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Professor of Spanish
Language & Literature
Universidad Complutense de
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Email: isabelhg@ucm.es

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Madrid, Spain
Email: el-madkouri@uam.es

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Email:

sami.nassar@buc.edu.eg

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Narrative of LGBTQ Representations in Disney Cartoons

Fatma Amr

School of Linguistics and Translation

Badr University in Cairo, Egypt

Email: fatma.mohamed2@buc.edu.eg

Abstract: The aim of this paper is to examine the features of the narratives of Disney cartoons directed to LGBTQ in both Western and Eastern multimedia platforms. Disney has been severely criticized for the lavish hidden references to LGBTQ, swear words, and inappropriate images. More obviously, most of the animated movies at Disney+ channel have been recently adapted to overtly include same-sex affection scenes. However, such pro-gay, or lesbian animation directed to children has received a ferocious backlash from the East, which calls for censoring inappropriate contents to maintain the social and religious norms. Such cross-cultural differences between the Western and Eastern societies raise ceaseless heated conflict to signify the emergence of a public narrative (Baker, 2018). The Arab resistance and dispute have not been resolved until Disney announces that any LGBTQ scene in Disney films will be censored to meet the regulatory requirements of Middle East and conservative markets (Daily Mail, 2022) and (Boundingintocomics, 2022). For the purpose of this study, the corpus is taken from different English and Arabic multimedia websites to compare between the narratives which tackle LGBTQ embodiment in Disney movies. Therefore, the data includes English and Arabic news articles, discussions in blogs and tweets, and videos circulated online to address this issue. The data is analyzed in terms of the four features of the narrative theory: relationality, causal emplotment, selective appropriation, and temporality (Baker 2006, pp.50-70).

Keywords: narrative theory; public narrative; Disney; LGBTQ.

Introduction

Since the launch of Disney+ channel in November 2019, and collaboration with American animation studios, mainly Pixar and Marvel, the integration of LGBTQ representations in cartoons has increased. Disney officially announces that it addresses diversity via its platform, though many families heap criticism on the inappropriate shows streaming on Disney+ (BBC, 2020). In a similar context, members of Western LGBTQ communities celebrate this media sensitive content, which is still debatable in the Middle East. The conflict between the East and West over normalizing same-sex relations in animation targeting children looms ahead rapidly on different multimedia websites. This in turn creates a public narrative between these two different societies. As Baker (2006) puts it, public narratives “are stories elaborated by and circulating among social and institutional formations larger than the individual, such as the family, religious or educational institution, the media, and the nation” (p.4). That is to say, Disney movies which present LGBTQ scenes, have been the concern of different socio-religious associations and news agencies in the two cultures. News dissemination and exchange of public views on social media outlets give the topic a currency in the West and East. Hence, two opposing perspectives on these LGBTQ scenes have become widely spread nationally and internationally to mark changes in the public narratives circulated. More importantly, the role of translators in disseminating this public narrative is accentuated to designate how the inclusion of LGBTQ elements in Disney movies would be dealt with in the Middle East via the narrative features.

The aim of this paper is to describe how the four narrative features are devised, when the English narratives about LGBTQ representations in Disney cartoons are

introduced in different Arabic socio-religious contexts. Investigating the changes caused by the four features in the Arabic narratives would emphasize “direct involvement of translators and interpreters” (Baker 2010, p. 3). This would highlight the Middle East stance towards the public narrative of Disney’s LGBTQ elements in children movies. Finally, to the best of my knowledge, researching LGBTQ narratives translated from English into Arabic and vice versa has gained little attention in translation studies, whereas most of research has been extensively discussed from literary translation perspectives (Salem, 2013) and (Mazzei, 2007); even recent studies have tackled LGBTQ representations in other language pairs (Baer, J. B. and Kaindl, K. 2018).

In the current study, I will attempt to answer the following questions:

1-How does the Arabic narrative promote the fueling conflict between the East and West over LGBTQ representations in Disney?

2-To what extent do the Arabic narratives serve to underpin the moral agenda of the East?

