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Bridging al-Ḍād and Shakespeare's Tongue: Conceptual–Constructional Mapping in Arabic–English Translation

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ABSTRACT: Translation between Arabic and English is often introduced through visible contrasts in script, sound, word order, and morphology. Those contrasts matter, but they do not fully explain why an apparently accurate translation may still alter agency, weaken a metaphor, change the degree of certainty, or flatten the rhythm of an argument. This article develops Conceptual–Constructional Mapping (CCM) as an interdisciplinary framework for locating such losses. CCM brings together contrastive linguistics, cognitive semantics, construction grammar, discourse pragmatics, and functional translation theory. Rather than treating equivalence as a search for matching words, it asks where a particular meaning is encoded in each language: in a root-and-pattern form, an argument-structure construction, a modal expression, a referential choice, a metaphor family, or a rhetorical sequence. The article is a conceptual-methodological study supported by close analysis of representative Modern Standard Arabic and English examples and by a corpus-ready protocol suitable for the United Nations Parallel Corpus and OPUS collections. Seven recurrent risk zones are examined: derivational morphology, valency and voice, motion-event framing, modality and evidential stance, definiteness and reference tracking, metaphor, and rhetorical texture. The discussion shows that many translation failures arise when meaning is preserved at one level but displaced at another. CCM therefore proposes a layered mapping record that connects linguistic form, conceptual frame, discourse function, translation purpose, and ethical consequences. The framework offers practical value for translator education, corpus-based research, revision, and quality assessment while avoiding deterministic claims that Arabic and English represent wholly separate worlds.

1. INTRODUCTION

Arabic and English are often contrasted through script, sound, word order, and morphology. These differences matter, yet translators know that the hardest problems frequently remain after a dictionary has supplied a plausible equivalent. A sentence can be grammatical and referentially accurate while sounding more certain, more accusatory, less deferential, or less persuasive than its source. The central difficulty is therefore not only what words denote, but how each language distributes meaning across morphology, syntax, discourse, and culturally familiar patterns of expression.

The title uses "al-Ḍād" and "Shakespeare's tongue" as cultural shorthand for Arabic identity and English literary prestige. It does not treat either language as uniform. The discussion focuses mainly on edited Modern Standard Arabic and contemporary written English, while recognizing variation by dialect, genre, institution, and audience.

The central argument is that recurrent Arabic–English translation problems are often misdiagnosed because they are examined at the wrong level. What appears to be a lexical gap may in fact be a mismatch between constructions. What is dismissed as stylistic repetition may carry cohesion, evaluation, or persuasive rhythm. What looks like a routine change from passive to active voice may alter the distribution of responsibility. Translation therefore requires more than the replacement of signs. It involves a negotiated redistribution of meaning between two linguistic systems and two communicative situations (Baker, 2018; Hatim & Mason, 1990; House, 2015).

Linguistic, descriptive, functional, and cognitive traditions all illuminate this problem. Formal correspondences do not guarantee textual equivalence; translations are shaped by purpose and norms; and grammar helps frame scenes, direct attention, and organize metaphor (Catford, 1965; Nord, 2018; Talmy, 2000; Toury, 2012). Construction grammar adds that recurrent form–meaning pairings contribute meaning beyond their individual words (Goldberg, 1995, 2006).

This article develops Conceptual–Constructional Mapping (CCM) as a practical synthesis of these insights. CCM asks what scene is represented, which participants are foregrounded, where causation or certainty is encoded, what discourse effect is produced, and which target-language resources can reproduce the relevant function. It does not prescribe one universal rendering; it identifies what is at risk and makes translation choices explainable.

Three research questions guide the discussion:

RQ1. How do Arabic and English distribute translation-relevant meaning across morphological, constructional, and discourse-conceptual levels?

RQ2. Which recurrent divergence zones are most likely to produce shifts in agency, stance, imagery, reference, and rhetorical force?

RQ3. How can a Conceptual–Constructional Mapping procedure support research, translator education, revision, and quality assessment?

Together, these questions move the discussion beyond inventories of "differences" toward an account of how each language foregrounds, grammaticalizes, or leaves inferentially recoverable particular aspects of a message.

2. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

2.1 From equivalence to recontextualization

Early linguistic models distinguished formal correspondence from textual equivalence and emphasized communicative effect (Catford, 1965; Nida, 1964). Their lasting lesson is that equivalence cannot mean sameness. A translation enters a new setting with different readers, genre conventions, and assumptions about clarity. It is therefore a recontextualization of the source message through another language's resources.

