




## REVIEW

# A Critical Review of Hermeneutic Approaches to Language and Translation: Theoretical Foundations, Interpretative Challenges, and Implications for Cross-Cultural Communication

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## ABSTRACT

This study provides a critical examination of hermeneutic methodologies in language and translation, with a focused analysis on their application to classical literature. While existing research has explored translation theory extensively, few studies have systematically investigated the intersection between hermeneutics and translation, particularly concerning classical texts. This gap motivates the present research, which employs a rigorous critical literature review methodology to analyze and synthesize key hermeneutical approaches to language and translation. By evaluating these methodologies, the study develops a comprehensive theoretical framework that clarifies the hermeneutic concept of translation, offering a robust foundation for reassessing classical text translations. The research identifies three primary factors that complicate the translation process: textual (linguistic structures, syntax, and semantics), contextual (historical, cultural, and situational influences), and paracontextual (ideological, power-related, and subjective biases). While traditional translation approaches

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### ARTICLE INFO

Received: 20 February 2025 | Revised: 1 April 2025 | Accepted: 3 April 2025 | Published Online: 10 April 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i4.8802>

### CITATION

Saleh, S.G., Khasawneh, M.A.S., Hassan, E.A.A.E., et al., 2025. A Critical Review of Hermeneutic Approaches to Language and Translation: Theoretical Foundations, Interpretative Challenges, and Implications for Cross-Cultural Communication. *Forum for Linguistic Studies*. 7(4): 511–526. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i4.8802>

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often prioritize textual fidelity, this study argues that contextual and paracontextual elements play an equally critical role in shaping meaning. For instance, translating classical Arabic poetry or sacred texts requires not only lexical accuracy but also an understanding of historical ethos, cultural connotations, and the translator's own interpretative lens. By integrating these three dimensions, the study advocates for a hermeneutically informed approach to translation—one that moves beyond mechanical word-for-word substitution toward a dynamic negotiation of meaning. This approach enhances translation accuracy, adaptability, and cultural resonance, particularly for classical works where linguistic and historical gaps are pronounced. Ultimately, the research underscores the necessity of hermeneutic analysis in translation studies, proposing that a deeper engagement with context and interpretation can bridge the divide between source and target languages, ensuring both precision and philosophical depth in translated literature.

**Keywords:** Classical Texts; Contextual Elements; Hermeneutics; Interpretation; Paracontextual

## 1. Introduction

This study is a kind of critical review on the studies addressing the overlapped and intervened connections between translation and hermeneutics, as there are few studies that focus on the translation from a hermeneutical approach. This study aims to look into issues in hermeneutics that help translators understand and objectively interpret traditional texts before they translate them so that they can provide correct and precise translations. But this study's main goal is to think critically about how other studies have thought about the connections and internal relationships between translation and hermeneutics. This study is meant to be reflective and critical on the current trends and theories in translation studies from a hermeneutical perspective. The hermeneutic concept of translation centers on the examination of language and its impact on the translation of classical literature. This approach diverges from traditional linguistic definitions of language, instead highlighting various factors that can hinder the translation of conventional texts<sup>[1]</sup>. These factors can be categorized into three primary types: contextual, paracontextual, and textual.

## 2. Definitions of Primary Categories in Hermeneutic Translation

### (1) Textual Elements

- **Definition:** The *linguistic and structural features* of the source text, including vocabulary, syntax, grammar, rhetorical devices, and genre conventions.
- **Role in Translation:** Forms the “literal” layer of meaning but is often insufficient for accurate trans-

lation due to ambiguities (e.g., polysemy, cultural idioms).

- **Example:** Translating Arabic “إن شاء الله” (In-sha’Allah) as “God willing” captures the text but not its cultural weight in Muslim discourse.

### (2) Contextual Elements

- **Definition:** The *historical, social, and situational frameworks* that shape a text's production and reception, including:
  - **Historical context:** Era-specific norms (e.g., pre-Islamic poetry's *jahiliyyah* ethos).
  - **Situational context:** Purpose of the text (e.g., Qur'anic revelation vs. secular Arabic prose).
- **Role in Translation:** Ensures the translated text resonates with the original's intended function.
- **Example:** Naguib Mahfouz's *Children of Gebelawi* requires knowledge of 1950s Egyptian socio-politics to avoid misreading its allegory.

### (3) Paracontextual Elements

- **Definition:** The *implicit, ideological, and power-laden dimensions* influencing interpretation, such as:
  - **Translator bias:** Colonial-era Orientalists reframing *One Thousand and One Nights* as “exotic tales”.
  - **Cultural hegemony:** Western translations of Sufi poetry emphasizing “mysticism” while erasing Islamic theology.
- **Role in Translation:** Exposes hidden agendas and demands reflexivity from translators.
- **Example:** Translating “جهاد” (jihad) as “holy war” (paracontextual distortion) versus “struggle” (closer to textual/contextual truth).

## Interdependence of the Three Categories

Hermeneutic translation treats these elements as *interwoven*:

- A Qur'anic verse (textual) cannot be divorced from its *asbab al-nuzul* (contextual revelation context) or modern ideological misappropriations (paracontextual).
- The Arabic *muwashshahat* (textual) rely on Andalusí musical traditions (contextual) and postcolonial identity politics (paracontextual).

The hermeneutic perspective emphasizes the significance of these elements in the translation process. While language is primarily considered a textual component, it is also shaped and influenced by contextual and paracontextual factors. Achieving an accurate, precise, and adaptable translation requires bridging the gap between these aspects and language. Therefore, it is essential to investigate and analyze the concept of language through a hermeneutic lens. The hermeneutical concept of language and translation, primarily rooted in the works of philosophers like Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur, emphasizes the interpretative nature of understanding and meaning-making<sup>[2]</sup>. This perspective posits that language is not merely a tool for communication, but a medium through which we engage with the world and construct meaning.

One critical aspect of this approach is its focus on the historical and cultural contexts that shape both language and translation. Hermeneutics argues that understanding a text requires an awareness of the preconceptions and biases that both the translator and the audience bring to the process. This highlights the inherently subjective nature of translation, challenging the notion of a “faithful” or “objective” translation. However, this emphasis on interpretation can also lead to challenges. Stolze argues that it may undermine the possibility of achieving a clear and stable meaning, as the fluidity of interpretation can result in multiple, sometimes conflicting, translations of the same text<sup>[3]</sup>. Additionally, the hermeneutical approach may inadvertently privilege certain cultural perspectives over others, raising concerns about cultural imperialism in translation practices. The emphasis on interaction and the convergence of perspectives—where the translator’s engagement intersects with the original text—can be complex, necessitating a profound understanding of both the source and target languages<sup>[4]</sup>. This complexity functions as both an asset and a limitation, enriching the translation pro-

cess while simultaneously complicating the responsibilities of the translator.

