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Translation, Cultural Nuances and Marketing: Human vs. AI Localisation and the Target Audience

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Abstract

Marketing is an important practice that attracts customers and target audiences, and so does localisation. Through the utilisation of localisation in the marketing field, both can become one powerful weapon that does not just attract target audience but also connect with them on cultural, and sometimes personal levels. This boosts sales and makes marketing, an already effective strategy, a much more effective one. AI has become an essential tool in translation, and that begs the question: Is Artificial Intelligence (AI) as good as humans in capturing the cultural nuances and specifics to adapt a text? This study aims to examine the difference between human and AI localisation and determine if AI is reliable enough for the task of localising marketing/advertising texts, while appealing to target audiences. The sample data is collected from English marketing descriptions that have been humanely localised into Arabic and that are also rendered by ChatGPT when asked to localise it. This study uses content analysis and comparison as research tools, and it employs a qualitative approach using Lefevere's Rewriting theory as a theoretical framework. The objectives of this study are to grasp the reliability of AI localisation in marketing, to assess the amount of needed human involvement in AI localisation, and to determine if AI localisation resonates well with the target audience. To achieve full coherence throughout the study, intricate steps will be followed as goes: gathering marketing description data both in English and in Arabic, localising the English data using AI, analysing the data and comparing the analysis, and finally assessing results. This study concludes that while both human and AI localisations can include cultural mistakes, human localisation is more reliable and human intervention in AI is still needed.

Keywords: translation, artificial intelligence (AI), localization, cultural nuances, marketing

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1. Introduction[i]

Marketing is an important practice that attracts customers and target audience, but so does localisation. Through the utilisation of localisation in the marketing field, they can both become one powerful weapon that does not just attract target audience but also connect with them on cultural, and sometimes personal levels. This boosts sales and makes marketing, an already effective strategy, a much more effective one. AI has become an essential tool in translation, and that begs the question: Is Artificial Intelligence (AI) as good as humans in capturing the cultural nuances and specifics to adapt a text? This study aims to examine the difference between human and AI localisation and determine if AI is reliable enough for the task of localising marketing/advertising texts, while appealing to target audience. The sample data is collected from English marketing descriptions that have been humanely localised into Arabic and that are also rendered by ChatGPT localisation tool. This study uses content analysis and comparison as research tools, and it employs a qualitative approach using Lefevere's Rewriting theory as a theoretical framework. The objectives of this study are to grasp the reliability of AI localisation in marketing, to assess the amount of needed human involvement in AI localisation, and to determine if AI localisation resonates well with target audience. To achieve full coherence throughout the study, intricate steps are followed as goes: gathering marketing description data both in English and in Arabic, localising the English data using AI, analysing the data and comparing the analysis, and finally assessing results.

Localisation means "taking a product and making it linguistically and culturally appropriate to the target locale (country/region and language) where it will be used and sold" (Localisation Industry Standard Association, 2003). This definition is also referenced and used by Pym (2005) in his paper "Localization: On its nature, virtues and dangers". Artificial Intelligence is a computer that has the ability of "imitating intelligent human behaviour"; that is, a machine that can think, act, or perform tasks like humans, becoming indistinguishable or near indistinguishable from human thought processes (Kok et al. n.d. pp 1-3).

This study puts the practice of using AI in localisation into significance since AI has been entered into every field of life, even translation. Assessing the difference between human and AI localisation in marketing is a very niched out selection of analysis, and it comes from the need of understanding the workings of AI, even in the smallest parts of the practice of translation. Thus, this study is a modest attempt at giving insight into the effectiveness of AI in the field of marketing localisation compared to humans.

This study's structure will be divided into, firstly, the introduction which introduces the study, secondly, the review of the literature which will present the used theoretical framework as well as show previous studies that relate to this study, thirdly, the methodology which explains the works of this study and how exactly it is conducted, fourthly, the data analysis and discussion which is where the study analyses the data and discusses it based on the theoretical framework, lastly, the conclusions which will give the final inferences on the study.

2. Review of the Literature

2.1. Lefevere's Rewriting Theory

André Lefevere's Rewriting theory (1992) revolves around the concept proposed by Lefevere that translation is a rewriting process. It views translations as no more than a process that reshapes the ST in a form fitting the ideologies of the translator, hence acting as a cultural tool that only reflects the values of the TC (target culture). Lefevere's framework consists of three factors: ideology, poetics, and patronage. The first factor, ideology, is the beliefs or values that drive translations, and these beliefs or values can be anything, ranging from personal beliefs to political beliefs (Lefevere, 2017, pp. 27-29). The second factor, poetics, analyses if the TT suits the TC in terms of style of writing. To be more precise, Lefevere (2017) defines poetics as goes:

> A poetics can be said to consist of two components: one is an inventory of literary devices, genres, motifs, prototypical characters and situations, and symbols; the other a concept of what the role of literature is, or should be, in the social system as a whole. (p. 20)

The third factor, patronage, is the people who are in control of translating and have the power over it like institutions and publishers etc. (Lefevere, 2017, pp. 27-29). Before applying these factors, the culture and the ideology behind the translation must be studied to fully understand the translation first.