Functionalist theories make purpose central. A legal translation may prioritize stable reference and institutional force, whereas a literary translation may preserve ambiguity, rhythm, and estrangement. Nord (2018) combines target-oriented decision-making with loyalty to communicative participants: purpose requires justification, not arbitrary rewriting.

Descriptive translation studies shows that choices are also shaped by professional and cultural norms (Toury, 2012). English editing may reward concision and overt connection, while formal Arabic may value repetition, balance, and nominal density. These norms can aid readability but can also normalize away meaningful texture (Venuti, 2018).

2.2 Conceptual systems without linguistic determinism

"Conceptual system" does not mean that Arabic and English speakers inhabit sealed cognitive worlds. Shared experience and bilingual practice make that claim untenable. The more modest point, captured by Slobin's (1996) "thinking for speaking," is that languages make some aspects of experience easier or more habitual to encode.

Frame semantics is useful because words evoke structured scenes. "Detain," for example, presupposes an authority, an affected person, a coercive process, and a duration. A source may suppress the authority and foreground the detainee; a translation that restores an agent redistributes the frame. Fillmore's framework and FrameNet provide a principled vocabulary for recording such roles (Baker et al., 1998; Fillmore, 1982).

Conceptual metaphor theory likewise treats figurative language as a mode of understanding rather than ornament (Kövecses, 2010; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). Arabic and English share many embodied mappings, but their conventional expressions differ in register and cultural resonance. Literal translation may preserve an image but lose its ordinary force; idiomatic translation may preserve function but erase the image.

Talmy (2000) and Slobin (1996) also show that languages have preferred ways of foregrounding path, manner, cause, and result. These are tendencies, not rigid rules, yet repeated choices can systematically alter narrative viewpoint.

2.3 Constructions as translation units

Construction grammar links conceptual analysis to form. A construction is a conventional form–meaning pairing, from a morphological pattern to a clause or discourse formula (Goldberg, 1995, 2006). "He ran into the room" combines manner and path through a directed-motion construction; Arabic may construe the same event with a path verb and a manner adjunct. Word alignment alone misses this functional correspondence.

Arabic makes constructional meaning especially visible through root-and-pattern morphology, which can encode causation, reciprocity, reflexivity, intensity, or affectedness (Holes, 2004; Ryding, 2005; Watson, 2002). English often externalizes comparable relations through separate verbs, particles, auxiliaries, or phrases.

Discourse constructions matter equally. Topic-fronting, resumptive pronouns, passives, parallel clauses, and formulas of modesty guide interpretation. The translation unit may therefore be a morpheme, clause, or rhetorical sequence, depending on where the relevant meaning resides.

2.4 Discourse pragmatics, genre, and interpersonal meaning

Conceptual–constructional analysis must remain sensitive to pragmatics. Speakers routinely communicate more than their sentences state directly, and translators reconstruct these implicatures for readers who may not share the same assumptions. Grice's (1975) account of conversational inference helps explain why a formally indirect expression can perform a clear social action. A cautious Arabic formula may function as refusal, criticism, or deference without naming that act. Rendering it as an explicit English statement can improve informational clarity while making the speaker sound unusually blunt. The reverse process can weaken a direct institutional obligation by translating it into a courteous but optional Arabic recommendation.

Genre provides the interpretive boundary. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) show that field, tenor, and mode shape grammatical selection: technical exposition, courtroom argument, political speech, and intimate conversation organize experience and interpersonal relations differently. The same Arabic passive may be routine in a report but strategically evasive in a press statement. The same repetition may be cohesive in a sermon, ceremonial in a public address, and excessive in an abstract. CCM therefore records genre before evaluating a shift. It also distinguishes propositional meaning from interpersonal meaning: what is said, how confidently it is advanced, what relationship it presupposes, and what response it invites. This distinction guards against a narrow fluency standard that rewards idiomatic English while overlooking changes in respect, distance, solidarity, irony, or institutional authority.

3. METHODOLOGY: CONCEPTUAL–CONSTRUCTIONAL MAPPING

3.1 Research design

This conceptual-methodological study develops a framework through an integrative reading of translation studies, Arabic linguistics, cognitive semantics, construction grammar, corpus linguistics, and metaphor research. Its representative examples illustrate recurrent problems but do not constitute a statistically representative corpus. The contribution is a reproducible procedure and testable hypotheses, not unsupported frequency claims.

