Behtash & Firoozkoohi, 2009), hence

the foreignization contributes to the existence of strangeness elements of the source text in the target language, but at the same time introduces the difference and otherness to target readers. These two procedures are considered as foreignizing strategy because both preserve the foreign values of medical or scientific terms and characteristics in Arabic.

- c. Exoticism (the latter) demonstrates trends of expansion and addition to assist the understanding of the selected terms in Arabic translation. The meaning translated by using this procedure is namely enhanced meaning because it imports linguistic and cultural characteristic wholesale from English into Arabic with minimal adaptation such as expansion/addition. The terms are so technical to understand, thus expanding and adding information can lead to a smooth flow in grasping those terminologies in the target language and providing ideas more effectively and understandable. The readers feel more comfortable and bring them closer and are local in the target language.
- d. Based on the study conducted in this paper, it is evident that exoticism is part of foreignization strategy (which is contradicted to some previous studies that found this procedure is categorized as domestication strategy). However, according to [Dickins et al. \(2017\)](#) and [Hervey and Higgins \(2002\)](#), exoticism is an approach that is biased to the source culture (author) and it involves multiple calque stating it represents wholesale foreignness. This is evidence that justify (in the light of this study) the exoticism is foreignizing strategy.
- e. In reference to the degree of freedom in translation by [Hervey and Higgins \(2017\)](#), it can be concluded that the translator of these terms applied literal translation, where the source text (ST) message content is preserved but at the same time prioritizes the target language naturalness and the faithfulness to ST details. In other words, the naturalness of ST is conveyed in the target text by being faithful to the ST message content. This is what is emphasized by the foreignizing translation strategy.
- f. In summary, the apparent trend based on the analysis is the application of faithful translation where the terms are transferred into Arabic using calque and exoticism procedures. Both are the approach that preserves the foreign value and strangeness of the source text without sacrificing the naturalness of the target text. This is the evidence of foreignizing strategy manages to remain the meaning of the term COVID-19 in Arabic to the highest degree by being a local and not stranger as the naturalness of meaning in Arabic remains and the faithfulness of English values sustains.

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Conflict of Interests

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