

ARABIZATION AND TRANSLATION IN ALGERIA AND THE MAGHREB

Mme **Harrane Rahma**

Université de Tlemcen.

Melle **Kissi Khalida**

Université de Tlemcen

Arabization is a linguistic policy which aims at restoring the Arabic language to its pre-eminent place that the French language occupied for a long time in the Maghreb. This policy was vehicled by a number of pro-Arabization leaders(Arabists),who were ascendant in the government following independence. Their aim was to restore Arabic as the national Language, and Islam as the religion, in addition to the restoration of the national identity. The major efforts were centered around Arabic to be the official language, this became the hallmark of Arabization which has aroused the most controversy and outright opposition between the Francophone and the Arabophone elites.

I. Arabization in Algeria:

Under the policy of Arabization, Algerian Institutions and administrations have been Arabized under the imposition of Arabic as the official language of the State. Two methods have been used. One which according to Grandguillaume may be called "Translation", consisted of saying and doing in Arabic what had previously been said and done in French. In the other, which can be called "Conversion",Arabic was essentially seen as the expression of a different culture, the aim was to reject modern technical advances ,but to restore close links with the culture that of a better term can be called Arabo-Islamic.

The choices have been between two ideological options: to accept attainments transmitted through colonization or to reject them. One was bilingual and the other monolingual.

1) Arabization and Translation in Law:

In Law,Arabization has concentrated on translation from French after the restoration of the Algerian Justice, and the result has been frequently a set of judicial texts and laws mostly ambiguous including a complex linguistic composition Because the Algerian legal system has mostly been based on French legal texts and laws, the result of the Long-termed French judicial occupation, Arabization was determined to impose Arabic in Justice and all what constituted the French written judicial language has been translated to Standard Arabic. But it is not easy to translate legislative writings in a sphere of linguistic deficiencies mainly composed of Francophone or even Arabophone elites who do not share a bilingual competence in mastering both French and Arabic at the same time, and ensure a good translation.

The majority of the Algerian judicial texts are written in Standard Arabic, however, the problem is not in the amount of writings but in their composition and their form, which both represent fundamental points for a general comprehension to attract everyone to read legislative texts and make everyone aware of the national and the international legislations.

2.The Importance of the French Law in Algerian Justice:

In the world of law and justice, there exist many judicial schools, Anglo-Saxon, Latin, Islamic and Germanic.

Some of the Arabic countries take as reference the Latin school in which France is the representative.

In the Algerian context, historical and judicial factors justify the importance of the French Law which still has a function in the Algerian judicial system since Constitutions which have been essentially elaborated from the French Law are still used. Consequently, the comprehension of the French judicial texts implies the mastery of the source language.

The importance of French law had an impact on the organization of Algerian law; the latter mainly depended on translation from French to Arabic.

3.Legal and Administrative Terminology:

Writing is the principle source of technical language in Law either for documents of official Characteristics (law, judicial decisions, treatises, deeds, wills, opinions..) This specialization of the judicial and the administrative judicial terminology poses a number of problems to translators mainly in the comprehension and the interpretation of the texts; moreover, the passage from one system to another presents some difficulties either in the conceptual plan which is particularly illustrated by the translation of laws in bilingual countries, of documents like notarial acts, or in the formal plan.

The problem of translation in Algeria does not only concern language itself but also translators. Not every text that is generated in connection with legislative, judicial or administrative activities, or in connection with the practice of the legal profession automatically contains legal and administrative terminology.

Since Law and Administration cover aspects of human life, a number of problems arise when we try to distinguish legal and administrative terminologies from the terminologies of other technical language or even from the vocabulary of Standard language.

Translation of course has not revealed all its secrets, and the methods used with respect to a given field (technical, literary, medical, legal, scientific) can occasionally serve as an example to jurists, especially to practitioners.

But, technical vocabulary represents a problem. Specialized lexicography is a difficult art, certainly in a plurilinguistic framework like Algeria, and especially when two or more legal systems are present. Note that more than 7300 new terms are added to the world of knowledge in the world each year. This is equal to 20 terms each day.

while the number of new terms added to the Arabic language each year does not transcend 2500 terms .

4. Translation Problems:

Some Algerian texts of a French origin relied on translation to Arabic. However, there has been a great number of difficulties and translation problems in the domain of Law like the problem faced by translators in understanding French legal texts ,the main cause being the translator who may not necessarily be able to comprehend the meaning of the text if he is not a trained one. The translator should be an expert in the law of the source language as well as in the one of the target language to insure ideal translation.

The difference between the French and the Arabic legal systems is also identified as a major problem, since the translator is called upon to translate the terminology describing concepts that are unknown in the target language or that do not exist in exactly the same form in that language .This may be due to judicial, political, but also cultural and social differences between French and Algerian States.

Law in Algeria has also faced a problem of polysemy which poses principally a problem of interpretation.

A number of items in Law are written in the same way as in French, but they have different meanings in Standard Arabic. Therefore, the task of translating these items from French to Arabic has caused complications in using different Standard Arabic equivalents for the same words in French.

There are many other problems including phonological and morphological ones, especially in terms of phonological and morphological differences between the two systems (French and Arabic).

Conclusion:

The success of Arabization in judicial writing strongly depends on the way translated legal text , laws, are shaped from French to Arabic.

Numerous viewpoints come with various suggestions on how drafting of laws can be successful if it relies on translation. Some of them accuse the drafters, others the language itself, but in fact both of them may be responsible for either a bad or a good translation.