Examples were normalized in Modern Standard Arabic, transliterated with a simplified scholarly system, and checked against standard descriptions of Arabic morphology and syntax (Holes, 2004; Ryding, 2005; Watson, 2002). Later empirical applications can draw on the United Nations Parallel Corpus and OPUS, with Arabic annotation supported by MADAMIRA or CAMeL Tools (Obeid et al., 2020; Pasha et al., 2014; Tiedemann, 2012; Ziemski et al., 2016).

3.2 The three CCM layers

The first layer is morphological–lexical. It records roots, patterns, inflection, clitics, lexicalization, collocation, and semantic prosody. Its central question is: which parts of the message are compressed inside the word, and which are expressed separately?

The second layer is constructional. It records argument structure, voice, transitivity, causation, information structure, modification, and clause linkage. Its central question is: how does the grammatical configuration organize the event and its participants?

The third layer is discourse–conceptual. It records frames, metaphor, stance, politeness, reference chains, genre expectations, repetition, cadence, and intertextual resonance. Its central question is: what relationship does the utterance establish among speaker, audience, subject matter, and surrounding discourse?

The three layers interact. A passive form may suppress agency and alter responsibility; a repeated root may create cohesion and cadence. A translator should therefore avoid solving one layer while overlooking consequences at another.

Table 1. Conceptual–Constructional Mapping layers and diagnostic questions

Layer	Primary features	Diagnostic question	Typical translation risk
Morphological–lexical	Roots, patterns, inflection, clitics, lexicalization, and collocation	Which meanings are bundled inside the word, and which are expressed separately?	Loss of intensity, aspect, derivational relations, or lexical cohesion
Constructional	Valency, voice, causation, transitivity, clause linkage, and information structure	How does the grammatical configuration organize the event and its participants?	Shift in agency, responsibility, focus, path, manner, or affectedness
Discourse–conceptual	Frames, stance, reference, metaphor, politeness, genre, repetition, and cadence	What relationship and rhetorical effect does the utterance establish?	Change in certainty, register, scope, imagery, interpersonal force, or persuasion

3.3 The mapping procedure

CCM has four phases. Phase A is register-stratified sampling from defined domains such as diplomacy, journalism, literature, law, or subtitling. Register must be controlled because a solution suitable for a speech may fail in a contract.

Phase B is multilayer annotation: Arabic segmentation and morphology, constructions, frame roles, metaphor-related words, stance, and reference chains. Metaphor should be identified through an explicit procedure such as MIPVU, supported by a codebook with clear and borderline examples (Steen et al., 2010).

Phase C aligns source and target at a flexible unit. A derivational nuance may require word-to-phrase alignment; a rhetorical pattern may require paragraph-level comparison. The record notes what is preserved, redistributed, made explicit, left implicit, or lost.

Phase D interprets the translation risk and compares alternatives in relation to purpose, audience, register, and ethical effect. The mapping record includes source form, gloss, frame, participant structure, stance, rhetorical function, target options, selected option, and rationale.

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In corpus studies, two trained bilingual annotators should pilot the scheme independently, revise the codebook, and report agreement where counting is appropriate. Query dates, preprocessing, exclusions, and alignment corrections should also be documented.

4. ANALYTICAL FINDINGS: SEVEN DIVERGENCE ZONES

Table 2. Seven recurrent Arabic–English divergence zones

Divergence zone	Primary diagnostic question	Common failure mode
Derivational morphology	What causative, intensive, reciprocal, reflexive, or result meaning is carried by the pattern?	Reducing related forms to the same general English verb
Valency and voice	Who acts, who is affected, and who is suppressed?	Inventing or erasing responsibility
Motion-event framing	Which elements of path, manner, boundary crossing, and viewpoint are asserted?	Flattening manner or adding unsupported vividness
Modality and evidentiality	How certain, obligated, hopeful, or distant is the speaker?	Strengthening or weakening epistemic commitment
Definiteness and reference	How are scope, topic status, and antecedents maintained?	Ambiguous reference or altered generality
Metaphor	Is the mapping shared, conventionalized differently, culturally salient, or creatively new?	Literal awkwardness or metaphor flattening
Rhetorical texture	What do repetition, parallelism, sound, and cadence contribute?	Editing persuasive structure into flat information

4.1 Root-and-pattern morphology and lexical redistribution

Arabic derivation often packages causation, intensity, reciprocity, or result inside patterned forms. Compare كَسَرَ kasara, "he broke," with كَسَّرَ kassara, "he smashed," "broke into pieces," or "broke repeatedly." Translating both as broke may preserve the event while erasing force or iteration. The missing nuance may need a stronger verb, adverb, or result phrase.