LGBTQ in Translation Studies

The representations of LGBTQ have recently gained attention of translation studies from different perspectives. Harvey (1998) is one of the pioneering translation scholars who deals with queer representations by examining the literary works written by gay authors translated from French into English, and vice versa. His theoretical framework analyses “camp talk”, the so-called queer language between homosexuals, as a reflection of their “sexual identity” (p.298). Therefore, he investigates irony of “camp-talk” in the speech exchanged between two gay characters on two levels: lexico-prosodic and text-pragmatic. He finds that in both English and French original texts hyperbole and intertextuality are overtly used when homosexual characters use gender-specific terms and word choices attributing to feminine traits, as in the use of emphatic lexical items, or French loan words intentionally left untranslated (Harvey,1998, pp.299-309). Formal and low register is manifested to mark physical relations between gay characters. Politeness theory and face threatening act is utilized to verify the use of explication and underpin the implicit references in the original texts to physical affairs between homos in the English target text (Harvey, 1998, pp.315-317). However, the translation from English into French of camp talk undertones the vulgarity of physical references (Harvey, 1998, pp. 308-311), due to the French cultural and political resistance to queers and homosexuals (Harvey, 1998, pp. 311-312).

Tierney (2020) discusses the translation of theoretical works from English into French, in for promoting and disseminating the queer theory in France. Tierney (2020) highlights that the first book; *Butler’s Gender Trouble*, gives credit to the origin of queer theory to the French theory of French Feminism, which is derogated by the French translator in her preface to the translation (p.259). Moreover, Tierney (2020) bestows that translation of issues related to identity, gender, and queer sexualities is always politically oriented. For that reason, the translation of Butler’s groundwork of queer theory, as stated previously, is intentionally delayed for 15 years, as it calls for amending legislations to accept hetro/homosexual practices (Tierney, 2020, pp.258-260). On the other hand, the ideological issues of queer terms in the translation of *Epistemology of the Closet* from English into French are given emphasis by means of footnoting, integration of intertextuality, explaining the etymology of queer English neologism in simple French ‘locale’ (Tierney, 2020, p.262). The research ends with future implications to draw on AVT to examine queer representations and create a pedagogical and methodological paradigm in TS to disseminate/restore queer ideologies (p.263).

Guo (2020) discusses socio-culture concepts related to homosexuality, gay, and lesbian, and queer as non-normative sexual relations to underline the role of translation in

Sinicized culture (p.345). His paper (2020) juxtaposes resistance in history to queer affairs, with respect to the religious norms of Buddhism, with dissemination and Sinicization of LGBTQ ideologies through scholarships to signal Chinese modernity (pp.346-348). Guo (2020) underpins the shift of focus in translation studies to relate the early discussions of gender ideologies and social movements of minorities to deal with rights of gays and lesbians, as post-marxist moves in China to engage sexuality to politics (pp. 152-154).

Flotow and Scott (2018) examine gender and sexuality as inseparable from translation studies (pp.42-44). They shed light on the role of translation in outlining the development of the translation and scope of the term gender. They highlight that when this term encapsulates normalization of heterosexuality, resistance of religious entities in Beijing, Latin America, and Vatican has sparked. Meanwhile, the UN puts gender definition in official documents as a term only referring to one of the two sexes (Flotow and Scott, 2018, p.46). In turn, oppositions of other sex orientation of minorities keep calling for radical changes in civil rights to acknowledge the inclusion of homosexuals, transsexuals, and bisexuals (Flotow and Scott, 2018, p. 47). However, their approach to the study of gender and sexual identity, in translation studies, is obviously to support issues of women equality with men and derogate the biological role of women in an attempt to liberate them from male dominance. Through a linguistic lens, gender and sexuality stamp the language as indicated in the translation of official Arabic documents to make it a hard mission for the translator to adapt the translation to meet the gender requirements (Flotow and Scott, 2018, p.48). Further discussion of the complexity of the term gender is significant in accordance with politics, cultural diversities, and translation technologies (Flotow and Scott, 2018, p.52). The broad sense of the term gender incorporates concepts that may be inappropriate to other cultures as “heteronormativity, or queer, or other GLBTQI” that are universal terms but local in their free practices (Flotow and Scott, 2018, pp. 52-53).

Issues of readership of gay and queer concepts across cultures have been touched upon in translation studies (Baer, 2018, pp. 42-48). After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russian agencies allowed the translation of Western literature about homosexual, gay and queer into Russian. Same-sex minorities enjoyed freedom of expression till Russia has fallen under the reign of Putin. Terms like gay and queer are no longer translated in the press in some national newspapers due to censorship (p.48). However, Baer (2018) examined 20 interviews with Anglophone gay actors, politicians, writers, and other celebrities in a Russian journal called *Kvir*, by such interviews the Russian journalist aimed to promote and normalize homosexuality. The emphasis of these interviews was on the existence of same sex affairs enjoyed by the interviewed celebrities who have their prestige and influence worldwide. The core of the interviews was to support and represent minorities in a way to signal their sexual identities (Baer, 2018, pp.49-52).