This study assumes that localisation is a process of rewriting in its core, as localisation is supposed to take the original text and reshape it completely or in part to suit the TC. Accordingly, this study will not evaluate the texts in the sense if they include rewriting or not, but rather, if they consist of the proper factors of rewriting that make an acceptable rewriting process. The factors that will be analysed will only be ideology and poetics, excluding

patronage, as patronage will neither be of help in evaluating the rewriting quality, nor for the purposes of this study, which is comparing the ST (Source Text) and HL (Human localisation) to AIL (AI localisation).

2.2. Previous Studies

2.2.1. Localisation and its Place in Marketing

Localisation, as a term, did not emerge until 4 decades ago, so its definition is still non-concrete. Kabát & Koscelníková (2022) discuss the origins of localisation and mention that it started in the 70s and 80s when computer companies wanted to sell their devices internationally but had to include the languages of these countries into their devices, so it becomes easy for customers to get accustomed with such a new invention. The term localisation itself is derived from the term "locale" which is a term encompassing all the values in a specific domestic area such as traditions. Localisation soon became an inseparable step in the process of software development which led to GILT (Globalisation, internationalisation, localisation, and translation) process's manifestation. Furthermore, Kabát & Koscelníková (2022) use a definition by the Localisation Industry Standard Association, and it goes as follows: "taking a product and making it linguistically and culturally appropriate to the target locale (country/region and language) where it will be used and sold" (Localisation Industry Standard Association, 2003). Pym (2004) demonstrates that localisation as a practice has been used very loosely compared to other translation approaches. He presents the main disagreement between the translation studies (TS) scholars and theorists and between brands and companies that use localisation. The TS theorists want localisation to be a part of TS where it uses translation concepts and tools, unlike the companies and brands that aim to use localisation merely as a step in the process that comes after internationalisation (a part of the GILT process where language is centralised to facilitate localisation later).

Localisation was in the process of getting more popular as a concept, and marketing happened to be one of the fields to adopt it early. Cheung (2010) studies localisation in marketing emails and how it rivals globalisation in terms of connecting to target audiences or customers. He finds that localisation is an essential concept that marketing should start to adopt since it connects very well to the audience using their culture and local language. He concludes that localisation, as a linguistic practice, is a very important part of marketing strategies. Temuçin et al. (2024) argue that lately, there have been a shift in adapting localisation into

academic studies, which hints at more attention that is being given towards this practice for its massive impact. Abdelhadi (2025, p. 74) adds that translators need to be aware of culture, especially when translating advertisements. She also stresses the importance of localisation in advertising and marketing as it adds to the impact it does on the target audience. We completely agree with this since marketing in its essence is a very targeted process. Coca-Stefaniak et al. (2010) Suggest localisation as a marketing strategy as well, since it offers a competitive advantage, especially for small businesses.

Localisation of marketing can be extremely helpful to the brand identity among the people of the TC. Sichtmann et al. (2019) argue that making a brand culturally appropriate is a key to achieve connection with audience and thus allows having a CBI (Consumer-Brand Identification) which then increases sales and makes a brand relevant in said culture which is crucial for acquiring the feeling of prestige, status and nostalgia in customers, hence boosting the brand's popularity in the locale. To elaborate further, Byrne (2009) reinforces this argument by arguing that localisation is important in nearly every field since it allows language to correspond with culture, thus creating a connection between audiences or users and the media that is localised which strongly links back to the CBI argument as they both hint at the connection being created between language, customers, and culture. As for how localisation should happen, Declercq (2012) argues that localisation in marketing is transcreation as it should not happen on the word level which might and will result in translation mistakes because some cultures cannot be translated (e.g. puns and some idioms) (p. 5). We see this as an overgeneralisation since localisation can happen on the word level in some cases like cross-cultural jokes or idioms which aligns with Chaula & Mwashota's (2024) research that explored lexical localisation on the word level, showing that localising puns and idioms is possible and viable.

2.2.2. Localisation and AI Challenges and Dangers

As AI becomes increasingly popular in every field, the localisation field is also one of the many fields that adapt it in the industry, and AI, as a translation and localisation tool, can be extremely helpful, but it also comes with its major drawbacks from challenges to full on dangers. On that note, Escribe (2019) assesses that while AI can be a great helping tool for localisation as a linguistic practice, human assessment of AI localisation is still a must since AI has yet to become more reliable before it can fully be independent (pp. 35-37). In our opinion, this is a great insight, not only because it is true, but because it should stay true, since,

when human agency is stripped away, translations can become meaningless and soulless. It was also stressed in Van Doren & Holland's (2025) research that AI localisation quality varied based on the language to which the ST was localised depending on the strength of the language and the amount of information and documentation available on the internet (p. 6). This is telling, as the fact that AI depends on a set of already available data potentially means that specialised AI machines should be created for languages with little to no spread across the internet. On the other hand, Ahmed (2025) examines AI as a hostile tool that might, with time and with its domination on discourse, change facts, manipulate truths and spread malicious agendas. The latter takes the argument back to the fact that translations without human agency will result in catastrophic outcomes.

