Intertextuality-Based Argumentation in Politico-Religious Speech: A Semiotic Perspective

Mohammad Ahmad Thawabteh

Electronic version
URL: http://journals.openedition.org/signata/1179
DOI: 10.4000/signata.1179
ISSN: 2565-7097

Publisher
Presses universitaires de Liège (PULg)

Printed version
Date of publication: 31 December 2016
Number of pages: 71-84
ISSN: 2032-9806

Electronic reference
Mohammad Ahmad Thawabteh, « Intertextuality-Based Argumentation in Politico-Religious Speech: A Semiotic Perspective », Signata [Online], 7 | 2016, Online since 31 December 2017, connection on 19 April 2019. URL : http://journals.openedition.org/signata/1179 ; DOI : 10.4000/signata.1179
1. Introduction

The Islamist groups, which abound almost everywhere, date back to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and the roots of their ideologies need to be explained briefly as an important context for the present study. In the aftermath of the First World War and the decline of the then Ottoman Empire considered as a guardian of the Islamic State, most of the far-flung Islamic lands were divided into areas controlled by Great Britain, France, Spain, among others. The rising tide of nationalism in Europe and the new-found Arab countries then contributed a great deal to the rise of Islamist groups, e.g., the foundation of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) in 1928 and Hizb it-Tahrīr (HT) in 1952, etc. These groups have ideologies which converge on monotheism but diverge on tactics, ranging from ushering in an Islamic State to declaring Jihad against colonisers through defying Western notions (e.g., democracy, freedom, secularism, existentialism etc.). Most importantly, the rise of Zionism and the establishment of the Jewish State in Palestine in 1948 have been a combustible fuse igniting the conflict between these groups and the West. For instance, MB has declared Jihad against Israeli’s occupation to Palestine and played up Palestine as an issue central to all Muslims. From MB’s vantage point, Jihad has become incumbent upon all Muslims and the fact that Israel has been

---

1. This term refers to Islamic Caliphate founded in seventh century in which a ruler called a caliph rules the far-flung Islamic lands. Many Islamist groups (e.g., Hizb it-Tahreer) believes that priority must be given to the establishment of Islamic Caliphate first, and Jihad is only declared by the caliph himself.
enjoying seamless support from the US has increasingly focused these groups’ ire on the United States.

Al-Qaeda (literally, “base”) is an organisation which has bearings on “radicalism” and “extremism”, founded and fomented by Bin Laden in the late 1980s, with a different ideology from that of other Islamist groups, say, Hamas, for instance. Whilst Hamas has been trying to tilt towards localising Jihad, i.e., restricting it to the boundaries of the occupied Palestinian territories, al-Qaeda sees it as a re-run of that pursued in the Islamic era, and that it is not limited to certain geographical boundaries, but is rather directed at the West as a whole. Hence Bin Laden has created for himself an image as a revolutionary as Snyder argues:

Bin Laden certainly fits the definition of a revolutionary: at a minimum he has sought political power (in having partial control of Afghanistan), has acquired some organisational capacity to gain it (in training thousands of fighters), and has promoted a populist regional ideology (in Islamism). (Snyder 2003, p. 329)

It ensues from the above discussion that the Islamist discourse has gained momentum and weight over the past decades owing to political and social upheavals the Arab and Islamic world have passed through. Clearly, the discourse has created a confluence of political and religious interests for these groups, in spite of the many ideological differences manifested in their agendas.

2. Methodology

The present paper comprises a translation taken from the English translated version of a Bin Laden’s speech from the angle of discourse analysis. The rational behind choosing the speech lies in the discoursal features of the speech. For the purpose of the study, a sample of 5 excerpts, identified by the researcher as posing difficulties when translated into English, was chosen.