Root families also create cohesion. From ʿ-l-m come عَلِمَ ʿalima "to know," عَلَّمَ ʿallama "to teach," تَعَلَّمَ taʿallama "to learn," مَعْلُوم maʿlūm "known," and مَعْلُومَات maʿlūmāt "information." English can translate each accurately, but the visible family resemblance weakens. Strategic recurrence or parallel syntax may be needed to retain the conceptual thread.

This matters in literary, religious, and political writing, where root echoes can support argument and sound together. English lexical variety should not obscure terminological or conceptual continuity.

Participles also compress event structure. مُعْتَقَل muʿtaqal may denote "detained," "a detainee," or a detention place according to vocalization and context. English may force a choice among state, event, participant, and location. CCM treats that choice as conceptual packaging rather than a routine change of word class.

The practical rule is to inventory the meanings carried by the Arabic form before choosing where to redistribute them in English. Morphological tools can assist analysis, but context and genre determine the translation.

4.2 Valency, voice, and the ethics of agency

Arabic institutional prose often uses passives, verbal nouns, and impersonal formulas. اعْتِقَالُهُ تَمَّ tamma iʿtiqāluhu is literally close to "his detention was carried out," but idiomatic English prefers "he was detained." This preserves agent suppression. "The police detained him" introduces responsibility not asserted by the source sentence unless the agent is established elsewhere.

The reverse shift also occurs. "The committee rejected the application" may become رُفِضَ الطَّلَب rufiḍa al-ṭalab, "the application was rejected." The event remains but accountability recedes. The effect may follow bureaucratic convention rather than intention, yet translators should still ask who disappears and who becomes prominent.

Arabic patterns can distinguish emergent from caused change. تَحَسَّنَتِ الأَحْوَالُ taḥassanat al-aḥwālu means "conditions improved," whereas حَسَّنَتِ الحُكُومَةُ الأَحْوَالَ ḥassanat al-ḥukūmatu al-aḥwāla assigns agency and credit to government. Blurring the contrast changes the political account.

Nominalizations require similar care. تَنْفِيذُ الإِجْرَاءَات tanfīdh al-ijrāʾāt, "implementation of the procedures," may be a technical term or an impersonal institutional voice. English can unpack it for readability, but should not invent an actor. "The procedures will be implemented" is less committal than "We will implement the procedures."

CCM therefore adds an agency audit: changes in voice, transitivity, and nominalization are checked for their effects on responsibility, affectedness, and evidential commitment.

4.3 Motion events and viewpoint

English often combines a manner verb with a path particle: run in, slide out, crawl across. Arabic frequently prefers a path verb plus a manner adjunct. "He ran into the room" may become دَخَلَ الغُرْفَةَ رَاكِضًا dakhala al-ghurfata rākiḍan, literally "he entered the room running." English foregrounds manner; Arabic foregrounds boundary crossing.

In narrative, repeated English manner verbs can create vivid movement. Replacing them with general Arabic path verbs may reduce dynamism, while adding varied manner verbs to an Arabic source may embellish what was not specified. The analyst must separate assertion from inference.

The Arabic اِنْدَفَعَ خَارِجَ القَاعَة indafaʿa khārija al-qāʿa might be "he rushed out," "burst out," or "surged out of the hall." Each verb adds a different evaluation, so the surrounding frame—panic, anger, crowd movement, or haste—must guide the choice.

Motion typology is thus a diagnostic prompt, not a stereotype. It directs attention to path, manner, boundary crossing, cause, and viewpoint while allowing for genre and dialectal variation.

4.4 Modality, evidentiality, and epistemic tone

Translation can preserve a proposition while changing a speaker's commitment to it. Arabic قَدْ qad is context-sensitive: with an imperfect verb it may signal possibility; with a perfect it may mark completion, expectation, or emphasis. Translating every occurrence as "may" is therefore misleading.