As AI is proven to not be fully developed every day, Anik et al. (2025) argue that the current AI models lack in cultural awareness and that this can be overcome by introducing more culturally aware Ais (p. 2). Ali (2024) also recommends the development of more advanced, culturally encompassing AI models since the current models cannot be relied on when translating, hinting at the potential benefit behind making specialised AI models for each language depending on need (p. 20). She also directed towards the inclusion of humans in the AI translation (Ali, 2024, p. 14). Moreover, in Alwi et al. (2025)'s research, they study the AI recognition of dialects, and in their findings, they state that AI is majorly hindered in recognising dialects because it still has difficulty recognising less prevalent dialects since very small amount of data exists on them. They also mention the many cultural stereotypes that the current AI only boosts and builds on them, shifting awareness from only the question of the availability of data to the question of the quality and accuracy of it.

On the other hand, AI can remain a helpful tool when it is used in the right way. Hassani et al. (2025) found that non-professional translators failed to surpass transcreation professionals in localising targeted marketing campaigns until they trained on AI localization (pp. 211-13). Afterwards, non-professionals 'translations hugely surpassed professionals 'localisations in quality. Kızıltuğ (2025) explores the utilisation of AI in game localisation, and his findings include that the usage of AI in game localisation is significantly faster, more efficient, and consistent. However, he also stressed the importance of human interference. To further elaborate, Orrego-Carmona (2024) highlights that human agency in AI-powered localisation is essential. This does not only cut costs and time; it also presents a way with which human and AI can complement each other.

After reviewing the literature, there is a gap revealed in which a study can serve a purpose. This gap comes in analysing fully AI localised marketing texts/descriptions 'accuracy in comparison to human localisations to the same texts, which is the topic that this study discusses. It is a very specific and targeted area which can reveal more about AI and its workings as well as its reliability. It also gives more insight into the full utilisation of AI without human intervention in localisations especially.

3. Methodology

Marketing, in its essence, is a very targeted practice, and in the last two decades, the industry has moved towards localisation to attract a target audience. In recent years however, AI has dominated every field and like a reaper, it has not missed localisation. From this problem statement, the researchers were able to formulate the aim of the study as to examine the difference between human and AI localisation and determine if AI is reliable enough for the task of localising marketing/advertising texts, while appealing to target audience. That is, the paper will assess both the human and AI localisations of the same STs according to the framework at hand; after which, it will determine whether AI's localisation is reliable and appealing according to the TC.

3.1 Research Questions

In order to achieve the previous aim, the study has raised the following questions:

1. How reliable is human localisation?
2. How accurate is AI in capturing cultural nuances?
3. How reliable is AI localisation compared to human localisation?

3.2 Objectives

In order to answer the previous research questions, the study sets the following Objectives:

- To fully comprehend the reliability of AI localisation in marketing,
- To assess the amount of needed human involvement in AI localisation, and
- To determine if AI localisation resonates well with the target audience.

3.3 Procedures

While conducting the previous methodology, the study follows the following procedures:

- To collect data in English.
- To collect humanely localised data in Arabic.
- To collect AI localised data in Arabic.
- To analyse the data using the framework.
- To compare results of analysis.
- To assess the results of the comparison.

3.4 Data

The selected data is descriptions of products from international brand websites (Zara - Calvin and Klein– Bath & Body Works – Decathlon – Adidas – Nike - PlayStation). The reason for selecting this specific data is its abundance with cultural adaptation instances in both AI localisations and human localisations due to the nature of these marketing descriptions. This data is also very critical as it constitutes mega corporations, for which a mishap can cause irreversible damage on the brand image. It is also important to mention that the AI localisation of these marketing descriptions differed a lot in their cultural adaptation, style, and ideology from the human localisation which shows that a comparison is warranted. The data includes three components: the first component is the ST which will be retrieved from the product descriptions in the English/international versions of the webpages. The second component is the HL text which will be retrieved from the Arabic localised webpages with the same product and product description. The third component is the AI localised descriptions of the ST (AIL), and it will be retrieved via making ChatGPT localise the source texts into Arabic, taking in account whichever webpage region that the HL texts were retrieved from (e.g. UAE). The data included is archived for proof of existence at any time. Both screenshots of the AI localisations, and of the human official localisations as well as the original product descriptions. This study uses content analysis and comparison as main research tools and employs a qualitative approach. The theory applied in this study is Lefevere's Rewriting Theory.

The data discussion will be divided into two parts: the first part is "Cultural Sensitivities" which will tackle sensitive topics and their localisations to analyse their

appropriateness. The second part is “Cultural Attractiveness”, and it discusses if the target text localisation (TT) maintains its attractiveness in the TC to ensure good marketing. This division was determined by us after carefully assessing the data and understanding its essence in relation to the theory at hand.

3.5 Challenges and Limitations

In the making of this study, we faced the challenge of acquiring data. The data had to have very strict selection criteria to suit the goals of the study, and in achieving that, the data acquisition process became extremely hard and exhausting.

