

# The Translatability of Culture-Specific Items in the Novel *Season of Martyrdom*

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**Abstract**—Culture-specific items (CSIs) in literary translation are obstacles translators may face during the translation process because of the absence of a systematic equivalence between the source language (SL) and the target language (TL). The problems with their translation may increase if languages and cultures are diverse, such as Arabic and English. The aim of this study is to investigate the translation of the culture-specific items (CSIs) in Arabic literary text to English and to describe the occurrence of the translation procedures used by the translator to transfer source text (ST) cultural aspects. This study is therefore a descriptive qualitative study, which investigates the translation procedures used by Paula Hayder (2018) to translate the CSIs of Jamal Naji's novel *Season of Martyrdom* (2015) into English. The occurrences of the CSI in the ST and their translation procedures in the target text (TT) are categorized in accordance with Newmark's (2001) culture-specific item categorization and the translation procedures proposed by Vinay and Darbalnet (2000). The results reveal that the translator utilized seven translation procedures: functional equivalence, description, free translation, modulation, borrowing, cultural equivalence, and endnote. Functional and cultural equivalences were the most frequently used translation procedures. Moreover, free translation and endnote translation procedures were used sparingly. The CSIs translation procedures used by the translator showed that the communicative purpose of translation was achieved in various degrees when rendering the culture of the ST.

**Index Terms**—culture-specific items (CSIs), culture translation, language specificity, translator's choices, translation procedures

## I. INTRODUCTION

In our modern technological world, translation has gone far beyond written texts. Various scholars and theoreticians in the field point out that translation is more than verbal communication today and deals with a variety of interdisciplinary fields. It is no longer only a branch of linguistic studies, but it is also a cultural study (Newmark, 2009; Bassnett, 2002). Academics should think of the unbreakable relationship between language and culture (Bassnett, 2002). Moreover, globalization has placed increasing focus and significance on translation because it has become a tool for international communication (Bassnett, 2002). As a result, intercultural communication problems arise because of cultural discrepancies.

Translation can alter the form and shape of the ST. The process of translation also has a significant role in changing ideology, illuminating others, and adapting different components of culture such as values and beliefs. Furthermore, it can also change the cultural situation and the receiving cultural situation. However, the process of translation from one language and culture into another language and culture does not always proceed smoothly due to various semantic and sociocultural differences (Newmark, 2009).

Culture and language are intrinsically linked. Language within a person's culture reveals human action, beliefs, values, worldviews, linguistic choices, and mental expression. The conventions and elements of culture, such as history, practices, and surroundings, define the meanings our language choices have (Tariq et al., 2019). Moreover, culture has constraints of its own when it comes to translating from source to target material and depends on three points: 1) religion; 2) historical context; and 3) local circumstances.

Every civilization develops its own culture, which is acknowledged, followed, and accepted despite its limitations. Cultural traits, which are not always imposed from the outside, place limitations on translation. Expectations regarding conduct vary depending on the setting (Brooks, 1968). Therefore, translators must transcend the constraints imposed by the source culture while translating a text, either by retaining them or by finding a translation procedure to express their meanings.

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According to Creswell (2016), it is unacceptable to think of translation as only changing words from one language to another. Since translation is no longer a matter of rendering words, translators should be aware of other people's cultures. When translating a document, understanding other cultures helps translators place the units of language in the appropriate situational and social context.

Furthermore, cultural variations may be observed in the target text (TT) because of the linguistic structure and semantic content of the source text (ST). As translation is a process of communication between cultures, translators must preserve the original language form and semantic content (Sager, 1997). Nida (2000) distinguishes three types of relationships for communicating the message about cultural and linguistic gaps across languages:

1. Translation allows for a close comparison of language and culture. When there are superficial similarities across languages, translators fall for the false friend illusion.
2. Cultures may be similar, but languages may differ. When languages vary and cultures interact, formal modifications in translation are inescapable, and content parallelisms can be discovered.
3. Consider cultural and language differences while translating. However, translation cannot overcome the vast cultural divide if the languages and cultures are entirely different.

As mediators between languages and cultures, translators utilize different translation procedures to overcome the absence of cultural words that have no equivalence in the target language. Due to the vast language and culture differences between Arabic and English, the translation procedures utilized by the translator to surmount these disparities come into question.

Culture-specific items (CSIs) are translation gaps between languages. These gaps gain more significance when they occur between two dissimilar languages and civilizations, such as Arabic and English. Furthermore, unavoidable gaps appear when translating CSIs between these two languages. Since Arabic and English are diverse languages and both of their cultures are remote, translators may encounter cultural words with no equivalent in the TL during the translation process. As a result, these absences of equivalence may force the translator to use translation procedures that bridge the gap between the two languages and cultures.

Various studies have discussed the translation of CSIs in different literary and non-literary texts. For instance, Ikrame Chibani (2022) explored the translation of CSIs in the Moroccan novel *Lu'bat al-Nisyan*, which was translated to *The Game of Forgetting*. The study employed Newmark's (1988) CSI categorization and his translation procedures. Al Tenaijy and Al-Batineh (2024) discussed the translation of Emirati CSIs in *Dubai Tales* by the Emirati author Mohammed Al Murr. The study employed Newmark's CSI categorization (2000) and Davei's (2003) framework for translation strategies. Unlike the previous studies, this present study investigates the translation of CSIs in the novel *Season of Martyrdom*, by Jordanian author Jamal Naji (2015) and translated in 2018 by American translator Paula Hayder. Similar to the previous studies, this research adopted Newmark's (2001) CSIs categorization, but it also adopted Vinay and Darbelnet's (2000) translation procedures. The taxonomy of translation procedures created by Vinay and Darbelnet (2000) addresses the incompatibilities between SL and TL structures. They proposed two main translation methods: direct translation and oblique translation (Vinay & Darbelnet, 2000).