Santaemilia (2018) pinpoints the queering of the translation of Spanish literature into English. He highlights cases of explication of sexual desires and erotic extracts versus desexualized content to undertone vulgarity of pornography in the source text (pp.12-15). On the other hand, the discussion of the subtitling of the American TV show into Spanish marks obvious cases of censorship/self-censorship by ‘mitigating’ or omitting explicit profane sexual references (p.17). He concludes his research by signifying political ideologies of queering translation where translation of discourse on sexuality and same-sex desires allows the rewriting of the original work in the TL. Issues of civil marriage of homosexuals, acceptability of transgendered or bisexual identities are against ethical and moral norms of certain cultures (pp.20-21).

Finally, Li (2020) examines Chinese gay literature within Baker's (2006) narrative model. He investigates the translation of a Chinese gay-oriented novel into English in 1990/95 and 2017, with special focus on explications of homosexual context and gay references (Li, 2020, p.158). Then he discusses the adapted version of the English novel into media content in the forms of a Chinese movie with English subtitles and fansubbed TV series and stage performance (p.158). Li (2020) investigates the framing and labeling of homosexuality in both the English written translation and the fansubbed movie. He finds that the space and temporal frames of the English editions of the Chinese novel have more obvious embodiment of homosexual and same-sex affection between gays. The American society welcomes the flagrant book covers which are intentionally made fussy and blur in the Chinese original editions (Li, 2020, pp. 163-164). Framing by labelling in the English translations reflects the intolerance of homosexuality in China in the 1990/1995 editions, whereas the English subtitling of the movie, TV series, and stage performance reflect social acceptance and normalization of gay affairs (Li, 2020, pp.165-169). Then, Li (2020) discusses the effect of re-examining the English written and visual retranslation of the Chinese narrative via temporal and labelling frames. Finally, he emphasizes the striking changes that have occurred in the Chinese society for propagating gay ideologies in Asia, and highlights the challenges of the identity of gays as Chinese minorities (pp.167&169).

Narrative Theory in Translation Studies

Baker (2006) designates a sociocultural approach to Translation Studies to discuss original narratives and analyze their suggested elaborations in their translations (Baker, 2010, p.349). Although Baker's (2006) model is based on the narrative diachronicity of both Somers and Gibson (1994) and Bruner (1991), it gives more insights into the narrative model with in-depth analytical tools to supersede the pure linguistic and descriptive translation analysis of ST and its TT (pp.50-51). It integrates multimedia narrative analysis to examine the way narratives operate and change in two different cultural contexts (Baker, 2010, p.349). In its broad sense, the term narrative refers to "everyday stories" in the whole world, as they disseminate in a 'dynamic' and 'subtle' way to change mindsets (Baker, 2006, p.3). In other words, re-narrated stories are impacted by the indigenous ideological stances, political affiliations, power, and identity of their "text producers" (Baker, 2006, p. 145).

Moreover, Baker's narrative model maps out four types of narratives through which translators and interpreters intervene: ontological, public, conceptual, and meta. Ontological narratives are subjective narratives which suggest self-reflection of personal stories, which might have originated in history, like autobiographies, and still influence the world (Baker, 2006, p.4). Public narratives are stories which are widely and rapidly disseminated and polarized among social institutions to affect the whole 'nation' (Baker, 2006, pp.4&33). As to conceptual, or the so-called disciplinary narratives, they represent scholars' explorations in a certain field. (Baker, 2006, pp.5&39). Finally, meta-narratives are abstract and globally vested such as the ones about "Enlightenment and Modernity" (Baker, 2006, p.45).