The language pair is something that limited the research to an extent since the researcher is only fluent in English and Arabic, which limited research to only English and Arabic data, two languages with arguably big amounts of data on them on the internet. Also, the data is only marketing texts, even though a lot of other material can be studied in the same sense, but this research is limited to marketing texts due to space, focus, and time constraint.

4. Data Analysis and Discussion

This section will present the data and analyse it using Lefevere’s Rewriting theory to test if the rewriting process succeeds in the given context and culture. Each example will include an introductory paragraph that introduces the main dilemma of the text as well as the text itself. Then, the ST, and the localisations will be presented. The official human localisation of the ST will be called HL, standing for human localisation, as for the AI localisation, it will be called AIL, standing for AI localisation. The brackets next to every HL will show the region of the localised site from which the localised text was retrieved (e.g. HL (Egypt)). It should also be noted that this section is split into two sub-sections: the first sub-section is called “Cultural Sensitivities”, and the second sub-section is called “Cultural attractiveness”.

4.1. Cultural Sensitivities

In this section, the term “sensitivities” refers to the texts that tackle culturally frowned upon items that a misrendering of them in the TT might present a big issue or spark outrage in the TC, and they will be analysed to determine if their localisation is appropriate for the TC. Accordingly, all texts picked for localisation examination in this section are texts that include cultural aspects of sensitive nature.

In marketing, the original marketing text is produced for the culture that the production works within. Thus, the localisation must consider cultural differences and acknowledge appropriate solutions to avoid cultural insensitivities. A place in which cultural insensitivities might occur is sexual innuendos that surface in the poetics of a text, so the localisation must consider euphemism or complete avoidance of sexual innuendos in accordance with the target culture's standards and perceptions. This problem surfaces in the following marketing text by Bath & Body Works on a scented candle:

[1] ST: What it smells like: a sweet, <u>seductive night in</u>.

HL (Egypt): وصف المنتج: يمنحك تجربة عطرية مذهلة <u>تملأ الغرفة بنفحات عطرية خلابة</u>.

AIL: رائحته: مزيج حلو وجذاب بلمسة دافئة، <u>يجسد سحر ليلة رومانسية مليانة هدوء وجاذبية</u>.

In the ST, the word "seductive" is primarily aimed at a culture that accepts such vocabulary. The poetics of the text reflect a sexual reference that works in the target culture of the ST, which is the US. However, in the TT, the localisation is aimed at the Egyptian culture, in which sexual innuendos are less accepted in society, and considered a perverted action. A product that openly promotes sexual themes in Egypt might even get backlash and downright face failure. That is why in the official HL, this innuendo is changed to, instead of referring to a seductive night in the sexual sense, it refers to how the scent of the candle will smell attractive by saying "تملأ الغرفة بنفحات عطرية خلابة" (fills the room with captivating aromatic whiffs). On the other hand, the AI localisation does not consider this in its localisation as much as HL and translates the ST almost identically by saying "سحر ليلة رومانسية مليانة هدوء وجاذبية" (a romantic night full of tranquillity and attractiveness). Through this localisation, it should be noted that the AI localisation for the ST is weak, as it does not abide by the target culture's ideologies as much as the HL does since the HL removed all the language that might hint at something inappropriate in the TC, and while AIL also succeeds at that, it is still weaker than HL as it only softened the "seductive" imagery instead of fully removing it by turning it into "جاذبية" (attractiveness), which partially aligns with Lefevere's rewriting principle, and consequently, partially fails to be fully true to the target culture. Moreover, the AI localisation of the text included Egyptian dialect amidst the MSA (modern standard Arabic), which is what might seem to AI like considering the acceptable poetics of the target culture (Egypt). In reality, in Egypt, the Egyptian dialect is not used interchangeably with MSA, in fact, it would seem alien to do so. According to that, the AI localisation does not grasp the poetics of the language of the

target culture accurately and instead operates on a trivial level to seem "true" to the target culture, completely failing the rewriting theory.

In considering the target culture in the localisation, one must also consider their standardised way of daily life. An example of that is promoting a perfect-fit bra by Calvin Klein that exposes the silhouette of one's body and localising it into a culture in which full-body coverage prevails:

[2] ST: Modal Stretch Rib collection is enhanced with a wide logo waistband. Cut in a close, form-fitting silhouette. Made with at least 55% certified organic cotton.

HL (Egypt): هذه البرا مصنوعة بنسبة 55% من القطن العضوي الذي تتم زراعته بدون استخدام المبيدات الحشرية الاصطناعية أو الأسمدة الاصطناعية أو البذور المعدلة وراثيًا.

AIL: تتميز بحزام خصر عريض يحمل الشعار بأسلوب عصري أنيق، مع قصة قريبة من الجسم تمنح مظهرا مرتباً وثباتاً مثالياً طوال اليوم.