لَعَلَّ laʿalla may express possibility, hope, or rhetorical modesty. Depending on register, English may require "perhaps," "it is possible that," or "it is hoped that." Likewise, إِنَّ يُقَالُ yuqālu inna may become "it is said that," "reportedly," or "according to some accounts," each creating a different distance from the claim.

إِنْ شَاءَ الله in shāʾ Allāh can convey theological commitment, hope, politeness, contingency, or reluctance to promise. "God willing" retains the explicit religious frame; "hopefully" or "if all goes well" may reproduce a routine interpersonal function but remove that frame. Speaker identity, genre, and audience should decide.

English modals create reverse problems. Must can mark obligation, inference, or authority; should can signal advice, probability, or a weaker norm. Arabic distributes these meanings across verbs, particles, adjectives, and nominal expressions.

CCM calls this stance calibration: does the target speaker sound as certain, cautious, hopeful, authoritative, or detached as the source speaker?

4.5 Definiteness, reference tracking, and information structure

Arabic definiteness operates through al-, construct phrases, demonstratives, agreement, and inference. English uses articles, demonstratives, possessives, pronouns, and order. جَوْدَةُ التَّعْلِيمِ jawdat al-taʿlīm is naturally "the quality of education," though technical prose may prefer "education quality." Genre and terminological consistency decide.

Reference chains become difficult across sentences. Arabic can omit subjects recoverable from agreement, while English normally requires an overt pronoun or noun. Arabic may also use repetition or a resumptive pronoun where English prefers a simpler form. هَذَا الكِتَابُ قَرَأْتُهُ hādhā al-kitābu qaraʾtuhu may be "This book, I have read," "I have read this book," or "It is this book that I read," with different focus.

Flattening topic structure can remove contrast; over-preserving it can sound unnatural. The translator must identify whether fronting introduces a topic, corrects an assumption, or creates dramatic emphasis.

Article choice also affects scope. An Arabic definite plural may be generic where English uses no article. Literal transfer can make a general statement sound specific, while the opposite shift can turn a particular institutional reference into a universal claim.

CCM therefore traces noun phrases across the discourse, recording antecedent, accessibility, scope, contrast, and thematic progression rather than treating each sentence in isolation.

4.6 Metaphor families and cultural conventionality

Metaphor is not a choice between literal fidelity and free adaptation. The question is what the image does. صَدْرِي اِنْشَرَحَ insharaḥa ṣadrī literally means "my chest opened" and conventionally expresses relief. "My chest expanded" is odd in ordinary English; "I felt relieved" loses the image; "a weight lifted from my chest" preserves embodiment but introduces a different metaphor. Genre and thematic context determine the best compromise.

حِفْظُ مَاءِ الوَجْهِ ḥifẓ māʾ al-wajh, literally "preserving the water of the face," concerns dignity and avoidance of humiliation. "Saving face" is a conventional equivalent but loses the water image; "preserving one's dignity" may better fit elevated prose.

Some metaphors are highly congruent. بِيَدِهِ الأَمْرُ al-amru bi-yadihi can become "the matter is in his hands" or "he is in control." Yet formal similarity is insufficient unless the target collocation is equally conventional.

CCM distinguishes shared expressions, shared mappings with different wording, culturally salient imagery without a routine counterpart, and creative metaphor. Options include retention, substitution, paraphrase, recreation, and compensation.

MIPVU identifies metaphor-related words by comparing contextual and more basic meanings (Steen et al., 2010). Applied bilingually, it encourages explicit evidence and reduces the tendency to label every vivid phrase "culture-bound" on intuition alone.

4.7 Rhetorical texture: repetition, parallelism, and cadence

Arabic rhetorical practice has long treated repetition, balance, antithesis, and sound patterning as resources for argument, memory, and affect, not merely as ornament (Abdul-Raof, 2006). English uses the same resources, but modern editorial norms differ by genre. Repetition that sounds deliberate and elevated in an Arabic speech may be marked as redundant in English academic prose. Translators often remove it in the name of fluency and, in doing so, delete the architecture of persuasion.

Consider لَا نُرِيدُ تَصْعِيدًا، وَلَا نُرِيدُ تَصَادُمًا، بَلْ نُرِيدُ حُلُولًا lā nurīdu taṣʿīdan, wa-lā nurīdu taṣāduman, bal nurīdu ḥulūlan. A plain translation is "We do not want escalation, and we do not want confrontation; rather, we want solutions." A more compact rhetorical rendering is "We seek no escalation, no confrontation—only solutions." The second version changes the syntax but preserves the three-part movement, the repeated negation, and the culminating contrast.