Furthermore, Baker elaborates the four narrative features of narrative namely temporality, relationality, causal emplotment, and selective appropriation. Highlighting that they all have the function of providing "a constraint and ...a resource for elaborating new narratives" (Baker 2006, p.66). First, temporality means the arrangement of "a set events" in a certain timeline that is different from their original sequence, which indicatively makes the readers "attribute blame, responsibility, victimhood or credit to

various protagonists” (Baker, 2018, p.186). In other words, this new timeline gives significance to the context of the re-narrated events and the involved participants. The translation of an old original narrative, in a certain timeline, weaves the new configuration of the target narrative (Baker 2018, pp.186-187). Translated narratives, or the so-called target-narratives, can also replace original narratives temporally and spatially by verbal and non-verbal elements to integrate multimodal reflection of the story timeline (Baker, 2018, p.187).

Second, Baker (2006) emphasizes that relationality means “that every event has to be interpreted within a larger configuration of events” (p.82). In other words, the weight a narrative gains in context opens up the original narrative to more interpretations. The target narrative is barely rendered as the original to highlight the integration of other underlying narratives the dislocation of which would make it insignificant (Baker, 2018, p.187).

It can be drawn on to inject a target text or discourse with implicit meanings derived from the way a particular item functions in the public or meta-narratives circulating in the target context, thus obscuring or downplaying its relational load in the source environment. (Baker 2006, p.66)

To explain this, Baker (2006) discusses the semantic meaning and use of loaded words in original narratives, in the case of the Palestinian documentary of Jenin, which were intentionally replaced by direct less emphatic lexical items in the English subtitles, as an example of anti-Muslim narrative in the West (pp.64-66). Relationality is underpinned when the information represented in a source narrative loses its weight, with respect to the translation agency’s agenda, in a way to lessen the intensity of the target narrative events or participants by replacing semantically loaded words and aspects of emphatic language with much more simple direct language (Baker 2006 pp. 64-66).

Third, causal emplotment means incorporating a set of events into a discursive narrative to highlight its moral value/reason, aiming at changing mind sets and steering public opinion (Baker 2006, p.67). Target narratives introduce other forms of causal emplotment as marked by the translators’ use of TL equivalents to give weight to the events signaled in the new narrative (Baker, 2006, pp. 69-70). Fourth, selective appropriation means the selection of some events and deselection of others for maintaining a “thematic thread” (Baker 2006, p. 72). Translators either use the feature of selection appropriation intentionally or unintentionally, as manifested by the use of strategies like omission, addition, foregrounding, or backgrounding (Baker 2014, p.167). In sum, Baker (2006) highlights that by these features translators almost ‘invent’ a new narrative to reinforce an opposite stance to a designated enemy in a certain culture, or society (p.75). In the following section, I will attempt to discuss the research corpus and design.

Methodology & Corpus

Corpus of the study

The corpus of this study includes news articles/reports, which are collected from both English and Arabic multimedia news websites from 2017 till 2022, that disseminate narratives of LGBTQ representations in Disney movies in Western communities and the Middle East.

The articles/reports are mainly selected to cover news stories about two main scenes in two of Disney’s movies. The first one is “Beauty and the Beast”, which was displayed on Disney’s screen in 2017, as the adapted live-action movie of the old version that was premiered in 1991. The aim of the film remake is to retell the same story in the same tone via Disney’s latest technologies, which are more advanced than the ones utilized in 1991 classic movie (The Walt Disney Company, 2017).

However, this adaptation subtly features Disney's first movie to portray gay affairs on Disney+ channel (Attitude, 2017). Condon, the movie director, creates an LGBTQ-oriented subplot to normalize a queer relation between two male characters: LeFou and Gaston in the movie (Attitude, 2017). Criticism has been directed against Disney's first representation of LGBT community in "Beauty and the Beast" for giving a minor role to the 'first' gay character as: "[t]heir someone who is an antagonist, the right-hand man of a cruel villain...LeFou does everything to get his attention" (Al Sayed, 2019).

Meanwhile, circulation of the official statements of the film makers in English and Arabic news websites emphasizes that the subtle inclusion of the gay character is intentional: "the movie's writers and producers have developed the admiration felt by sidekick LeFou ... for Gaston...LeFou's gradual reconciliation with his sexuality acts [is] a way of increasing LGBT visibility on screen" (The Guardian, 2017). Consequently, calls for banning the film in the Middle East countries emerged.