In the ST, the text promotes a bra that offers a "form-fitting silhouette", and that is perfectly acceptable in its target culture which is the US. Accordingly, the official localisation of the product description omits this bit of description and adds to the organic manufacturing description of the bra "الذي تتم زراعته بدون استخدام المبيدات الحشرية" (which is planted without usage of pesticides) which expands on the process of creating its organic materials, creating a rewriting process that fits the target culture which is in the UAE, as they do not care about the look of their exposed silhouette since full-body coverage is the standard there. The AI localisation normalises the ST's ideology in the TT though. And that is done through the sentence "قصة قريبة من الجسم تمنح مظهرا مرتبا وثباتا مثاليا طوال اليوم" (A form-fitting cut that gives the body a tidy look and perfect stability for the entire day) which promotes the perfect-fit exposed look, not abiding by the general market demands in the target culture. This example shows, once again, that AI fails to provide a fully culture-compatible localisation, hence failing the rewriting process described by Lefevere as well, which leads to a failure in marketing and, in consequence, a decline in sales.

Another occurrence of a cultural insensitivity inconsideration is an outright sexual suggestion that completely ignores the customs and traditions of a target culture. This can cause a huge cultural panic and, in turn, lead to a decline in sales of a product. An example of that surfaces in Bath & Body Works' body lotion marketing description:

[3] ST: Now go catch your cab, because a sweet, sparkling evening out on the town awaits.

HL (Egypt): رائحة فاخرة تمنحك الجاذبية.

AIL: والآن استعدّي للخروج—اطلبي التاكسي، فليلة حلوة ومليئة باللمعان في انتظارك في المدينة.

In the ST, the sentence "Now go catch your cab, because a sweet, sparkling evening out in the town awaits" suggests and encourages a nightlife on a product that is made for and targeted towards women. Now, a description like this would never be a fit one for the Egyptian culture and that is why utter consideration must be exercised in such situations. Accordingly, the human localisation on the Egyptian localised site omits this part completely and goes for a more general approach that is suitable for the target culture, although lacks in rhetorics compared to the ST. The sentence "رائحة فاخرة تمنحك الجاذبية" (An exotic scent that makes you attractive) is a sentence that exercises little to no creativity, which is not necessarily a good thing, but in this situation, it prevents worse consequences by conforming to a cultural standard. The AI localisation however, messes up badly by importing the same suggestive sentence into Arabic, and by that ignores all cultural norms in the target culture by localising the ST into "والآن استعدّي للخروج—اطلبي التاكسي، فليلة حلوة ومليئة باللمعان في انتظاركِ في المدينة" (Now, get ready for the outing – call your cab, because a glamorous evening is awaiting you in the town), proving a failure in considering the ideology of the target culture which highly frowns upon nightlife in the sense that the ST hints at, and hence warrants a failure in the rewriting process.

Another example of cultural insensitivity is the mention of food beverages that are widely frowned upon or prohibited in some regions. Such things are alcoholic drinks; especially, that they are not accepted in the Arab world due to the Muslim majority in the region. This problem arises in Bath & Body Works' 3-wick scented candle scent description:

[4] ST: Fragrance notes: wild black cherries, velvety red wine, juicy red raspberries and bright plum.

HL (Egypt): مزيج عطري من الكرز الأسود البري وعصير العنب والتوت الأحمر والبرقوق مع الزيوت الأساسية الطبيعية.

AIL: مكوّنات العطر: كرز أسود بري، ونفحات من العنب الأحمر الغني، وتوت العليق الأحمر العصيري، ولمسة من البرقوق المنعش.

The ST in this example mentions that one of the notes of the scented candle is "velvety red wine" which is accepted in the target culture of the ST. However, wine is not just unpopular in Egypt, it is also completely avoided and frowned upon its mention also due to Muslim majority. This problem is well dealt with in the human localisation as it localises this description to "عصير العنب" (grape juice), which avoids the cultural insensitivity; but not just that, it also gives an accurate description to the scent in another way that still avoids all sensitivities. This translation shows a great representation of the rewriting theory by abiding by the ideology of the target culture, then changing the poetics to match that of the target culture. What's more is that the AI localisation almost mimics that of the human localisation by saying "نفحات من العنب الأحمر الغني" (scents of rich, red grape), which also shows an understanding by the AI towards the target culture of the localisation, which is Egypt, ensuring a well rendered rewriting process that also adapts the TC poetics while abiding by its ideology.

It appears that AIL seems to fail to render culturally sensitive items appropriately into the TT to suit the TC more often than not. The reason for that is that in the previous examples, the AI localisation is mostly word-to-word relative to the original text, which causes discrepancies between the original culture of the text and the target culture despite directions to suit the target culture in its localisations (with reference to which target culture it should consider) in the prompts.

4.2. Cultural Attractiveness

This section refers to the question of whether the text remains attractive in the TT, which comes from the very principle of Lefevere's concept of poetics, which, according to him, is a collection of devices that shape the rewriting (2017, p. 20). Accordingly, a TT must preserve poetics that fit the target culture to maintain attractiveness of the text, or it loses its main purpose, which is to market.