The crucial distinction is between dispensable repetition and functional recurrence. Repeated wording may maintain reference, intensify evaluation, build cadence, or create a root-based pattern. Removing every recurrence can weaken cohesion. Preserving every recurrence can burden the target text. CCM requires the translator to label the function before deciding whether to retain, reduce, relocate, or compensate.

Sound-based density is especially challenging. Shakespearean English can compress meaning into polysemy, punning, meter, and syntactic ambiguity. High-register Arabic can compress meaning through derivation, parallelism, internal rhyme, paronomasia, and patterned cadence. These are not equivalent traditions, but both remind us that density is distributed. A lost effect may need to be "paid back" at another point in the sentence or passage rather than attached to the same word.

Rhetorical texture also carries voice. A translator who converts a ceremonially balanced Arabic address into terse managerial English may preserve information but misrepresent the speaker's public persona. Conversely, artificially ornate English can exoticize a straightforward Arabic source. The aim is functional proportion: enough structural resonance to preserve emphasis and identity without forcing the target language into imitation.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 What CCM contributes

Traditional contrastive analysis often stops after observing that Arabic tends to use one form and English another. CCM adds the question that matters for translation: where does the meaning live? If intensity is encoded morphologically in Arabic, English may need a stronger verb or result phrase. If English packages motion in a verb-particle combination, Arabic may redistribute path and manner. If Arabic repetition carries stance and cadence, English may preserve the pattern through syntactic parallelism rather than lexical copying.

This layered view explains why translations can be accurate at one level and deficient at another. A target sentence may name the same participants and event but alter agency through voice. It may preserve a metaphor's basic sense while losing its interpersonal warmth. It may communicate the proposition while changing the speaker's confidence. Quality assessment should therefore examine conceptual–constructional fidelity alongside grammaticality and fluency.

CCM also clarifies the relationship between source orientation and target purpose. A purposeful translation is not necessarily a domesticated translation, nor is formal closeness necessarily loyal. Loyalty requires identifying which relations are central to the communicative act. In a patient-information leaflet, clarity may justify replacing an unfamiliar metaphor. In a novel, that same metaphor may be part of characterization and cultural setting. The mapping record makes the trade-off visible rather than allowing it to disappear behind the label "natural English."

5.2 Translator education

Arabic–English translator training often separates grammar, vocabulary, and translation practice. CCM suggests a more integrated curriculum. Arabic morphology should be taught as a system of meaning packaging, not only as a paradigm to memorize. English phrasal verbs, clefts, passives, and information-structure constructions should be taught as choices of construal, not merely forms. Students can then produce short mapping commentaries that identify frame, participants, stance, metaphor, rhetorical function, and translation purpose.

Corpus work can make this pedagogy evidence-based. Students can compare several professional translations of the same pattern in UN documents, news, subtitles, or literature. They can examine when translators preserve an Arabic nominalization, when they unpack it, and whether agency changes. Such comparison replaces prescriptive slogans with observed choices. It also teaches students that frequency is not a substitute for interpretation: a common solution can still be unsuitable in a particular context.

Revision exercises should include an agency and stance audit. Students can underline every explicit or suppressed actor, mark modal strength, and trace reference chains. They can then compare the source and target versions. This practice develops ethical attention, especially in politically sensitive and institutional texts.

5.3 Corpus research and translation technology

CCM is compatible with corpus annotation and computational assistance. Arabic morphological tools can standardize segmentation and supply candidate analyses, while parallel corpora can reveal recurring alignments. Frame labels and metaphor protocols can support more systematic comparison across genres. Nevertheless, automated analysis must remain accountable to context. Arabic forms are often ambiguous without diacritics, and machine-generated alignments may split a construction across segments.

For translation technology, the framework offers a diagnostic complement to surface-based evaluation. A fluent machine translation may omit a modal particle, introduce an agent, or replace a coherent metaphor family with unrelated expressions. Human evaluation can use CCM categories to locate the problem precisely: agency shift, stance shift, frame-role loss, reference disruption, metaphor flattening, or rhetorical weakening. These labels are more actionable than a general judgment that the translation "does not sound faithful."

The same categories can guide terminology management and quality assurance. A translation memory normally stores segment pairs, but a CCM-informed resource could also record constructional patterns, typical risks, and genre-sensitive solutions. Such resources would not dictate one answer. They would remind translators what must be checked.