The second movie is "Lightyear" which is produced by Disney and Pixar in 2022. It is a Toy Story franchise and a science fiction film that features space rangers in a long trip trying to save the planets. Unlike, the subtle integration of queer affairs in "Beauty and the Beast" 2017, "Lightyear" is classified as incorporating clear references to homosexuality. The movie ends with a scene of two women, as newlywed couple embracing each other and holding their baby. Buzz's coworker is a successful space ranger; she proudly announced at the end of the space trip that she finally settled down with a same-sex female to have a family. Paradoxically, Buzz; the hero of the movie, is represented as a disoriented fuzzy straight male for lacking such queer feelings (Reuters, 2022). Accordingly, many Middle East countries called for censoring these scenes, but their requests were turned down until the issue was highly escalated and the movie was officially banned (Reuters, 2022).

For the purpose of this study, the texts under study are originally selected as they are written in their designated culture: in English and Arabic and are not considered direct translations.

I exclude the analysis of photos and videos in the news articles, as they do not indicate any of the queer or homosexual oriented scenes in the two movies. Therefore, intersemiotic and multimodal analysis would not be significant in the current research. Meanwhile, English news articles/reports are collected from three news websites: Reuters and the Daily Mail, which are British, and Euronews; a French news agency that provides English news. On the other hand, the Arabic news articles/reports are taken from Alyoum Alsabi; an Egyptian newspaper, and Ammoon; a private Jordanian news website.

Theoretical Framework and Procedures of Data Analysis

The theoretical framework of this study is based on Baker's (2006) narrative model.

I select the four narrative features mainly: temporality, relationality, causal emplotment, and selective appropriation to be examined in the Arabic news articles/reports as compared with their English original narratives, to highlight how the Arabic target narratives operate differently. The analysis of LGBTQ narratives in English and Arabic news articles is discussed in chronological order: from the oldest to the most recent. First, I will give examples of news extracts about LGBTQ narratives in "Beauty and the Beast"; then, I will discuss the different positions in the English and Arabic selected articles/reports about Lightyear. The time span between the two movies is five years from 2017 to 2022, in which Disney promotes LGBTQ inclusion and manifestation gradually. Therefore, the research design is set to identify the significance of every narrative feature in the data, to show how the conflict between the East and West over the inclusion or censorship of LGBTQ content in Disney's movies is heated.

English and Arabic Narrative of LGBTQ Representations in Disney Beauty and the Beast Gay Scene: Western's Normalization vs. Middle East Conservatism

In this section, I will discuss how the four features interplay in the Arabic narrative, as compared with their English originals, to configure the Middle East standpoint against the West's pro-homosexual integration in Disney cartoons.

Example 1

Once Beauty and the Beast was premiered in 2017, Disney confirmed that the sexual implications to a pro-gay affair between two male characters was intentional. The two features of selective appropriation and causal emplotment in the following example are indicative in highlighting the different stance in the West and the East towards the 'gay scene'

Disney puts 'gay scene' in Beauty and the Beast: Character of LeFou set to explore his

sexuality and feelings for leading man Gaston in new film

Mr Condon said: 'He's confused about what he wants. It's somebody who's just realising that he has these feelings. It is a nice, exclusively gay moment in a Disney movie' Mr Condon said the character, played by Josh Gad, is part of a 'watershed moment' for Disney. He said: 'The studio is sending out a message that this is normal and natural – and this is a message that will be heard in every country of the world, even countries where it's still socially unacceptable or even illegal to be gay.' (Daily Mail,2017).

لأول مرة.. ديزني تتخلى عن العفة وتضع مشهدا عن الشواذ جنسيا بفيلم "Beauty and the Beast" المخرج يصف المشهد الحصري بلحظة فاصلة في تاريخ الشركة.. ويؤكد: رسالتنا ستصل للعالم حتى الدول المعارضة للمثلية

أكد موقع الديلي ميل أن شركة ديزني قررت وضع مشهد عن الشواذ جنسيا لأول مرة في عمل فني، حيث يتضمن فيلم "Beauty and the Beast"، مشهدا يظهر الميول الجنسية الشاذة لشخصية LeFou الذي يجسدها الممثل جوش جاد والمقرر أن يلعب دورا رئيسا في تحريك شخصية "جاستون" لمواجهة الوحش ومحاولة القضاء عليه (Alyoum Alsabi, 2017).