## 3. Hermeneutic Universal Concept of Language and Translation of the Contextual Elements

The hermeneutic framework of language and translation offers valuable insights into meaning and comprehension; however, it also poses significant challenges that warrant rigorous exploration within translation theory and practice. Hermeneutics has a distinct concept of language, which is somewhat different to the linguistic concept of language. Gadamer contends that since the Romantic period, the idea that interpretative concepts can simply be retrieved from a linguistic repository when needed—without immediate comprehension—can no longer be sustained. Instead, language functions as the universal medium through which understanding takes place, and interpretation serves as the process that enables comprehension. This does not mean, however, that challenges related to unique expression do not exist. The gap between the translator and the original text, or the difference between the language of the text and that of the interpreter, is not a minor issue but a fundamental aspect of the interpretative process<sup>[5]</sup>. Hermeneutics highlights the importance of language as the primary means for understanding, interpreting, and translating a text. This perspective presents a unique view of language that differs from traditional definitions.

Translating a classical text requires the translator to possess a hermeneutic understanding of language, as articulated in the idea that translation is a dual act of communication. This process involves two distinct codes: the ‘source language’ and the ‘target language.’ The differences between these two codes create challenges in the translation process<sup>[6]</sup>. This situation arises from the idea that a text cannot exist independently of language. The language of a work of art encompasses contextual, paracontextual, and textual or linguistic elements. Linguistic challenges in translation can manifest as “lexical or morpho-syntactic deficiencies or as issues of polysemy<sup>[6]</sup>. In contrast, contextual factors that influence the translation process are characterized by “the relationship between signs and their users, a relationship that reflects aspects such as individuality, social status, and

geographical origin of the speakers”<sup>[6]</sup>. The translation of contextual elements in traditional texts is a complex issue that poses numerous challenges. The complexity of translation challenges intensifies when historical context is taken into account. Should the translator strive to evoke the temporal atmosphere of the original text for contemporary audiences? Or should they modernize the archaic language to improve accessibility for today’s readers? For instance, should the works of Dante, Shakespeare, Cervantes, or Chaucer be presented using antiquated language, or is it more appropriate to adapt their language to resonate with modern sensibilities? Furthermore, should Cicero’s rhetorical style be mirrored by that of a prominent contemporary politician? These questions underscore the intricate balance translators must navigate between preserving historical authenticity and ensuring comprehension for the present-day reader

Steiner argues that a text is composed of textual and contextual components. The translator is driven towards investigating the concrete and visible elements of a text and its invisible ones<sup>[7]</sup>. The translator is confronted not only with the language of the text, but also with the language that he/she uses for interpreting and translating his/her own understanding of the text. In translating a traditional work, the translator is torn between using archaic or modern language and consciously bringing the text from the past to the present, or preserving its originality and pastness.

Malmkjaer presents a nuanced understanding of language through a tripartite framework that encompasses three interconnected aspects: the author’s language, the target language, and the translator’s language<sup>[8]</sup>. The first aspect pertains to the language of the source material, which serves as the foundation for the translation. The second involves the translator’s comprehension of this text, where they interpret the meaning and nuances embedded within the original language. The third aspect is reflected in the translated text itself, which embodies the translator’s understanding and choices. In the same vein, Malmkjaer emphasizes that the translator’s comprehension is deeply rooted in analyzing the interplay between the language structure of the original text and its contextual environment<sup>[8]</sup>. This means that the process of translation is not merely a mechanical conversion of words; it requires a profound engagement with both the linguistic and cultural dimensions of the source material. Furthermore, there exists a dynamic relationship between comprehension

and interpretation.

The translator must grasp the original text fully, considering its cultural values, ideological messages, and the broader context in which it was produced. As a result, the act of translation transcends simple linguistic transfer; it becomes a complex endeavor that conveys not only the content but also the underlying cultural significance and ideological frameworks present in the original work “The speaker guarantees that her utterance is a faithful enough representation of the original: that is, resembles it closely enough in relevant respects<sup>[9]</sup>. Therefore, the translated text becomes relevant to the reader. Gutt writes: the idea of relevance significantly restricts the translation for both its intended meaning and its expression<sup>[10]</sup>. Consequently, if we inquire about the aspects in which the intended interpretation of the translation should mirror the original, the response is: in aspects that ensure sufficient relevance to the audience—specifically, those that provide adequate contextual effects; if we question how the translation should be articulated, the answer is: it should be articulated in a manner that conveys the intended interpretation without imposing undue cognitive effort on the audience. Thus, considerations of relevance limit both the intended understanding of the translation and its expression, and as adherence to the principle of relevance is inherently context-dependent, these limitations are likewise dictated by context.

## 4. Research Methodology

This study adopts a critical literature review methodology to examine hermeneutic approaches to language and translation, particularly concerning the translation of classical literature. The methodology follows a two-stage process: first, it systematically reviews and analyzes various hermeneutical theories related to language and translation, evaluating their foundational principles and interpretative frameworks. Second, after a critical examination of these methodologies, their key concepts are synthesized to establish a comprehensive theoretical framework for understanding translation from a hermeneutic perspective. This framework serves as a foundation for reassessing the translation of classical texts by highlighting the interplay between textual, contextual, and paracontextual elements. The study identifies how these factors influence the translation pro-

cess, demonstrating that translation is not merely a textual endeavor but also deeply rooted in broader interpretative and cultural contexts. By integrating these dimensions, the research promotes a hermeneutic analysis of language to enhance the accuracy, adaptability, and interpretative depth of translation practices.

## 5. Hermeneutical Translation Principle of the Textual Relevance to the Modern Readership

Leo Tak-Hung Chan highlights the pivotal role of the reader within the hermeneutic theory of translation<sup>[11]</sup> He argues that the significance of the reader in the translation process is unmatched, as the translated or interpreted text is fundamentally designed for a contemporary audience. This adaptation from past to present is essential; if a text fails to resonate with today's readers, it loses its vitality and becomes an inert artifact, stripped of its ability to communicate meaningful messages. To grasp the relationship between a text's language and the contemporary world, it is crucial to define the audience's nature. The language employed in a text is not merely a vehicle for communication; it is a dynamic element that reflects and shapes the reality of the audience. This language is both formed by and reshaped through its sociocultural context, illustrating the interplay between the text and its environment. Thus, the effectiveness of a translation hinges on its relevance to the audience's current experiences and cultural frameworks. A successful translation breathes life into the original text, ensuring that it remains a vibrant part of contemporary discourse<sup>[5]</sup>. By recognizing the audience's role and the sociocultural dimensions of language, translators can create works that are not only faithful to their origins but also resonate powerfully with today's readers, bridging the gap between past and present.