5.4 Quality assessment and accountable revision

A CCM-informed review does not replace existing quality models; it adds explanatory depth. Conventional error labels such as mistranslation, omission, grammar, or style are often too broad to show why a fluent segment is misleading. A revision sheet can instead ask whether the target preserves frame participants, causation, aspect, agency, modal force, referential scope, metaphor function, and rhetorical organization. The reviewer then grades severity in relation to communicative consequence. Losing an intensifying pattern in a casual description may be minor, whereas introducing an agent into a legal allegation may be critical.

This approach also improves dialogue between translators and editors. Editorial comments such as "awkward," "too literal," or "make it natural" offer little guidance and can encourage unnecessary normalization. A mapping-based comment identifies the actual conflict: the literal wording is awkward, but the source repetition marks contrast; the target passive is fluent, but it removes the responsible institution; the idiom is natural, but it changes a religious stance marker into casual optimism. Once the function is named, translator and editor can compare alternatives without treating personal preference as a rule.

Professional quality assurance can use a compact hierarchy. First, verify referential and propositional accuracy. Second, check constructional relations such as agency, transitivity, and information structure. Third, calibrate stance, register, and interpersonal force. Fourth, assess metaphorical and rhetorical effects that are relevant to the brief. This order prevents stylistic polishing from concealing more consequential shifts and makes revision decisions traceable to evidence.

6. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The present article develops and demonstrates a method; it does not claim statistical representativeness. Its examples focus mainly on Modern Standard Arabic and edited English, so the analysis cannot be transferred uncritically to dialectal conversation, Classical Arabic, audiovisual translation, or specialized subfields. The seven divergence zones are high-impact areas, not an exhaustive typology.

Future studies should test CCM on closed, register-stratified corpora and publish complete sampling and annotation procedures. Researchers could compare human and machine translations, measure inter-annotator agreement, and examine whether CCM-based training improves revision accuracy. Process data such as screen recording, keystroke logging, or retrospective interviews could also show when translators notice conceptual–constructional risks and how they resolve them. Reader-response studies would be useful for determining whether preserved rhetorical or metaphorical features produce the intended effect in different audiences.

Comparative work should also avoid treating "Arabic" and "English" as single stable baselines. Separate studies are needed for Modern Standard Arabic, regional varieties, heritage-language use, and different Englishes. Genre-specific reference corpora would reveal whether an apparent cross-linguistic difference is actually produced by institutional style, translation direction, or editorial intervention. Publishing source texts, aligned translations, coding manuals, and adjudication records would make such claims open to replication and correction.

7. CONCLUSION

Arabic–English translation cannot be adequately explained as the transfer of meanings from one list of words to another. Arabic frequently compresses relations into roots, patterns, clitics, and rhetorical structures; English often distributes comparable work across lexemes, particles, auxiliaries, word order, and discourse conventions. Neither system is inherently richer or poorer. They allocate communicative labour differently.

Conceptual–Constructional Mapping makes that allocation visible. By linking morphology, constructions, frames, stance, reference, metaphor, rhetoric, purpose, and ethics, it helps translators identify what is actually at risk in a segment. The seven divergence zones examined here show that many serious shifts are subtle: an agent appears or disappears, a possibility becomes a certainty, a path replaces a manner, a topic loses contrast, a familiar metaphor becomes strange, or persuasive rhythm is edited into flat information.

Used carefully, the model also resists two opposite simplifications: that formal closeness guarantees fidelity, and that fluency justifies unrestricted adaptation. It asks instead which relations matter in this text, for these readers, under this communicative purpose, and with what consequences.

The practical value of CCM lies in disciplined explanation. It does not promise automatic equivalence or a fixed recipe. It provides a record of the source configuration, the target options, and the reasons for choosing among them. Such transparency can strengthen translator education, corpus research, professional revision, and technology-assisted quality assessment. More importantly, it encourages translators to treat linguistic form as meaningful action. Bridging al-ḍād and Shakespeare's tongue is therefore not a matter of making one language resemble the other. It is the work of reconstructing relations—conceptual, grammatical, rhetorical, and ethical—so that a new text can speak responsibly in a new setting.

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Data availability: No original dataset was generated. The proposed method can be implemented with publicly available resources such as the United Nations Parallel Corpus and OPUS.

Ethical approval: Not applicable. The study did not involve human participants, personal data, or animal subjects.

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