Causal emplotment is manifested when the Arabic narrative is weaved by using extremely strong loaded words to refer to Disney's movie as a taboo in several phrases. First, the headline portrays Disney as turning profane: "تتخلى عن العفة" (relinquishing its chastity). Second, the phrase "gay scene" is depicted in the Arabic narrative as "شواذ جنسيا" (homosexual) trice, to highlight that such affairs are morally and socially rejected in the Arab world. The word 'gay' in English is not as strong as homosexual; in Arabic the word "شواذ" is derived from "شذ" (irregularity), and the plural form of the adjective "شاذ" which means a "psychic sexual" (Hans Wehr, 1994, p. 539). It is a strong word that has a negative connotation in the Middle East. It is used to signal a state of sexual deviation. The medical definition of the term "sexual deviation" refers to a "sexual behavior or fantasy ... which is morally, biologically, or legally sanctioned" (The Free Dictionary online). Therefore, this Arabic word indicates that homosexuality in Eastern conservative communities is obviously condemned. LeFou, who is celebrated boastfully by the film makers and gay groups abroad, is entirely rejected by depicting him as someone who has "ميول جنسية شاذة" (homosexual orientations). The repetition of the word "شاذ" (homosexual) in the Arabic narrative is for derogating any sexual deviation by whoever belongs to any of these sex categories: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, or queer (LGBTQ). On the contrary, in some Western societies, the term 'homosexual' is

always replaced by the other aforementioned gender identities, as it is the “clinical term, coined in the field of psychology, for people with a same-sex sexual attraction... [and]...is often associated with the idea that same-sex attractions are a mental disorder, and is therefore offensive” (LGBTQ Glossary online). Similarly, pro-LGBTQ hold that the word ‘homosexual’ violates human rights and should be preferably replaced with “gay and lesbian,” whereas the term is still “acceptable in many non-English-speaking contexts” (UN Migration Glossary of Terms, 2021, p.2).

Meanwhile, the same anti-homosexual stance is reinforced by the device of selective appropriation in the Arabic narrative. The omission of relatively short strings of events, which subtly spreads the normalization and acceptance of gay representations and practices in Disney’s animation, is underlined. The English narrative highlights a turning point in Lefou’s personality, when he unconsciously tends “to explore his sexuality and feelings” towards Gaston. More emphatically, the gay scene is portrayed as “nice,” “normal and natural.” The use of selective appropriation in the Arabic narrative is also exemplified by foregrounding Disney’s agenda in the Arabic headline “رسالتنا ستصل للعالم حتى الدول المعارضة للمثلية” , while it occurs at the end of the lead paragraph in the English narrative: “this is a message that will be heard in ... even countries where it’s still socially unacceptable or even illegal to be gay.” Foregrounding is most probably for drawing the attention of conservative families to monitor the media content on Disney+ channel and to realize its planned pro-LGBTQ agenda. Omission of the word ‘unacceptable’ and replacement thereof with ‘معارضة’ (anti-gay), is another instance of selective appropriation which in turn accentuate an opposition to the Western homosexual ideologies.

Meanwhile, the same binary opposition between the East and West stance regarding gay scenes in “Beauty and the Beast” is maintained after one year. The English narrative reinforces the integration of gay scenes in the adapted live movie of “Beauty and the Beast”, as if homosexual affection is normal. However, this is overblown by the East, as indicated by strong lexical choices.

Example 2

Disney’s live-action remake of “Beauty and the Beast” ... featured a fleeting gay romance that was met with applause by LGBT activists but caused an outcry in more conservative countries...threatening to ban the film. (Reuters, 2018)

والسؤال الذي يطرح نفسه حاليًا هل ستدخل ديزني معركة مع مثلي الجنس، أم ستتراجع من أجل إرضائهم... التوقعات تشير إلى أن ديزني ستتراجع خاصة أنها أكثر من سابقة في التلميح في عدد من أفلامها لبعض الإيحاءات الجنسية في عدد من أشهر أفلام الرسوم المتحركة التي أنتجتها، فالعام الماضي فتح الكثيرون النيران على ديزني حينما قررت وضع مشهد عن الشواذ جنسيًا لأول مرة في عمل فني، في فيلم "Beauty and the Beast" في نسخته الحية، والذي كان يتضمن مشهدًا يظهر الميول الجنسية الشاذة لشخصية LeFou الذي جسدها الممثل جوش جاد حيث كانت شخصيته تكشف أن لديها مشاعر خاصة. (Alyoum Alsabi ♀, 2018)