Trask explores how the hermeneutic linguistic tradition sheds light on the characteristics of language found in traditional and ancient texts<sup>[12]</sup>. This perspective offers a unique understanding, recognizing that the archaic nature of these texts, along with their lack of immediacy, can actually serve as a linguistic advantage. Rather than hindering comprehension, the language of traditional texts evolves and renews its meaning in response to the shifting contexts of their readers and the progression of history. The real chal-

lenge lies not in the language itself but in the translator's ability to engage with and interpret this archaic language through the lens of hermeneutic training. Effective translation requires a deep understanding of the historical and cultural contexts that shape the language, as well as the ability to identify the elements that consistently influence its evolution over time. These elements include shifts in societal values, technological advancements, and changes in collective consciousness.

Thus, the translator must navigate the complexities of both the source text and the contemporary audience, ensuring that the richness of the original language is preserved while making it accessible to modern readers. By embracing the hermeneutic approach, translators can bridge the gap between past and present, allowing traditional texts to resonate with new generations while honoring their historical significance. This dynamic interplay between language, context, and interpretation underscores the enduring relevance of ancient texts in contemporary discourse. In translation, there are instances where it becomes impossible to fully capture the essence of the original text. This reality compels the translator to make critical decisions regarding which aspects of the original work are most essential and which elements may be sacrificed or simplified. The challenge of achieving translation reliability stems, in part, from the need to assess the relative importance of various values embedded within the literary work. Each text carries unique cultural, emotional, and aesthetic nuances that contribute to its overall meaning. Therefore, the translator must carefully evaluate these attributes to determine what is vital for conveying the original's intent and impact to the target audience. This process involves not only linguistic skill but also a deep understanding of the source culture and its literary traditions. The translator must navigate the delicate balance between fidelity to the original and the necessity of making the text resonate with contemporary readers. Ultimately, the effectiveness of a translation hinges on the translator's ability to prioritize the most significant elements of the original while ensuring that the translated work remains coherent and meaningful in its new context. This intricate interplay highlights the inherent complexities of translation and the subjective nature of interpreting literary values across different languages and culture.

## 6. Hermeneutical Translation Principle of the Transformative Textual & Contextual Understanding

In the creation of a transformable text, the translation process is deeply intertwined with comprehension. It is essential to recognize that it is the language of the text that undergoes transformation, rather than the text itself. Several factors influence how language evolves during this process. When translating traditional works, the translator often faces the challenge of conveying the full spectrum of values embedded in the original text. A significant hurdle lies in clarifying the paracontextual elements—those implicit nuances and cultural references that enrich the original but may not have direct equivalents in the target language. This task is vital, as it allows the traditional language to resonate anew across different times and contexts. As Gadamer articulates, “All tradition is contemporaneous with each present time in the form of writing” highlighting the dynamic relationship between past texts and present interpretations<sup>[5]</sup>. In selecting the meaning of a traditional text, translators find themselves navigating a tension between the past and the present. They must decide whether to prioritize a literal or metaphorical interpretation, or to convey the meaning as understood within its original context. This decision-making process is complex and requires a nuanced understanding of both the source and target cultures. Ultimately, the translator’s choices shape how the traditional text is perceived and appreciated by contemporary audiences, thereby bridging the gap between historical significance and modern relevance.

Katherine Reiss writes:

“Torn out of its original social context - now a historical report and also translated as such = informative text; Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver’s Travels* - satire on contemporary social ills = expressive text with an operative secondary function; today only recognizable in this function by the experts specializing in this period; for the ordinary reader (also of the original) - a fantastic adventure tale = expressive text.”<sup>[13]</sup>.

Lathey argues that translating a traditional text can yield multiple interpretations of the same source material, with language playing a relatively minor role in shaping

its meaning<sup>[14]</sup>. For instance, when translating *Gulliver’s Travels*, the translator faces a dilemma: should the work be rendered primarily as a political satire that critiques the political landscape of the eighteenth century, or as an adventurous tale aimed at children? This duality highlights the paradox of the novel’s language, which can facilitate a range of translations and interpretations. On one hand, *Gulliver’s Travels* can be approached as a biting critique of the moral decay within English society during its time, revealing the absurdities and failings of contemporary politics. On the other hand, it can also be viewed as a fantastical narrative, an exotic and imaginative story meant for entertainment and leisure reading. In this context, the translation process requires careful consideration of the intended audience and the broader implications of the text. The translator must navigate these competing interpretations, deciding how to balance the political undertones with the whimsical elements of adventure. This necessitates a nuanced understanding of both the source material and the cultural context of the target audience, ultimately shaping how the work is received and understood in different settings. Notorious for its lack of immediacy, the language of a traditional text has to be rendered immediate and fresh: its meaning is shaped through connecting the lost ties between the past context of the text and present experience. The incomprehensible language of traditional texts can be made intelligible and clear when they are incorporated into their broader present context.

The primary aim of hermeneutic theory in translation is to reveal the complex language of a text. Over time, the archaic language of traditional texts often loses its original meaning, as meaning is closely tied to historical context. These texts carry messages from the past that may conflict with contemporary values, customs, traditions, and societal norms. In today’s world, many tools, artifacts, and cultural values that were once prevalent have disappeared, leading to considerable challenges in interpreting, translating, and understanding traditional texts. This disconnect can result in misinterpretations and misunderstandings, making it essential to approach such texts with a careful consideration of their historical and cultural backgrounds. Gadamer remarks that written works transmitted to us are shaped by a desire for permanence, giving rise to the distinct forms of continuity that define literature. Literature is not merely a collection of memorials or symbolic markers of the past; rather, it con-

tinually renews its relevance in the present. Engaging with literature does not primarily involve reconstructing the past through rational analysis but instead requires active participation in its content. The relationship between a reader and a text is not centered on a personal connection with the author—who may remain largely unknown—but rather on a shared experience of the text itself. The meaning of a text exists independently of whether it serves as a reflection of the author's life or as a historical document; what matters is the reader's ability to comprehend and engage with it in the present<sup>[5]</sup>.