2.1. The present study

This study aims to examine intertextuality-based argumentation in a politico-religious speech from a semiotic perspective. To do so, five examples from the speech are extracted, and then analysed based on the way they are dealt with by an anonymous translator of a speech by Bin Laden, aired by Qatar-based al-Jazeera on April 23, 2006. Although the translation seems to have been professionally done, we shall show how failure to observe the intertextualities (and a lack of semiotic interactions among signs) in translation distorts the schematic structure of Bin Laden. We shall also show how the success of some renderings of the same

Intertextualy-Based Argumentation in Politico-Religious Speech

Intertextualities paves the way for maximal discoursal communication. We shall finally investigate the discourse-related problems encountered by the translator of a speech by Bin Laden’s speech by contrasting the speech (i.e. SL) with the translation (i.e. TL).

2.2. **Significance of the Study**

The article could be deemed significant as, to the best of our knowledge, it drifts away from the present focus on intertextuality in its traditional manner, on a more specific religious type of intertextuality utilised by text producer (i.e. Bin Laden) to make a more ideologically-motivated argument. The originality in dealing with the subject is based on the fact that text producer prioritises a given type of intertextuality over another for entirely ideological lining. Therefore, intertextuality is not used haphazardly, but systematically—as will be demonstrated in relation to chronologicality later in this article. Curiously enough, the text producer invented his own discourse outside the reach of other Islamic-dominated discourses.

3. **Intertextuality**

Hatim and Mason (1997) offer the following definition of intertextuality: “a precondition for the intelligibility of texts, involving the dependence of one text as a semiotic entity on another, previously encountered.” For an exchange to take place, Hatim and Mason (p. 219) opine that “texts producers as well as text receivers rely upon their own and other people previous experience of other texts in order to communicate and comprehend the particular meanings that they are seeking to exchange” (Ibid.; see also de Beaugrande and Dressler, 1981, p. 184). “The text is a productivity,” Kristeva claims and,

not in the sense that it is a product of being worked (as narrative technique or the mastery of style would demand), but as the very theatre of a production where the producer of the text and the reader come together: the text “works’ whenever and however it is taken up; even in written fixed form, the text does not stop working, or undertaking a process of production.” (Kristeva 1980, p. 36)

The “productivity of the text” entails various shades of meanings in a different social context. Similarly, but more precisely, Hatim (1997) highlights that for maximum impact in communication, utterances interact with each other within and between texts;

in tandem with the interaction between a speaker (and utterances produced) and a hearer (and utterances received), another, far more important, level of semiotic activity emerges to facilitate the interaction of sign with sign. The principle which regulates this activity is “intertextuality’ through which textual occurrences are seen in terms of their dependence on other prior, relevant occurrences. (Hatim 1997, p. 30)
Bakhtin (1986, p. 93) speaks of inimitability and inevitability of intertextuality as an inescapable phenomenon in everyday use of language: the “speaker is not biblical Adam, dealing only with virgin and still unnamed objects, giving them names for the first time. [A]ny utterance, in addition to its own theme, always responds in one form or another to others’ utterances that precede it.” A text is no longer seen as virgin territory, but a concatenation of text upon text manipulated by text producer in daily socio-linguistic.

The issue we shall address at this juncture is an important type of intertextuality, namely “cultural intertextuality”, as proposed by González-Cascallana (2006), according to whom, there is a distinction between genre-related intertextuality whereby a text producer conventionally employs given utterances to set off a speech, oration etc., and cultural-bound elements in which socio-cultural practices are subsumed within a text for a rhetorical purpose. Islamic benediction (illustrated a few pages below) is a case in point for the former. As for the latter, the use of the Qur’anic verses with an eye to a particular discoursal thrust is a good example.

The pièce de résistance of Bin Laden’s speech is likely to be intertextuality (on the use of intertextuality, see also Momani, Badarneh and Migdadi, 2010). Thawabteh (2007, p. 86) points out that “intertextuality has played a crucial role in substantiating one’s own speech to arrive at the discoursal thrust of the text in question.” Indeed, it is a rhetorical device frequently used to corroborate and diversify Bin Laden’s argument, substantiate his own speech for maximum communicative force, and to serve al-Qaeda’s hidden agendas, e.g. Jihad is a staple of al-Qaeda’s agenda. More to the point is also “argumentation” defined by Hatim (1990, p. 49) as “a type of discourse intended to present proof for settling differences of belief among those engaged in argument. It is used in ideological doctrines, religious debates, legal proceedings, disputes and defences.” To engage in argumentation, Bin Laden has obviously employed three forms of intertextuality, namely Qur’anic intertextuality, prophetic intertextuality and anecdotal intertextuality.