Tracing the feature of causal emplotment in the Arabic narrative and the event of re-narration might be significant in this rhetorical question: “هل ستدخل ديزني معركة مع مثلي الجنس، أم ستتراجع من أجل إرضائهم (Will Disney be in a battle with gays and lesbians, or will it retreat to satisfy them?). This question may indicate interweaving the Middle East’s utter resistance to LGBTQ embodiment in “Beauty and the Beast”. The scene that the English and Arabic narratives refer to is the one in which LeFou flatters Gaston’s appearance, while he was singing and dancing in the ballroom with another man (The Daily Mail, 2017). Although the language of the song is not foul, viewers of different ages can sense the implicit reference to LeFou’s gay attitude. Consequently,

representation of the East's disapproval to gay scenes is emphasized by causal emplotment in: "فتح الكثيرون النيران على ديزني" (many people opened fire on Disney), to have the same indication of resistance. Finally, the only sentence in the news, which refers to LeFou's implicit homosexuality in the English narrative, is again disparaged contemptibly by the East as exemplified in "ميول جنسية شاذة" (having homosexual orientations), and "الشواذ جنسياً" (homosexuals). Finally, temporality is signaled in the English and Arabic narratives to show two opposite positions and inclinations of their related agendas, a year after showing the movie in different countries. The conflict between the Middle East news agencies and the Western ones has ended by accentuating extreme and steadfast rejection of the controversial scenes to either force Disney to cut them, or to ban the whole movie.

Combating LGBTQ: Lightyear Heating the Conflict

Lightyear is a breathtaking animation for children, which ends with an insinuating scene in which the heroine introduces to Buzz her 'wife'. In exploring the utilization of the narrative features in the Arabic target narratives on "Lightyear", the conflict has gained more weight in the Arabic narratives to emphasize an opposite standpoint to homosexuality.

Example 1

The following example highlights that selective appropriation is invariably interwoven with causal emplotment in Arabic to signal the Arab resistance to play Lightyear in UAE movies, as the most flagrant same-sex cartoon.

The United Arab Emirates on Monday banned Walt Disney-Pixar's animated feature film "Lightyear" from screening in cinemas because it features characters in a same-sex relationship. The film would not be licensed for screening in the country as it violated the nation's media content standard, the Ministry of Youth and Culture's media regulatory office wrote on Twitter. (Reuters, 2022)

أكد مكتب تنظيم الإعلام في الإمارات سحب فيلم الأنيميشن *Lightyear*، من الأسواق، وذلك بعد أن تم طرح العمل للعرض، ومن ثم قامت الجهة المسؤولة بمنع عرض العمل، بعد أن أكدت عدة دول في الخليج منع عرض العمل، الذي كان من المقرر بدء عرضه في 16 يونيو الجاري، وذلك بسبب المشاهد التي تخل بقيم ومبادئ المجتمعات العربية، العمل من إنتاج شركتي ديزني و Pixar. وتابع البيان: "ويؤكد المكتب التزام كل الأفلام في دور السينما بالدولة للمتابعة والتقييم قبل موعد عرضه للجمهور لضمان سلامة المحتوى المتداول وفق التصنيف العمري الملائم" (Alyoum AlSabi, 2022)

As the two narratives are juxtaposed, the English news objectively states the announcement of banning the movie in UAE. However, the Arabic narrative draws on the moral and legal obligations of banning Lightyear in the Middle East countries by means of the addition strategy: "وذلك بسبب المشاهد التي تخل بقيم ومبادئ المجتمعات العربية" (this

is due to scenes that violate the values and principals of the Arab communities), and highlighting the role of the Culture's media regulatory office: "والتزام سلامة المحتوى المتداول" (to guarantee that the disseminated media content is safe and appropriately classified according to the viewers' age). This addition also incorporates the feature of causal emplotment, by which Disney is represented as indignant to the moral values of the other by stamping its own homosexual ideologies on the East.

In addition, causal emplotment, selective appropriation and relationality are highlighted in the Arabic narrative to weave an anti-same sex agenda in the Middle East.

Example 2

In the film, Buzz's close friend is a female space ranger who marries another woman.