## 7. Hermeneutic Principle of the Authorial Intentions Reconstruction to the Translated Text

Understanding the intentions or opinions of the original author is a crucial part of translating a traditional text. However, authorial intent should not be the primary focus; instead, it should be viewed as just one aspect of the translation process. Once a text is translated, it becomes part of a broader cultural conversation rather than remaining solely the property of its original author. In today's context, the language of a traditional text is disconnected from its original linguistic environment. The meanings of the words have evolved, shaped by the passage of time and historical changes. Thus, translators must navigate these shifts in meaning, recognizing that the text now exists within a new cultural and temporal framework. Reiss writes:

“Language is (among other factors) a temporal phenomenon and thus subject to the conditions of time. This also applies to language in written texts and therefore to these texts themselves, a factor which is significant for translating<sup>[13]</sup>.

Tymoczko contends that translators do not merely replicate the old meanings of traditional texts; instead, they reinterpret them for contemporary audiences<sup>[15]</sup>. The nature of language is inherently temporal, compelling translators to adapt conventional texts to resonate with modern realities. This evolution can sometimes lead to misunderstandings, as readers may struggle to grasp the nuances of classical texts, which can undermine their confidence in the accuracy of their interpretations. Plato poignantly noted the limitations

of written language, stating, “the specific weakness of writing was that no one could come to the aid of the written word if it falls victim to misunderstanding, intentionally or unintentionally”<sup>[5]</sup>. This highlights the crucial role of the hermeneutic translation approach, which seeks to ensure that the language of the original text is not only preserved but also accurately understood in its new context. Ultimately, the translator acts as a bridge, navigating the complexities of time and meaning to illuminate the wisdom of the past for today's reader. According to Gadamer, the language of a traditional text represents a serious challenge for translators. He has this to say: As previously noted, all writing represents a form of alienated speech, requiring its symbols to be reinterpreted in order to recover their original meaning as spoken language. The fundamental hermeneutical challenge lies in reversing this process of self-alienation, which occurs when meaning is transcribed into written form. In written texts, meaning must be reconstructed solely from the linguistic symbols provided, without the contextual cues inherent in spoken communication. Unlike speech, which is accompanied by vocal tone, cadence, and situational context that naturally aid interpretation, writing lacks these supplementary elements. As a result, the “art” of writing plays a uniquely decisive role in shaping interpretation, as it must compensate for the absence of the self-explanatory qualities found in oral discourse.”<sup>[5]</sup>.

## 8. Hermeneutical Translation: Translator as a Rehabilitator Textual and Contextual Contexts

Translating ancient texts presents clear and significant challenges. When spoken language is transcribed into writing, it undergoes a transformation that can alienate and distort its original meaning. This alteration is further compounded when the text is moved from its historical context to the present day. In spoken communication, paralinguistic elements—such as facial expressions, tone, pace, and intonation—enhance understanding and provide crucial context for the speaker's message. In contrast, written language lacks these cues, making it more difficult to convey and interpret meaning. The task becomes even more complex when the message originates from a different time, culture, and social reality, far removed from that of contemporary readers.

Translators are thus required to navigate not only the linguistic differences but also the cultural and temporal divides that distinguish the original audience from contemporary readers. This endeavor demands a comprehensive understanding of the source material, as well as an awareness of the nuances inherent in modern language and context. Such complexities underscore the intricate art of translation as a vital conduit between disparate worlds. Moessner asserts that the hermeneutic theory of translation primarily examines the factors that drive transformation, the alterations that traditional texts undergo, and the ways in which the meaning of language evolves as it is transmitted across generations<sup>[16]</sup>.

The written word exists in a state of continuous flux and transformation, influenced by more than just historical or cultural contexts, which leads to its detachment from both its author and its original circumstances. This phenomenon contrasts sharply with the spoken word, which is typically more readily comprehensible and contextually anchored. Quine argues that the translation process is inherently indeterminate and offers a hermeneutic approach to understanding word meaning<sup>[17]</sup>. He suggests that the meanings of words are fluid, unstable, and subject to change<sup>[17]</sup>. Translation involves more than just aligning expressions between different languages; it also focuses on conveying the cultural essence, ideologies, and concepts found in the original text to the target text. Understanding traditional texts cannot rely solely on dictionaries; instead, it requires an examination of the broader context, including the verbal and physical behaviors related to the text. Quine has this to say: The ability of a non-verbal stimulus to trigger a specific sentence often depends on pre-existing associations between different linguistic expressions.

Such instances illustrate how language extends beyond mere phenomenological reporting. For example, when an individual mixes the contents of two test tubes, observes a green coloration, and infers the presence of copper, the resulting statement is prompted by a non-verbal stimulus. However, the effectiveness of this stimulus relies on a prior network of linguistic and conceptual associations—specifically, the individual’s familiarity with chemical theory. This demonstrates that language is not solely a reaction to direct sensory experiences but is also shaped by learned knowledge and interpretive frameworks<sup>[17]</sup>. Quine asserts that language reflects the sociocultural realities of a society, align-

ing with its belief systems, prevalent modes of thought, and cultural practices<sup>[17]</sup>. Thus, for a translator, it is essential to understand a foreign text within these contextual factors. In his article “The Problem of Meaning and Linguistics,” Quine emphasizes that language accurately represents its environment<sup>[17]</sup>. Supporting this view, Wittgenstein argues that language is fundamentally a social practice<sup>[18]</sup>. In his work “Investigations,” he states, “it is not the content of your speech that matters; it is the manner in which you express it and the context in which it is delivered,” further noting that “words are defined by their application<sup>[18]</sup>.”

Peter Winch argues that the criteria of logic are not universal truths but emerge from specific social practices and ways of living<sup>[19]</sup>. Therefore, applying these criteria consistently across all social contexts is not advisable. Language and meaning are dynamic; they must evolve to stay relevant to modern lifestyles, or they risk becoming obsolete. Winch emphasizes that “ideas cannot be so easily detached from their context; the relationship between idea and context is an internal one,” suggesting that the significance of concepts stems from their functions within their respective systems. He further posits that translation is a contextual act, requiring an understanding of the broader context in which words are used<sup>[19]</sup>. To grasp the intended meaning of the original text, its social context must be reconstructed. In line with hermeneutic principles, Winch notes that the language of traditional texts represents a rich conceptual framework that encompasses the world of the text, its context, and the translator’s perspective<sup>[19]</sup>.

A translator can effectively convey meaning when they appreciate the evolving, complex nature of language and its conceptual framework. The translation process happens between two intangible realms that share broadly similar universal concepts. Despite differences in the orthographic features of words, the underlying concepts they represent are often closely related. This process aims to recreate the social context of the original text while considering the conceptual dynamics involved in linguistic transfer. Translation begins and ends with language: “In order to convey the meaning and content of a text, it is necessary to translate it into our language.” However, this requires linking to the broad spectrum of potential meanings we navigate linguistically. Interpretation brings the text to life through language, showcasing a reciprocal relationship between language and translation.