4. Analysis and discussion

4.1. Islamic benediction

The opening benediction is part of Islamist discourse as is the case in Friday Sermons, funeral condolence speeches, marriage contracts, political speeches, and so forth. Bin Laden’s speeches are no exception. Al-Mohannadi (2008, p. 531) aptly remarks that “Osama bin Laden used for his introduction a typical Arabic/Islamic convention. It begins by praising God and declaring the first pillar of the Islam, which is the Shahāda or Testimonies of Faith.” More tersely, as a semiotic entity, the benediction acts as an opening gambit which may include: (1) a greeting using the most common Islamic formula (Peace be upon you); (2) pronouncing ‘In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful’ or simply the blending
form *basmallah*; (3) saying ‘Peace be upon Muhammad, his kins and companions; (4) thanking Allah; and (5) references to the Qur’an and/or Hadīth by Prophet Muhammad’s companions.

The rhetorical purpose of the benediction is more or less a sort of warm-up for what will be said so that the audience can psychologically be prepared for receiving the speech. In addition, it is aimed at drawing the attention of an audience to the speech *per se* and alluding to the topic of the speech.

In a socio-religious context, we argue, it is actually quite significant for the speaker to start his/her speech by pronouncing *basmallah*, and that any speech bereft of *basmallah* is considered to be value-free. Like many Muslim orators, Sheikhs or even Arab political figures, Bin Laden draws heavily on the Qur’an, and always begins his speech by pronouncing a Qur’anic verse *basmallah* to highlight the religious significance and reliability of an utterance. To elaborate more on the point, consider Text 1 below (the source language text is stated first followed by the English translation):

1a. ‘*ila il’umati il-‘islāmiyyati āmatan as-salāmu ‘alayykumu wa rahmatu allahi wa barakātuh.

1b. ‘Praise be to Allah, Lord of the world, prayer and peace be upon our prophet Muhammad, his kin and all his companions.’

It should be noted that a variety of benedictions like the one in Text 1a above can be employed in Arab-Islamic discourse. The introductory part of Bin Laden’s does not occur in a vacuum, but is inextricably interwoven with rest of the text for the realisation of a given rhetorical purpose. The benediction paves the way for more discoursal considerations necessary for optimally effective communication. First, the (un)reliability of what will be said by a text producer depends on the benediction, particularly on “In the name of Allah…” Second, the benediction shapes the overall speech as Islamic rather than secular, for instance. As can be observed, the rendition in Text 1b is incongruent with the overall discoursal structure of Text 1a—the translator seems to have encapsulated the importance of retaining the SL benediction, but s/he has come up with a benediction in Text 1b quite different from that in Text 1a. In Text 1a, the benediction aims to inspire all Muslims to get into the religious fray in question by means of using an utterance addressed to a Muslim nation, i.e. *‘ila il’umati il-‘islāmiyyati āmatan* (lit. “to all Muslim nations”), then using a typical Islamic greeting, *as-salāmu ‘alayykumu wa rahmatu allahi wa barakātuh* (lit. “peace and Allah’s mercy be upon you all”); in Text 1b, however, it is merely an introductory part with a view to prefacing the speech with an invocation for divine guidance. The translator’s decision seems to have opted for another functionally-oriented beneficication, quite far beyond the SL formal ambit, yet religiously-oriented and salient discourse-wise.
4.2. Qur’anic intertextuality

It almost goes without saying that the Qur’an has held sway over Islamic-Arab culture throughout Islamic history, and the Qur’anic embeddedness in Arabic rhetoric is typical of an array of political and religious speeches, Bin Laden’s speeches are no exception. Let us indulge in a few more illustrative examples to show how argumentation is achieved by employing Qur’anic intertextuality (QI).