A scene showing milestones in the couple's relationship includes a brief kiss... "We're not going to cut out anything, especially something

as important as the loving and inspirational relationship that shows Buzz what he's missing by the choices that he's making. (Reuters, 2022)

وفي قصة الفيلم، تتزوج صديقة باز المقربة من امرأة أخرى، ويتضمن مشهد في الفيلم قبلة عابرة بينهما... وتحدثت رئيسة ديزني في مقطع الفيديو المسرّب من أحد اجتماعات الشركة عن سعي ديزني لوضع أكبر عدد ممكن من المحتوى الداعم لمجتمع الميم (LGBT)، وهو مصطلح يشير إلى مجتمع مثلي الجنس والمتحولين جنسياً في أفلام ديزني، إذ تريد إحدى أكبر شركات الترفيه في العالم أن تصبح هذه الشخصيات موجودة في كل أفلام ديزني. (Ammoun, 2022)

The inappropriate scene in *Lightyear*, which includes a kiss between two lesbians, is depicted in the English narrative as a 'milestone,' whereas in the Arabic it is referred to as "قبلة عابرة" (a brief kiss). More significantly, the English narrative reinforces Disney's resilience to remove any obscene content by quoting the producer's statement, which indicates that homosexuality in Disney's agenda is 'important' and 'inspirational.' Not to mention, that such emotive epithets are omitted in the Arabic narrative to undervalue Disney's malignant, which in turn marks the use of selective appropriation. In addition, the Arabic narrative shifts to scornfully accentuate the flagrant inclusion of profane scenes by referring to Disney's president of General Entertainment Content video, in which she revealed the channel's policy. The Arabic narrative refers to this announcement to unfold the intentionally substantial embodiment of homosexuality in all Disney's movies: "سعي ديزني لوضع أكبر عدد... لمجتمع الميم" (Disney strives to include as much pro-LGBT content as possible). Relationality; henceforth, is underpinned by the semantically loaded words in Arabic to warn the viewers of Disney's inevitably immoral agenda.

Findings and Discussion

Having discussed the narrative of LGBTQ representations in Disney's movies: "Beauty and the Beast" (2017) and "Lightyear" (2022), I tend to answer the following research questions:

1-How does the Arabic narrative promote the fueling conflict between the East and West over LGBTQ representations in Disney?

Examining the four narrative features, which have been subtly interwoven and overlapping, highlights the tension between the East and West, which in turn has unleashed a determinate and planned incorporation of homosexual ideologies via Disney's animation to be persistently spread in the Middle East. The conflict between the Middle East and the West over LGBTQ has been morally emphasized by calling for removing inappropriate content that may propagate homosexuality directly or indirectly. Resistance of the Arabs has been always contrasted with West's resilience over censorship of such obscene and sensitive content in the two movies. Such binary opposition between the Eastern and Western cultures would give full account of the escalation of the LGBTQ issue in Disney from the perspective of the conservative Middle East societies.

Addressing the second question of this study; To what extent do the Arabic narratives underpin the moral agenda of the East? one can say that the extracts that were selected from the English narrative to be re-narrated in Arabic have been invariably acknowledging the deeply rooted social and religious norms of the Arabs. The Arabic news websites with their translators and editors have weaved new narratives that have discursively structured how Disney's taboo concepts in the two movies were stigmatized in the current study. The same anti-homosexuality agenda has been shared in the Middle East news websites to eradicate the spread of same-sex ideologies in the Arab culture. Therefore, the Arabic narratives have sent clear moral messages to their readership to

reinforce holding the same socio-religious beliefs and traditions to fight against homosexuality.

Conclusion

The English news articles/reports represent the gender identity of film directors and producers typically. Their comments, which support gay and queer minorities, are widely circulated by Reuters, Daily mail, and Euronews. On the other hand, Arabic news articles/reports in Alyoum Alsabiṣ and Ammoun downgrade LGBTQ inclusion and normalization in these Disney animations. Henceforth, the Arabic narratives represent opposition to homosexual references in the two movies. In sum, Arabic narratives launch a counterattack on Disney and shift the focus of the original English narratives by marking the resistance of LGBTQ embodiment in Disney's animations.

Further discussion of the narrative of LGBTQ in children animation needs to be developed in Translation Studies from different perspectives. Holding Baker's (2006) paradigm, future research can adopt framing and labelling tools. Audio Visual Translation (AVT) can implicate how LGBTQ concepts are handled in multimedia content (Flotow & Josephy-Hernández 2018) and (De Marco, 2006). Localization of multimedia content by amateur translators who may propagate the same LGBTQ concepts might be another area for investigation. Re-examining the uncontrollable circulation of news in both official and unofficial websites; in the globalization era, would bring about issues of re-narration ethics in Translation Studies (Baker, 2008).

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