## 9. Hermeneutic Situation and the Corresponding Equivalence

Wittgenstein asserts that language is deeply intertwined with the world, history, culture, and society<sup>[18]</sup>. Alasdair MacIntyre differentiates between linguistic and cultural aspects of meaning, arguing that the terms in different languages do not always correspond, especially when each language belongs to a distinct cultural domain<sup>[20]</sup>. As a result, languages can be significantly different conceptually when translating across cultures. Steiner highlights the complexity and fluidity of the term *language*, which carries multiple meanings<sup>[7]</sup>. It encompasses the language of the translator, the language of the text, the language of its context, and the target language in translation. However, language can also be understood as the final product of the translator's interpretive process—an evolving construct shaped by comprehension. The thoughts embedded in a text are not fixed; rather, they can be understood differently by each translator. Language, in this sense, is embodied in both the world of the text and the translator's personal understanding. Consequently, no single translation or interpretation of a traditional text can be deemed definitive or absolute. Every translation is shaped by a particular *hermeneutic situation*—the context in which the translator perceives and interacts with language.

The hermeneutic situation offers a valuable perspective on the fluid and transformative nature of language. As a traditional text moves through time, it encounters new contexts and perspectives, continuously interacting with an ever-changing world. This dynamic movement generates new meanings across time and space, ensuring that no text remains static. The hermeneutic approach to translation does not merely transmit meaning but actively engages with and reshapes it, making understanding both visible and deeply embedded in the act of interpretation. In this process, language is not just a tool for translation—it is an intrinsic part of the meaning itself. Gadamer emphasizes the failure of language to provide us with corresponding equivalence: When an individual is fully immersed in a language, they experience a profound conviction that its words possess an unparalleled precision in expressing the subject matter at hand. It seems unlikely that equivalent terms in other languages could capture the essence of the same objects with equal accuracy. The appropriate word is always perceived as

unique and intrinsic to the concept it represents, much like the object itself. The fundamental challenge of translation arises from the perceived inseparability of the original words from the objects they signify. As a result, achieving comprehensibility in translation often necessitates an interpretive paraphrase rather than a strictly literal rendering. The more acutely one's historical consciousness responds to linguistic nuance, the more evident the untranslatability of the unfamiliar becomes. Yet, this realization presents a profound hermeneutical dilemma: if words and their meanings are so intimately bound to their original linguistic and cultural contexts, how can understanding be achieved across linguistic boundaries without being confined to one's own language?<sup>[5]</sup>

Language is more than a system of symbols used for communication; it is a fundamental mode of existence. It serves as a tool through which individuals engage with the world, and each language is deeply embedded in its respective culture. Cultural distinctions inherently shape linguistic differences, reinforcing the close relationship between language and cultural identity. In the context of traditional texts, *paracontextual* elements—primarily culture and tradition—play a crucial role in shaping meaning and interpretation. As a result, each language maintains a degree of cultural exclusivity, distinguishing it from others. These linguistic and cultural distinctions are evident in various elements, including culture-bound terms, cultural markers, names of traditional objects and instruments, designations of specific social occasions and celebrations, religious terminology, and local idiomatic expressions. As Sapir asserts, “Again, language does not exist apart from culture, that is, from the socially inherited assemblage of practices and beliefs that determines the texture of our lives”<sup>[9]</sup>. In this sense, language is inextricably tied to the cultural framework in which it emerges, existing within the confines of its own unique cultural context.

Pei emphasizes that language is inseparable from its unique worldview, serving as a direct reflection of the culture from which it emerges<sup>[21]</sup>. Language is not merely a neutral system of communication; it is deeply embedded with the cultural ideology and political context of its society. It acts as a vessel for social realities, folklore, art, and traditions, reinforcing the idea that linguistic expression is inherently shaped by cultural identity. Compared to broader challenges in cultural transmission, linguistic comprehension in transla-

tion is relatively minor—worldviews embedded in different languages remain fundamentally distinct.

## 10. Language Limitations and Hermeneutical Translation Strategies

The hermeneutic theory of translation seeks to address these challenges by offering strategies for interpreting and conveying meaning within culturally rich texts. A major obstacle in translation arises from the limitations of language itself; a language is inherently shaped by its own cultural framework and struggles to fully encapsulate perspectives beyond its scope. As Wardhaugh explains, “The cultures of people find reflection in the language they employ: because they value certain things and do them in a certain way, they come to use their language in ways that reflect what they value and what they do”<sup>[22]</sup>. This underscores the profound influence of cultural values on linguistic expression, highlighting the complexities of translating meaning across cultural and linguistic boundaries. Gadamer has this to say:

The work of understanding and interpretation always remains meaningful. This shows the superior universality with which reason rises above the limitations of any given language. The hermeneutical experience is the corrective by means of which the thinking and reason escapes the prison of language, and it is itself verbally constituted<sup>[5]</sup>.

The primary obstacle to understanding and interpretation is not language itself but the cultural framework that shapes the meanings and significance of words. Readers naturally comprehend concepts more readily within their own cultural context; however, translators often encounter challenges when attempting to interpret and convey meaning beyond their cultural boundaries. The hermeneutic approach to translation provides a theoretical framework for addressing these challenges, offering strategies to bridge cultural differences when translating traditional texts. Gadamer argues that the diversity of languages, a fundamental concern of linguistics, inevitably raises an important question. However, this inquiry is not merely about linguistic variation but rather about how each language, despite its distinct characteristics, is fully capable of expressing meaning in its own unique way.

Linguistic analysis reveals that every language achieves this function through its particular structures and conventions. Yet, this leads to a further question: how does the unity of thought and expression persist amid such linguistic diversity, allowing all written texts to remain comprehensible? Thus, our inquiry ultimately shifts toward the opposite of what linguistics traditionally seeks to explore—focusing not solely on linguistic differentiation but on the underlying continuity that enables cross-linguistic understanding.”<sup>[5]</sup>.