Sometimes, products make themes for themselves to encourage consumer-brand identification via methods like relating the product to certain cities or cultures. This act of making a product themed is an act of adding to the poetics of the text, as it derives from the characteristics of something other than the product and attaches these characteristics to the product. This is what Zara's gel-textured perfume brush description does; it makes the brush related to the spirit of New York, and that is the main dilemma with which the following analysis is concerned:

[5] ST: Vibrant and cosmopolitan, it evokes the characteristic energy and sophistication of New York.

HL (UAE): نابض بالحياة وعالمي، يستحضر طاقة ورقي نيويورك المميزين.

AIL: عطر نابض بالحياة وذو طابع حضري أنيق، يستحضر روح الطاقة والتميّز التي تشتهر بها مدينة نيويورك، مع لمسة فاخرة تناسب الذوق الإماراتي العصري.

In the ST, the text states that the brush "evokes the sophistication of New York" to relate the product to a city, hence, relating the customer himself to the product. The official human localisation does not stray far from the original text at all and localises it to " يستحضر طاقة ورقي نيويورك المميزين" which basically translates to the same segment in the ST. Doing this proves a failed attempt of rewriting as it does not relate the product to the target culture, instead, it relates it to the culture of the ST, which is a failure in adapting the poetics of the ST to the target culture of the HL. Alternatively, the AI localisation localises it to " مع لمسة فاخرة تناسب الذوق الإماراتي العصري" (with an exotic touch that suits the modern Emirati taste). This cultural adaptation of the poetics of the ST adds to the ST by including the target culture of the AIL present in the text which, in turn, relates the target consumer to the product, something that the human localisation fails at. The result of this is a successful rewriting that suits the target audience by relating them to the product, and not just that, as its inclusion of the New York theme draws a bridge between a cultural adaptation and keeping the original theme in check.

Target cultures tend to have different standards regarding their rhetoric and poetic choices in texts. For example, marketing in the Arab world is heavily relied on including exaggerated rhetoric language in texts (Almanna & Al-Shehari, 2024). Consequently, the prevalent stylistics of a language in a target culture must be considered in order to achieve best marketing results. Decathlon's women thermal ski base layer top ST description does not use a lot of rhetoric in the ST which, while it might work in the target culture of the ST, it might not be the same for the target culture of the TT:

[6] ST: Not a fan of the cold? The brushed fleece fabric forms a thermal barrier against the cold. Classic cut suitable for all body shapes.

HL (Egypt): الثلج يتساقط بالخارج...يا له من حظ رائع. هل يزعجكِ الطقس البارد؟ تُعد هذه الطبقة الأساسية الخيار المثالي للأنشطة متوسطة الشدة. انعمي بالأنشطة الخارجية براحة بال.

AIL: عطر مش من محبّي البرد؟ قماش الفليس المبطن بطبقة داخلية ناعمة يمنحك دفئًا مريحًا ويعمل كعازل حراري يحميك من البرودة. تصميم كلاسيكي أنيق بقصّة تناسب جميع أشكال الجسم، ليمنحك الراحة والثقة طوال اليوم.

In the ST, the product description is a very simple one that quickly tells the customer about the product features. In the HL however, the presented bit of text is a complete addition to the ST that is full of rhetoric language and direct connection with the customer which establishes a relationship between him and the product. This verbose addition is also a sign of successful rewriting; it shows that the translator is aware that the Arab world prefers rhetoric language and so he adds to the localisation accordingly. What's more, the translator specified that the product is suitable for "للأنشطة متوسطة الشدة" (medium intensity activities) which shows that the HL not only considers the target culture but also understands the product well enough to make a suitable rewriting. The AIL, though, does not do that, instead, it is a direct translation of the ST which fails at a successful rewriting attempt. To elaborate, the AIL's direct translation is not a completely failed rewriting attempt, but it fades in comparison to the HL; especially, upon the fact that the HL localisation aligns with Almanna & Al-Shehari's (2024) conclusion on marketing in the Arab world since the HL is from the Egyptian site of the product. This shows that the human translation of the product is more nuanced and understanding towards the target culture, unlike the AIL which only scratches the surface and fails to understand the nuanced concept of the stylistics of language in the Arab world.

Bad interpretation of poetics in the ST can lead to disastrous translations that seem offending rather than attractive in the localisation target culture. This will only lead to disgust by customers and consequently an overall inconsideration of the product which leads to a marketing failure. An example of that is Zara's perfume which has a localisation-tricky product description:

[7] ST: Intense, enveloping, and addictive, it leaves a warm and sophisticated trail.

HL (Egypt): مكثفة، آسرة ومسببة للإدمان .

AIL: عطر مكثّف وآسر يحيط بكِ بجاذبية خاصة، ويترك أثرًا دافئًا وأنيقًا يدوم.