2a. faqad harrama allahū tabārka wata’ālā adhāhu faqala il- Qurānī il-'azīm: “‘inna alladhīna yu’dhūna allaha warasūlahah la’ānahumu allahu fi iddunya wal-ākhirati w’a’adda lahum ‘adhāban muhīnan.”

2b. “Allah, the Almighty, has made it a taboo to offend him, saying in the Qur’an those who harm Allah and his messenger would be damned and severely punished.”

The italicised Qur’anic verse in Text 2a represents the drift of Bin Laden’s speech inasmuch as it can be used interchangeably with the thesis statement of the speech (see Fig. 1 below). To make sense of the speech, we need to consult the previous text(s) in their socio-cultural occurrences. In addition, the intertextual potential of the Qur’anic verse highlights the question of identity of people who do not belong to a Muslim group because of harming “Allah and his messenger” which may unfold ‘racist’, ‘ethnocentric’, ‘xenophobic’ ideologies (see van Dijk 1995, p. 249). For example, an ethnocentric ideology is clear based on the belief that one particular group (i.e. Muslims) is superior to all others which harm “Allah and his messenger”.

4.3. Prophetic intertextuality

Prophetic Hadīth (roughly what has been said or done by Prophet Muhammad) is ranked second in terms of importance after the Glorious Qur’an. The Hadīth includes Islamic jurisdiction for the welfare of Muslims spiritually, socially, politically and economically. Like Muslim orators or leaders, Bin Laden has utilised prophetic sayings to make Islamic discourse. In terms of argumentation, prophetic Hadīth is used to make prophetic intertextuality (PI) which is further employed by text producers to either initiate an argument or substantiate an argument that has already been made, as illustrated in Example 3 below:

3a. waqad thabata i is-sahīh ‘an nabinna sala allahū ‘alayyhi wasalam ‘nahu qāl: “wal-ladhi nafsi bi-yadihi la y’uminu ‘ahadukum hatā ‘akuna ‘ahaba ‘ilayhī min wālidihi wa waladihi wannasi āma‘īn.”

3b. “It was also confirmed by an authentic source that Prophet Muhammad said no ‘one could be faithful until he loves me more than he loves his parents, his sons and all other people.’

Scrutinising the highlighted Hadīth in Text 3a, one can realise that the text producer wishes to reinforce a thesis previously made at the outset of the speech.
As can be observed in Text 3b, the translator successfully produces not only functionally-related translation, but also formally-related translation in which intertextual realisation is observed in the TL.

4.4. Anecdotal intertextuality

Bin Laden has regaled his audience with Anecdotal Intertextuality (AI)—accounts of moral or religious points by Prophet Muhammad’s companions and theologians. The intertextual potential of these accounts plays a role in the making of his argument as shown in Example 4 below:

4a. *qala shaykhul-islāmi ibnu Taimiyyah rahimahu allāh: “‘inna sabba ar-rusuli wat-ta’ni fihiy yanbū’ā jamī‘a il-kufuri wajima’u jamī‘ ad-dallāt wakulu kufurin mutafari‘un minh.”*

4b. “Therefore, the Umma has reached a consensus that he who offends or degrades the messenger would be killed. Such offence is regarded as kufr (infidelity).”

In Text 4a, Sheikh of Islam Ibn Taimiyyah, a theologian, has his own say on any demeaning remarks against Prophet Muhammad. However, Text 4b addresses itself to the Umma’s (roughly people of religious bond) point of view, rather than to Sheikh of Islam Ibn Taimiyyah’s. Clearly, the Arabic AI was left undealt with. The translator has opted for “the Umma” in lieu of AI. Consequently, a loss in translation at discoursal level is observed, though the intended message is successfully conveyed.