This perspective raises critical questions about whether language should be understood purely as a symbolic form, as Cassirer suggests: “*Is the idea of form still appropriate here? Is language a symbolic form, as Cassirer calls it? Does this take account of the fact that language is unique in embracing everything—myth, art, law, and so on—that Cassirer also calls symbolic form?*”<sup>[5]</sup>. From a hermeneutic standpoint, however, translation involves more than the mere transfer of linguistic forms; it requires engagement with the underlying thoughts, values, ideologies, and cultural influences embedded within language. Traditional texts, in particular, encapsulate both their historical origins and their ongoing reinterpretation within contemporary contexts. As Gadamer asserts, “*The hermeneutical experience is exactly the reverse of this: to have learned a foreign language and to be able to understand it—this formalism of a faculty—means nothing else than to be in a position to accept what is said in it as said to oneself*”<sup>[5]</sup>. This perspective reinforces the idea that true understanding in translation necessitates an active and personal engagement with meaning, rather than a mere mechanical transfer of words from one language to another. A translator may be proficient in multiple languages, but their thoughts, values, and worldview are fundamentally shaped by their native language. Their entire perception of the world is framed through this linguistic and cultural lens. The challenge in translation lies in accurately conveying the value system of the source language into the target language.

A key difficulty in this process is the translator’s ability to recognize the shared historical experiences and cultural influences that connect the two languages. In this role, the translator navigates two distinct identities: their own cultural background and that of the foreign culture they are translating. They must balance these often contrasting perspectives, ensuring that differing values and worldviews are

represented with equal consideration and sensitivity. Thomas highlights the relationship of modern linguistics to traditional hermeneutics. The field of modern linguistics represents an emerging area of study with the potential to significantly reshape long-standing principles of biblical interpretation. Although still in its early stages and lacking universally accepted terminology, the discipline has introduced several key concepts that may be unfamiliar to many. “Phonology” refers to the study of the fundamental sounds of language, known as phonemes, while “morphology” examines the smallest meaningful linguistic units, or morphemes. “Syntax” focuses on the structural formation of phrases and sentences from these smaller units, whereas “semantics” explores the meanings of morphemes and words, as well as the various ways in which larger linguistic structures are constructed. Additionally, “discourse” pertains to linguistic structures that extend beyond the sentence level, encompassing broader textual organization and coherence<sup>[23]</sup>.

Thomas explains that the hermeneutic theory of translation employs analytical tools that differ significantly from those used in modern linguistic theories to comprehend, interpret, and translate texts. According to the hermeneutic approach, a traditional text consists of three interrelated components: contextual, paracontextual, and textual elements. In contrast, modern linguistic theories primarily focus on identifying and analyzing the linguistic and textual structures within a text. The fundamental divergence between these two perspectives lies in their conceptualization of language. Modern linguistics adopts a structural and systematic approach, employing specialized linguistic terminology to analyze language at various levels. Phonology examines phonemes, the fundamental sound units of a language. Morphology investigates morphemes, the smallest units of meaning. Syntax explores the arrangement of words and phrases to form sentences, while semantics delves into the meanings of words and morphemes. Additionally, discourse analysis examines larger textual structures beyond the sentence level.

Thomas further argues that contemporary linguistic theories offer a distinct framework for understanding traditional texts, one that emphasizes the connection between human cognition and the physiological ability to produce language. This perspective views language as an innate cognitive function, emerging naturally from the human mind rather than being shaped by external cultural or historical influences.

Consequently, it downplays the role of external reality in shaping linguistic expression, positioning language as an autonomous system governed primarily by internal cognitive mechanisms.

Modern linguistic theories of translation overlap with the traditional hermeneutics of Schleiermacher and Dilthey. Silva argues that it is a reasonable assumption that any interpreter engages with a text through a pre-existing framework of experiences, which have been internalized with a certain degree of coherence and shape their comprehension. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the interpreter can assess the text without relying on these presuppositions as a fundamental point of reference. However, I also contend that the interpreter has the capacity to transcend—though not entirely eliminate—these preconceptions. This is achieved not by attempting to disregard them in the pursuit of objectivity, but rather by consciously acknowledging and employing them as interpretive tools. In the process of analyzing a text, we inevitably contextualize it, yet an awareness of this tendency enables us to critically adjust our interpretive framework when confronted with contradictory evidence<sup>[24]</sup>.

Both modern linguistic theories and the hermeneutic theory of translation acknowledge that translation must begin with an analysis of the original text’s background, as this context informs the translator’s interpretation. This background includes presuppositions and points of reference that inevitably shape the translator’s understanding of the text. In the case of traditional texts, the translator cannot fully detach from these influences.

The hermeneutic approach further asserts that while the translator cannot entirely transcend these points of reference, awareness of their potential biases allows for a more reflective and nuanced translation. However, linguistic theories of translation do not provide a clear framework for how translators can recognize or mitigate these biases. Cotterel and Turner challenge the notion of achieving an entirely objective translation of traditional texts, arguing that the Cartesian or Baconian ideal of neutral exegesis is ultimately unattainable<sup>[25]</sup>. They contend that every interpretation is inevitably shaped by the translator’s own perspective: *“The criticism goes, the Cartesian or Baconian ideal of ‘objective’ exegesis, an exegesis that is unaffected by the world of the analyst, is unattainable. Every attempt to define an author’s intended meaning actually only discovers a mean-*

ing which is somehow related to ‘meaning for me’<sup>[25]</sup>. This perspective underscores the inherent subjectivity of translation, suggesting that any attempt to uncover an author’s original intent is inevitably filtered through the interpreter’s own worldview.

Traditional hermeneutics seeks to achieve an objective translation and interpretation of a text by reconstructing the author’s psychological state to capture their original intent. However, this approach has been largely rejected by contemporary hermeneutic scholars such as Heidegger and Gadamer, whose views align more closely with modern linguistic theories. As Nida points out, “*There is no generally recognized psychological theory that is sufficient to elucidate all that is involved in language acquisition, competence, and performance*”<sup>[26]</sup>.

A fundamental concept in contemporary hermeneutics is predisposition—particularly presupposition—which underlies the process of comprehension, beginning at an unconscious level. Language acquisition is not a product of formal education but rather an implicit interaction between an individual and their environment. Infants acquire language naturally by listening to their surroundings, reinforcing the idea that understanding a traditional text requires more than a technical analysis of its linguistic structures.

Hecke argues that modern linguistics acknowledges the inherent opacity of meaning in traditional texts; their original intent is not immediately accessible but must be inferred. This hidden meaning can be uncovered through linguistic analysis and reconstructed through hermeneutic interpretation<sup>[27]</sup>. As Thomas states, “*The direct violation of the fundamental tenets of grammatical-historical interpretation and its objective of discerning the meaning of the text intended by the author and as understood by the original reader is the incorporation of preunderstanding into the interpretative process*”<sup>[23]</sup>. This perspective underscores the dynamic nature of translation, where understanding is shaped by both the historical context of the text and the interpreter’s own presuppositions.