In the ST, the word "addictive" is used in a contextually suitable position in relation to the word itself. To elaborate further, in the ST target culture, the word addictive is used to describe a highly desired product but it does not necessarily carry any bad meanings in regard

to drugs or other references that might suggest a health threatening issue. The human localisation fails to render the word "addictive" correctly and localises it to "مسببة للإدمان" (addictive); this is a huge mistake as the expression "مسببة للإدمان" (addictive) in the Egyptian culture, aims to repel people from using the described item and carries a meaning that hints at health threatening complications rather than making something look attractive or desired. This rendering suggests an ignorance towards the target culture's poetics which results in a false rewriting process according to the rewriting theory, which also might cause decline as customers may feel weird reading such description of a product. Alternatively, the AI localisation renders the ST description in a culturally appropriate way by localising it into " يترك أثرا دافئا وأنيقا يدوم" (leaves a lasting warm and elegant effect). This can be deemed a successful rewriting process as it considers the poetics of the target culture and acts upon it, exchanging in the process a problematic expression by replacing it with better, more attractive words to suit target audiences.

Another example of cultural attractiveness is the way children are referred to in marketing. For example, children in the Arab world are mostly dependent on their parents regarding their purchases, so in localising a marketing text, this fact should be considered. This issue appears in Adidas' children shoes' product description and in its localised version:

[8] ST: Hook-and-loop straps make them a cinch to slip on and off, whether you're headed out the door or kicking back at home.

HL (Egypt): رغم تصميمه الجذاب، لا يتعلق هذا الحذاء بالمظهر فحسب، فهو مُصمم لدعم مغامرات طفلك اليومية من خلال قصّة ملائمة ومريحة.

AIL: عطر أحزمة الإغلاق اللاصقة (فيلكرو) تجعل ارتداءه وخلعه سريعًا وسهلًا — مثالي للأطفال كثيري الحركة، سواء كانوا خارجين للعب أو مسترخين في البيت.

The ST appears to have excluded the parents from its discourse completely; the text is aimed right at the child who is viewing this product which appears the most through the usage of the second-person pronoun "whether you're headed out…". The Egyptian localisation of the same product takes on a completely different approach and addresses the parents instead as in "مصمم لدعم مغامرات طفلك" (designed to withstand your child's adventures). Not only does this approach make more sense as it addresses the parents directly which is the better way of marketing in the Arab world due to tradition, but it also avoids a major controversy which is child exploitation through marketing; to elaborate, Story and French (2004), in their

examination of food advertising targeted at children, concluded that marketing targeted at children may exploit children's views who still do not understand that marketing is designed only to sell them products and not for their own good. Thus, the Arabic localisation can be rendered as a successful attempt of rewriting as it takes both the stylistic and ideological parts of the ST into a new level that resonates well with the TC. The AIL takes a similar, yet different, approach as it stays neutral, addressing neither the children nor the parents in a direct manner, instead, it provides a description of the product that can be described as appealing to both the children and the parents. The AIL's approach is also a successful rewriting attempt as it does stray away from the ST's approach in targeting children in its marketing. It is, however, arguably less attractive than the HL.

Consumer-brand identification can be achieved by associating the consumer with a public figure like a celebrity or an athlete. Nike's Kylian Mbappe football shoes achieve that by making the product tied to the very popular professional football player, Kylian Mbappe; hence, it makes the product attractive to the customer who wants to be like him. This in itself is a localisation challenge that should be considered while transferring:

[9] ST: <u>It gives you, and Kylian</u>, the propulsive feel needed to break through the back line.

HL (KSA): إلا أن حذاء ميركوريال كان موجودًا <u>ليطلق العنان لسرعته الفائقة</u>.

AIL: <u>تمنحك—كما تمنح كيليان</u>—ذلك الإحساس بالاندفاع الذي تحتاجه لاختراق خط الدفاع والانطلاق نحو المرمى.

In the ST, the product marketing description says: "it gives you, and Kylian", this conjunction between the second-person pronoun "you" and using the athlete's first name makes it easy for the customer to feel a sense of connectedness with the player as the phrasing encourages that. Using the athlete's first name is a deliberate choice in the ST as this particular athlete is more referred to using his last name Mbappe, so using his first name creates a proximal relationship between the customer and the athlete. In human localisation, this proximal relationship is omitted and replaced by a mere reference to Mbappe's speed. In saying "ليطلق العنان لسرعته الفائقة" (unleashes his superspeed), the rewriting fails at delivering the same poetics of the ST which is establishing a relationship between the athlete and the customer. It does not just fail at this, but it also fails at delivering on the product's whole point, which is the fact that Kylian Mbappe's shoes will make the customer faster and better at football. So, as a whole, the HL

fails at delivering the message of the ST and the product itself, making the rewriting attempt in this case a bad one since it does not consider the target culture by not understanding the localised product in the first place. As for the AI localisation, it states "تمنحك—كما تمنح كيليان" (grants you – as it does Kylian) which is a decent attempt at understanding the point of the product itself and a successful attempt of rewriting, making AI's the superior one in this case as it also establishes a connection point between the customer and Mbappe, the face of the product.

Video games require their descriptions to be appealing to the target audience as, unlike other tangible products, a video game's concept cannot be grasped outside of playing it or just reading their description. Therefore, game descriptions on storefronts must convey the aesthetics as well as the concept of the games very clearly in order to convince customers to buy them, making the description of a game one of the most important pieces of marketing for games. Playstation's "God of War" has a challenge in its localisation that is poorly tackled by HL and violates the poetics of a successful rewriting:

[10] ST: It's in this harsh, unforgiving world that he must fight to survive, and not only teach his son to do the same… but also prevent him from repeating the Ghost of Sparta's bloodstained mistakes.