5. Terminology

The wordings used in the speech were meticulously chosen to further substantiate points in the argument. For example, the Arabic word ‘jihad’ has been used in the speech with several meanings e.g. “striving for the utmost”, “holy war” and “ criticising dictatorship leaders” depending on the context (cf. Baker, 2006, pp. 70-71). To appreciate other terms, consider the following example:

5a. *walimu’aqabati ‘ashabi al-jarīmati allati ‘iratakabaha ba’du as-shaftīna mina aznādiqati il-murtadīna bil’isā’iti ‘ila sayyid il-awalīna walākharīna nabuytīnna mohammad ‘alayhi ’afdalu as-salatu wa’atamu it-taslīm.*

5b. “And to punish the perpetrators of the horrible crime committed by some Crusader-journalists and apostates against the master of the predecessors and successors, our prophet Muhammad.”

The Arabic collocational terms *sayyid il-awalīna walākharīna* (the predecessors and successors) and *azznādiqati* (heretic) are carefully used by Bin Laden, the last of which is Persian according to Lisān al-Arab (n.d., p. 143), a dictionary of the Arabic language. This term, it should be noted, dated back to the pre-Islamic era,
and has been used principally to describe Muslim philosophers who used to mix philosophical issues with religious matters (Ibid.). The term has drifted away from its semantic import and is used to describe any Muslim who performs the same actions as the early Muslim philosophers. Similarly, “apostates” is used to describe Muslims who abandon their religious belief, and has hardly ever been used to describe Christians. The punishment for freethinkers and apostates is killing insofar as Islam is concerned. Neither of the two words is used to describe non-Muslims by virtue of the fact that Christians and Jews can have their own creed. As can be noted in Text 5a, Bin Laden was dismissive of azznadiqati il-murtadīna.

The discoursal power of Text 5a above goes in the direction of criticising some journalists who have completely defended the publication of 12 editorial cartoons featuring Prophet Mohammed by Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten in 2005. First, the speaker grew weary of the troubles caused by the drawings insulting Prophet Muhammad and expressed his revulsion against the desecration of a religious leader. The speaker tries first to deal with the journalists as apostate perpetrators so that their killing can be justified not only because they are Christians, but also for being heretics. In trying to take the problem of intertextual potential in his/her stride, however, the translator in Text 5b could convey the intended message, but with a noticeable loss of the SL peculiarities at the discourse level.

The arguer cited a thesis to be argued through later: “to punish the perpetrators of the horrible crime …” The thesis is self-substantiated via creating a kind of rhetorical parallel—mina azznadiqati il-murtadīna “heretics and apostates” and sayyid il-awalīna walakharīna. That is, the subsequent enhancers seem to be taken for granted insofar as the development of the text is concerned.

A close look at Text 2b above bears witness to pragmareligious failure in the translation of harrama (forbidden). Bin Laden vehemently denied insulting Prophet Muhammad by employing a lexis that goes in harmony with Islamic rules, and that by committing harram in accordance with these rules, the wicked transgressors must be sent to hell to be punished when they die. Opting for a sociocultural lexical item, namely “taboo” seems to evaporate the beauties of the SL text, and in the words of Lefevere (1992, p. 14), it “can be potentially threatening.”

6. Chronologicality

It seems plausible to assume that Islamist discourse undertakes a particular order of intertextualities when it comes to the inclusion of Qur’anic verse, or Hadīth, or anecdotal. To make an argument render valid, an Islamist interlocutor would first rely on Qur’anic verse(s), then Hadīth and finally on an anecdotal example. To appreciate the point, consider Figure 1 below whereby failure to observe the order of the intertextualities exploited by the text producer is likely to be problematic.
7. Discourse and semiotics