Trips argues that the linguistic and hermeneutic modalities of interpretation and understanding are in conflict and differ in certain respects<sup>[28]</sup>. These distinctions are observed in the following domains: the conceptual framework of words; synonyms; syntactical expressions; authorial intention; historical consciousness; the integration of horizons;

precision; and discourse. The diachronic examination of words and terms utilized in conventional texts is not a focus of contemporary linguistics. The diachronic study of a word endeavors to elucidate the meaning of the word during a particular historical period. The protracted process of its semantic change over time is also traced. Nevertheless, the essence of contemporary linguistics is the synchronic examination of words, which pertains to their current usage and their meaning. Nida refutes the notion of comprehending meaning by following the historical progression of words<sup>[26]</sup>. In this manner, the meaning of a traditional text should be in harmony with the contextual elements that surround it. The significance of the text is not considered to be significantly influenced by the historical study of its words, as the concept of its meaning is derived from the restoration of its linguistic meaning in its current context. Consequently, textual connections to the past are disregarded. Nida provides a succinct explanation in the following: “Etymologies, whether arrived at by historical documentation or by comparative analysis, are all very interesting and may provide significant clues to meaning, but they are no guarantee whatsoever that the historical influence is a factor in people’s actual use of such linguistic units”<sup>[29]</sup>.

Contemporary readers often question whether historical developments have shaped the meaning of a word. Linguistic theory asserts that the meaning of words cannot be empirically verified by tracing their historical evolution. De Saussure argues that “*the linguist who wishes to comprehend a state must discard all knowledge of everything that produced it and ignore diachrony. He can only penetrate the minds of speakers by utterly suppressing the past. His assessment can only be compromised by historical intervention*”<sup>[30]</sup>. Modern linguistics, therefore, largely disregards the historical context of words, focusing instead on their present function and meaning. This perspective contrasts with modern hermeneutics, which emphasizes the historical study of language as essential for understanding texts in their original cultural and historical context. For traditional texts, historical analysis is crucial in recovering the lost cultural consciousness of past societies—something modern translators may not inherently possess. Without this shared cultural awareness, translators risk misinterpreting or oversimplifying the historical dimensions of a text when viewed through a contemporary lens. To bridge this gap, the translator must

reconstruct the historical context of the text while preserving its historical significance in the present. While modern linguistics argues that the relationship between words and their referents is based on meaning and sense yet remains arbitrary and unpredictable, contemporary hermeneutics contends that this relationship is reciprocal, shaped by historical and cultural influences.

## 11. Examples from Arabic Literature

The examples from Arabic literature vividly demonstrate the hermeneutic challenges of translation discussed in the text, particularly the interplay between textual, contextual, and paracontextual elements. For instance, translating the Qur'an's "Allahu al-Samad" (textual) requires grappling with theological connotations (contextual) and the translator's doctrinal stance (paracontextual), echoing Gadamer's assertion that meaning emerges from the "fusion of horizons"<sup>[31]</sup>. Similarly, colonial distortions in *One Thousand and One Nights* reveal how power dynamics (paracontextual) override linguistic accuracy (textual), aligning with the critique of instrumentalist translation<sup>[32]</sup>. The *Mu'allaqat*'s untranslatable *atlat* motif underscores Ricoeur's "distanciation," where ancient Bedouin context (contextual) resists modern poetic frameworks<sup>[33]</sup>. Meanwhile, censored translations of Mahfouz's *Children of Gebelawi* exemplify how ideological biases (paracontextual) truncate textual meaning, reinforcing the hermeneutic call for reflexive, culturally grounded translation. These cases collectively illustrate the text's core argument: that hermeneutics bridges linguistic gaps by treating translation as dynamic negotiation—not mere transfer—of meaning across time, culture, and power<sup>[34]</sup>.

### (1). Qur'anic Translation

- **Challenge:** Divine untranslatability – Surah Al-Ikhlās (112:1) "Allahu al-Samad" is rendered as "God the Eternal" (Pickthall) or "God the Absolute" (Asad), losing theological nuances<sup>[35]</sup>.
- **Hermeneutic Lens:** Islamic Tafsir traditions vs. Western orientalist translations (e.g., Arberry's poetic approach) reveal how paracontextual beliefs shape meaning<sup>[36]</sup>.

### (2). Al-Mutanabbi's Poetry

- **Challenge:** Translating 10th-century Arabic pan-

egyrics' layered metaphors (e.g., "والليل والبيداء والخيال تعرفني الخيل" / "The steeds, the night, the desert know me").

- **Case Study:** A.J. Arberry's 1965 translation preserves rhythm but flattens cultural allusions to Bedouin honor codes<sup>[37]</sup>.

### (3). *One Thousand and One Nights* (ألف ليلة وليلة)

- **Challenge:** Colonial distortions – Antoine Galland's 18th-century French version added tales (e.g., Aladdin) absent from Arabic manuscripts<sup>[38]</sup>. (Haddawy, 2020, p. 63).
- **Hermeneutic Issue:** Modern translators like Husain Haddawy (1990) strive to recover pre-Galland textual authenticity<sup>[32]</sup>.

### (4). Naguib Mahfouz's *Children of Gebelawi* (أولاد حارتنا)

- **Challenge:** Allegorical references to Quranic figures (e.g., Gebelawi as God) led to bans; Swedish/Spanish translations excised religious parallels<sup>[34]</sup>.
- **Analysis:** Censorship reflects Gadamer's "historically effected consciousness" in translation<sup>[31]</sup>.

### (5). Pre-Islamic *Mu'allaqat* Poetry

- **Challenge:** Imru' al-Qais' opening line "ومنزل وقفا نبيك من ذكرى حبيب" ("Halt, two friends, let us weep for a lover and abode") requires reconstructing 6th-century nomadic ethos<sup>[39]</sup>.
- **Example:** Desmond O'Grady's 1990 translation imposes Celtic lament tropes, misrepresenting *atlat* (ruin motif) conventions<sup>[37]</sup>.

### (6). Al-Jahiz's *Kitab al-Hayawan* (كتاب الحيوان)

- **Challenge:** 9th-century zoological-ethical hybrid text defies Western genre categories. Latin translations (e.g., 18th-century) stripped its *adab* (literary-humanist) style<sup>[40]</sup>.
- **Key Point:** Untranslatability of *adab* as both "literature" and "ethical cultivation"

### (7). Modern Arabic Novels: Elias Khoury's *Gate of the Sun* (باب الشمس)

- **Challenge:** Palestinian oral history narrative techniques (e.g., *hakawati* storytelling) clash with Eurocentric novel structures<sup>[41]</sup>.
- **Translation Strategy:** Humphrey Davies' 2006 English version uses fragmented syntax to mirror Arabic orality<sup>[37]</sup>.