HL (KSA): في هذا العالم القاسي الذي لا يرحم، يجب عليه القتال لينجو، ولا يقتصر تعليمه لابنه على كيفية النجاة... بل ومنعه من تكرار الأخطاء الشنيعة لـ Ghost of Sparta.

AIL: في هذا العالم القاسي الذي لا يرحم، عليه أن يناضل من أجل البقاء، وأن يُعلّم ابنه كيف يفعل الذات... بل والأهم من ذلك، أن يحول بينه وبين تكرار الأخطاء الملطّخة بالدماء التي اقترفها شبح سبارتا.

The ST is targeted at US customers and it describes the game accordingly, creating a good marketing text that could attract players to buy the game. The problem in the human localisation is it does not really localise the "Ghost of Sparta" part and leaves it as is, but that is a big mistake because an Arab player will expect to have more understanding of the game just by reading its description. Moreover, this unlocalised part is a very important name in the game that heavily and actively contributes to the plot, so not localising it means that the translator did not understand or research the material at hand, which is essentially the game. Interestingly, the AI localisation fixes this part and localises "Ghost of Sparta" into "شبح سبارتا" (ghost of sparta), which means the same thing. What is interesting about this approach by AI is not just

the fact that it approached the localisation from an excellent angle, which made the localisation a successful rewriting to the ST by modifying the poetics of the text, but also the fact that it accompanied the localisation with comprehensive explanation to its approach. To elaborate, the AI provided the following explanation after the localisation: “"Ghost of Sparta" was kept with a direct Arabic rendering (شبح سبارتا) as it is a well-known title among Arab gamers and altering it would lose brand recognition”. The AI could provide a better researched localisation to the description of the game than the human-localised one which might hint at its benefits, while also making an accurate rewriting of the ST to suit the target audience.

In this section, the AIL performed a lot better compared to the previous section, “Cultural Sensitivities”, by outputting culturally appropriate localisations, that are also considered good from the “rewriting” point of view. This is a curious result as it shows that AI can definitely produce culturally appealing results while not being able to keep up with the culturally sensitive items. More so, in our opinion, the fact it can do that can be extremely dangerous as it might be manipulative in the sense that it produces culturally insensitive results in an appealing manner, undermining culture.

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to examine the difference between human and AI localisation and determine if AI is reliable enough for the task of localising marketing/advertising texts, while appealing to target audiences. The study tackled the English → Arabic language pair and applied Lefevere’s Rewriting theory (1992) on data from international brand websites that have localised versions. The study used a qualitative approach, and raises the questions of human localisation reliability, AI accuracy in capturing cultural nuances, and AI localisation reliability compared to humans.

Human localisation can be very unreliable sometimes. Whether it is because of translator incompetence or for corporation standards, reality is that humans do make mistakes that sometimes even AI can avoid. However, in the grand scheme of things, human localisation is very reliable and produces decent localisations more often than not.

For AI accuracy, the first section in the discussion, called “Cultural Sensitivities”, AI failed for the most part at producing results that adhere to the TC, making it inaccurate, mostly, giving direct translations to the original texts. So, when it comes to culturally sensitive items, AI seems to have missed the point in most texts. As for the second section in the discussion

called “Cultural Attractiveness”, the AIL is exceedingly more accurate, it picked up on almost all traits of the texts and rendered them to the TC correctly. Accordingly, it can be inferred that the accuracy of AIL in capturing cultural nuances differed according to the task at hand.

For AI reliability, the answer is not simple. AI has proven to be reliable in many cases, making it mostly reliable, but when it was not reliable it made great mistakes. It should also be noted that the human localisation made some mistakes at some points, but they were not as fatal as the mistakes of AIL were. Furthermore, many of AILs examined in this study proved to be decent in the sense of achieving the requirements of a good rewriting process without further human intervention. This shows that AI is increasingly becoming more reliable, but it still is not reliable enough to be left on its own to localise texts. Overall, AIL is not as reliable as HL as of yet, but it is slowly increasing its reliability.

Through this study, it should be very clear that AI cannot replace humans, and that one must have critical thinking skills. After the analysis, it became obvious that not only AI makes mistakes, but also humans. This is a sign that even without AI, it is still not a simple task to trust content on the internet. With that said, one cannot ignore the critical flaws of AI. While AI failed at one task, picking on the sensitive items of the texts, it succeeded at the other, understanding the attractive components of the text. The latter can be seen as an advantage at first glance as AI does succeed at something, but in reality, it is a great and dangerous flaw that can undermine rules and subvert ideologies through just appealing to the target audience. In our opinion, it seems that AI is slowly learning to be a politician by being appellative while injecting culturally harmful concepts (in the form of cultural indecency) in its output.

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[i] **List of Abbreviations**

AI: Artificial Intelligence
AIL: AI Localisation
HL: Human localisation
ST: Source Text
TC: Target Culture
TT: Target Text