7.1. Discourse analysis

The advent of discourse analysis can be seen as a major epoch in Translation Studies. Three prominent concepts are so relevant to our discussion: text, genre and discourse, all of which can be dealt with irrespective of socio-cultural aspects. Hatim and Mason (1997, p. 15; emphasis in original) state that “intertextuality may and often does involve aspects which are more challenging than the socio-cultural. The reference could indeed be to entire sets of rhetorical conventions governing texts, genres and discourses.” First, text, as Hatim and Mason (Ibid.) argue: “involves the language user in focusing on a given rhetorical purpose (arguing, narrating, etc.).” Second, genre “comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognised by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre” (Swales 1990, p. 58). Finally, discourse, in the words of Hatim and Mason (1997, p. 15) embodies “attitudinal expression with language becoming by convention the mouthpiece of societal institutions (sexism, feminism)”. As “a textual manifestation of the speaker’s ideology” (Al-Mohannadi 2008, p. 530), discourse is considered “the major vehicle of ideology and it often represents the ideology of the powerful against the powerless.” By way of illustration, the text producer (e.g. Bin Laden) usually intends to imbue his utterances with numerous rhetorical devices in order to steer the intended receiver into accepting what he puts forward, e.g., arguing against the USA “atrocities” in the Islamic World by means of spoken utterance, i.e. text. In terms of genre, Bin Laden uses a one-of-a-kind benediction “conventionally caters for a particular social occasion” (Hatim & Mason, 1997, p. 15), very much related to conventionalised Islamic discourse. Insofar as discourse is concerned, the intention the language user has in mind is focused on promoting certain ideologically-related discourses, e.g., Jihadism, Islamism etc.

In its discourse, al-Qaeda has displayed animosity and antagonism towards the West and the Jews in a general sense. Most Bin Laden’s diatribes have highlighted that Jews have been a streak of malevolence and suggested that their nature is irredeemable. In the Islam-Arab context, there has been mounting interest in using discourse to resist institutional or dominant constructions of hegemony exerted by the West and USA.

7.2. Semiotics

Swann et al. (2004, p. 275) defines semiotics as “the scientific study of the properties of signalling systems, both artificial and natural—sometimes called ‘the science of signs’ […]]. Language is a semiotic system whose signs are words (and morphemes) which stand in a particular relation to objects and concepts”. On their part, Hatim and Mason (1997, p. 223) define semiotics as “a dimension of context which
regulates the relationship of texts or parts of texts to each other as signs”. Hatim and Mason (1990, p. 67) further say that its focus lies “on what constitutes signs, what regulates their interactions and what governs the ways they come into being or decay”.

Text is then looked at as semiotic manifestations of discourse. For Bin Laden, the West still has a myopic attitude towards the Muslims and Arabs, and the Arab regimes are nothing short of authoritarian and monolithic. With text, the text producers can make two types of argumentation or “managing” in the words of de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981): counter-argumentation and through-argumentation. In this regard, Hatim writes:

Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) displays a particular preference for a form of argumentation in which the arguer advocates or condemns a given stance and consequently does not have to make any direct concession to a belief entertained by an adversary. The latter, more explicitly counter-argumentation procedure, is particularly favoured by languages such as English. (Hatim 1990, p. 47)

It is worth noting that the semiotic interaction of a number of signs within the boundaries of Bin Laden’s speech is of paramount importance to make sense of the overall speech (see Figure 1 below). First, the speaker carefully makes a rancorous thesis statement in which he shows a bilious speech, attacking Western journalists for offending Prophet Muhammad. In through-argumentation, he cites substantiators/enhancers to communicate his ideology—that prophets are perfectly respectable persons whose names should not be defiled as is the case with sacred name of the Holy Prophet of Islam. The substantiators, it should be noted, are not recalcitrant in the text, but they interact with each other in such a way that makes the whole text coherent, readable and comprehensible. Such SL text development goes with Hatim’s (Ibid.) claim. Bin Laden is adamant that he will not budge on his views, thus selecting more than one intertextually-based substantiator. Each encompasses the most important and reliable sources, then goes to the less weighty, as it were. Even the less weighty is reliable in Islamic fiqh (Islamic Jurisdiction) as consensus among Muslim scholars is more or less as valuable as the Qur’an and Prophetic tradition. We need to know that the intertextualities vary in terms of their religious connotations and values, and hence text producers can make their utterance more persuasive, not ‘hot air’, for instance when they employ reliable sources, reliable in the eyes of the SL language users. Therefore, the realisation of the intertextualities in the TL is so important.
As can be observed, a thesis statement is introduced at the outset of the speech substantiated by six enhancers, inseparably intertwined to make communication flow as smoothly as possible. ‘Text recalcitrance’ does not exist in the boundaries of SL actual text. Such peculiarities of the SL text are likely to be universal, but in Arabic, such ‘rainbow’ combinations of QI, PI and AI to initiate an argument seems to be worthwhile.