## 12. Conclusions

The hermeneutic approach to translation posits that while languages are distinct in their structure and cultural specificity, they share a fundamental capacity to express similar linguistic concepts due to the universality of human thought and emotion. Language serves as both a private and culturally specific medium and a conduit for universal human experiences. Despite the unique characteristics of each language, the process of communication and meaning-making remains deeply interconnected across linguistic and cultural boundaries. A central tenet of the hermeneutic approach is the necessity of interpreting a language's *paracontextual* elements—cultural, historical, and ideological factors that shape meaning—which can be abstracted and rendered comprehensible across linguistic divides. This perspective stands in contrast to the instrumentalist theory of signs, which asserts a fixed, direct relationship between words and their meanings. In contrast, hermeneutics maintains that linguistic meaning is fluid and subject to continual change. Semantic shift—a common linguistic phenomenon—demonstrates that words do not possess immutable meanings but evolve over time in response to cultural and historical transformations. Consequently, the hermeneutic approach seeks to uncover the elements that drive these shifts in meaning across different temporal and cultural contexts. This understanding underscores the notion that words, in themselves, are empty symbols that derive their significance from external realities. Instrumentalist theory, by contrast, emphasizes the formal properties of language, assuming a direct correspondence between a word and its conceptual meaning

## 13. The Findings

These findings have critical implications for future translation practices:

- (1) **Beyond Literalism:** The Qur'anic "*al-Samad*" and *Mu'allaqat*'s *atlat* motif demonstrate that rigid adherence to lexical fidelity erodes meaning. Translators must prioritize *functional equivalence* by reconstructing cultural concepts (e.g., rendering *adab* as "humanist ethics" rather than "literature").
- (2) **Context as Compass:** Colonial distortions in *One Thousand and Nights* and censored translations of Mahfouz

prove that ignoring historical power dynamics (*paracontext*) perpetuates epistemic violence. Future practices must integrate *critical historiography* to expose and redress such erasures.

- (3) **Translator as Mediator:** The hermeneutic model rejects the illusion of neutrality. Like Elias Khoury's *Gate of the Sun*, translators should embrace *positionality*—annotating choices (e.g., why *hakawati* becomes "fragmented narration") to foreground their interpretative role (Berman 1985).
- (4) **Dynamic Meaning-Making:** Semantic shifts in Arabic (e.g., *jihad*'s evolution from "struggle" to politicized term) demand *diachronic sensitivity*. Tools like collaborative digital glossaries (Apter 2013) could track contextual evolution across translations.
- (5) **Ethics of Untranslatability:** Sacred texts (Qur'an) and culture-bound terms (*wala'*/loyalty) require *metalinguistic scaffolding*—footnotes, parallel texts, or multimedia supplements—to preserve layers of meaning without reduction.

## 14. Limitations of the Hermeneutic Approach to Translation

While the hermeneutic approach offers valuable insights into the complexities of translation, it is not without limitations. These constraints must be acknowledged to ensure a balanced application of hermeneutic principles in translation practice and theory.

### (1). Subjectivity and Lack of Standardization

Hermeneutics emphasizes the interpreter's role in meaning-making, which can lead to **excessive subjectivity**. Unlike linguistic models that prioritize structural accuracy, hermeneutics allows for multiple valid interpretations, making it difficult to establish **consistent translation standards**. For example, a translator's personal biases or cultural background might lead to divergent renditions of the same text (e.g., Sufi poetry interpreted through a Western existentialist lens versus an Islamic mystical framework).

### (2). Overemphasis on Context at the Expense of Textual Fidelity

While hermeneutics rightly highlights the importance of

contextual and paracontextual factors, it risks **undermining textual integrity**. Some translations—particularly of sacred or legal texts—require strict adherence to original wording (e.g., Qur’anic *ayat* or Hadith narrations). Over-interpretation may distort authorial intent, as seen in colonial-era translations of *One Thousand and One Nights*, where cultural embellishments altered the narrative’s authenticity.

### (3). Practical Challenges in Cross-Cultural Mediation

Hermeneutics assumes that meaning can be negotiated through a “**fusion of horizons**” (Gadamer), but this process is **not always feasible** when translating between vastly different linguistic systems. For example:

- Arabic’s root-based morphology (e.g., *k-t-b* for writing-related words) has no direct equivalent in analytic languages like English.
- Culture-specific concepts (*wasta*, *tarab*) may lack functional equivalents, forcing translators to choose between explanatory footnotes (disrupting flow) or oversimplification.

### (4). Time and Resource Intensity

A truly hermeneutic translation requires **deep historical, cultural, and linguistic expertise**, making it **labor-intensive**. Most commercial or technical translations (e.g., legal documents, medical texts) prioritize efficiency over interpretative depth, limiting hermeneutics’ applicability.

### (5). Risk of Cultural Appropriation

Hermeneutic openness to reinterpretation can inadvertently **appropriate source texts**. For instance, translating pre-Islamic Arabic poetry (*Mu’allaqat*) through a modern feminist lens might misrepresent its original socio-historical context, imposing contemporary values on ancient works.

### (6). Unresolved Tension with Machine Translation

Modern AI-driven translation (e.g., Google Translate, DeepL) operates on **statistical and neural patterns**, not hermeneutic reflection. While hermeneutics enriches literary and philosophical translation, it offers little guidance for **automating culturally nuanced translations**, raising questions about its relevance in a digital era.

## Author Contributions

Conceptualization, S.G.S., M.A.S.K., E.A.A.E.H., and S.M.I.; methodology, S.G.S. and M.A.S.K.; validation, M.A.S.K. and E.A.H.; formal analysis, E.A.A.E.H.; investigation, S.G.S., M.A.S.K., and E.A.A.E.H.; writing—original draft preparation, S.G.S., M.A.S.K., and E.A.A.E.H.; writing—review and editing, S.G.S., M.A.S.K., E.A.A.E.H., and S.M.I.; supervision, S.M.I.; project administration, S.M.I. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

## Funding

1. This study is supported via funding from Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University project number (PSAU/2025/R/1446).
2. The authors acknowledge the Deanship of Scientific Research at King Faisal University, Saudi Arabia for financial support under annual research grant number Grant KFU250711
3. The authors extend their appreciation to the Deanship of Scientific Research at King Khalid University for funding this work through Large Research Groups under grant number (RGP.2/311/45).

## Institutional Review Board Statement

Not applicable.

## Informed Consent Statement

Not applicable.

## Data Availability Statement

Not applicable.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest. The funders had no role in the design of the study; in the collection, analyses, or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript; or in the decision to publish the results.

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