To make our argument more solid, let us look at the way the translator dealt with the macro-sign, i.e., through-argumentation and the micro-signs, i.e., the enhancers. Figure 2 exhibits the development of the translation.

Fig. 1. Development of Arabic text.
As can be observed in Figure 2 above, the development of the translation is incongruent with that of the SL. In a sense, the translation lacks the macro-signs established by the text producer. The decision taken by the translator not to translate enhancer 2, 5 and 6 is probably due to linguistic constraints in English, in which repetition is not preferable. This can be further shown on a hypothetical continuum whereby the thesis is cited followed by a number of enhancers occupying a position between two ends of a cline. Figure 3 shows SL argument versus the translation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL: Thesis</th>
<th>En 1</th>
<th>En 2</th>
<th>En 3</th>
<th>En 4</th>
<th>En 5</th>
<th>En 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QI</td>
<td>QI</td>
<td>PI</td>
<td>AI</td>
<td>AI</td>
<td>AI</td>
<td>AI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TL: Thesis</th>
<th>En 1</th>
<th>En 2</th>
<th>En 3</th>
<th>En 4</th>
<th>En 5</th>
<th>En 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QI</td>
<td>x*</td>
<td>PI</td>
<td>AI</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 3. Cline of argument development of the SL and TL

x* = Left untranslated

The cline points the way the enhancers go for the development of the original utterance and translation, usually starting with Qur’anic enhancers at the left end of the cline to Prophetic enhancers, and then other remaining enhancers, e.g., anecdotals. We can argue that Qur’anic enhancers constitute the fulcrum of the argument.

As can also be noted in the TL, the second Qur’anic verse, which serves as Enhancer 2 in the SL, was left untranslated in the TL. The translator seems to have reached a conclusion that having translated the first in lieu would have done the trick. However, a concatenation of enhancers already formulates a coherent text in the SL, for neither being recalcitrant nor superfluous. Nevertheless, in TL, Enhancer 4 is paraphrased; hence a discourse disparity seems to be created.

8. Conclusion and implications

Thus far in our analysis, we have established a framework envisaged along a historical line in which we have examined both the birth of Islamist groups and their discourses. We have seen that in response to some sacrilegious behaviour by Western journalists, Bin Laden carefully designed his speech, heavily drawing on intertextuality. For intercultural communication to take place, text receivers should, or even must, call up previous knowledge structures. Translation-wise, what is actually needed here is a fully fledged translator/mediator because “without a translator of great sagacity and immense experience, the translation of intertextuality would turn out to be difficult; the end-product would also be utterly
beyond TL recipients’ comprehension” (Thawabteh 2007, p. 35). In addition, the translator as a mediator and a first TL text receiver should be percipient of the text producer’s mood so that maximal communication can be achieved the best way possible. Mediation, according to Katan (1999, p. 212), is highly needed in translation “to allow the interlocutors to cooperate, and be seen to cooperate, exactly as far as they wish to. This means, at the very least, that mediators must be able to context their interlocutors so that they are able to put the right interpretative frame to the statement.” As Lefevere (1992, p. 14) writes: “the Qur’an says: ‘God has given every nation a prophet in its own language.’ Every translator is a prophet among his own people”. In fact, the translator rose to the occasion in Text 3b. It seems plausible to assume that without having in mind the intertextual relation among discrete signs within the boundaries of a given text and, more importantly, texts as signs, doing translation turns out to be exceptionally challenging (see also Thawabteh 2007). The articulation of meanings exceeds mere one-to-one equivalent to a more global approach to translation by means of intertextuality device insofar as the present article is concerned. Finally, the article argues that translation can be looked at from an angle of global meaning generated by translation, rather than from mere linguistic practice with all complexities of translational practices.

Bibliographical references


Bakhtin, Mikhail (1986), Speech Genres and other Late Essays, EMERSON & HOLQUIST (eds.), Austin: University of Texas Press.