The goals of this study are threefold. This study aims to: (a) shed light on the translation of culture-specific items (CSIs) from Arabic into English, concerning translators' choices and respecting language specificity when rendering cultural occurrences between diverse languages; (b) identify the occurrences of the CSIs in the novel *Season of Martyrdom*, following Newmark's (2001) CSIs categorization; and (c) investigate the translation procedures utilized by the translator to translate the CSIs from Arabic into English.

The subject of this study is the Arabic novel *Season of Martyrdom*, written by the well-known Jordanian writer Jamal Naji in 2015 and published by Hamad Bin Khalifa University Press (HBKUP). The translator is Paula Hayder, who translated it in 2018, and the publisher of the translation is the Bloomsbury Qatar Publishing Foundation. This novel was selected because it is a modern Jordanian masterpiece that reflects the cultural, social, religious, and political attitudes of young Arabs during the Arab Spring.

The gap between the previous studies and this current study concerns their limitation to the cultures of specific Arabic countries, specifically Morocco and the Emirates. In contrast, this study focuses on the translation of standard Arabic in the Levant region in general and Jordanian culture in particular. The literature review reveals that, despite the large volume of research on the relationship between language and culture, there is a scarcity of studies addressing the topic in the Arabic context. Therefore, this present study attempts to fill this gap by contributing to the body of knowledge on the topic in the context of Arab literary culture.

This present study's significance lies in its contribution to the existing body of knowledge regarding the relationship between language, translation, and culture. The research addresses the problem of translating CSIs from a complex and ancient culture (Arabic) into a differently complex modern culture (English).

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Language and Culture

The interrelationship between language and culture means the issue of translatability of culture-specific items (CSIs) is a controversial subject among scholars and theoreticians in the translation field. Catford (1965) highlights the problem

of the untranslatability of culture, which appears when the linguistic and cultural words of the source text (ST) are not present in the target text (TT) language (Hermans, 2009).

Newmark (2001) asserts the same notion of the untranslatability of culture. According to him, the translatability of the ST culture is in accordance with the fluent theories of translation. Schleiermacher (1813) began this non-fluent theory in translation by differentiating between two methods of translation: first, when the writer moves towards the reader, and second, when the reader moves towards the writer. Various scholars and theorists, such as Benjamin, Steiner, and Venuti, have adopted this approach. Culture translation helps identify the ideological, contextual, and cultural factors that influence translational choices. From the last two decades of the 20th century and into the beginning of the third millennium, an increasing number of studies have compared and contrasted many translations of literary works (Wittman, 2013, p. 439).

### *B. Culture-Specific Items Categorization*

Many scholars and theoreticians have defined culture-specific items (CSIs). For instance, Aixela (1996) defines CSIs as linguistic items that are challenging to translate because they are embodied in the ST but do not, in most cases, exist in TL culture. Moreover, Nord (1997) defines CSIs as “a cultural phenomenon that is present in culture x but not present (in the same way) in culture y.” Likewise, Tobias (2006) states that CSIs are linguistic items that do not exist in the culture of the TL but are embodied in the ST. The absence of the CSIs in the TL results in a translation problem due to differences in cultural understanding.

Regarding translation, Larson (1984) emphasizes the translator’s familiarity with the target culture’s rituals, values, beliefs, behaviors, and the original culture. Additionally, the translation procedure used when translating CSIs plays a significant role (Daghoughi & Hashemian, 2016). Creswell (2016) emphasizes the importance of the translation of CSIs that have no equivalence because they “represent something unique or essential about the speakers of that tongue” (Cresswell, 2016, p. 447). The translation of these unique words helps communication with the TL. Therefore, the roles of both the translator and the translation change. For the translator, he/she becomes a critic and a rewriter (Mohammad & Keshavarzi, 2016). For translation, it becomes a problem-solving process.

Fahim and Mazaheri (2013) state that classifying CSIs into categories makes their identification easier for translators and readers. Although different CSI categories have been proposed, they sometimes overlap with each other. Newmark (2001) suggests five cultural categories for cultural words: 1) ecology; 2) material culture; 3) social culture; 4) organizations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts; and 5) gestures and habits. Aixela (1996) proposes two groups: 1) proper nouns and 2) common expressions. The second group consists of habits, opinions, objects, and institutions, as well as place names, works of art, and any expression or concept in the ST that does not exist in the TT culture (Kuleli, 2019). However, Davis (2003) criticizes Aixela’s assumptions and examples, stating that when making the contrasts between the examples, the examples are not clear and the procedures are ambiguous (Blažytė & Liubinienė, 2016).

Baker (2011) also provides two categories of culture-specific concepts: 1) abstract and 2) concrete. There are English examples unfamiliar to people from other cultures. She employs the abstract and concrete concepts of privacy and airing cupboards to illustrate her point. However, she does not add more sub-categories or further clarification regarding her classification of CSIs (Tiwiyanti, 2016). Furthermore, Guerra (2012) classifies CSIs into four categories: 1) terminology used in geographical and ethnographic contexts; 2) phrases or idioms associated with folklore, tradition, or mythology; 3) commonplace names for things, acts, and occasions (such as those related to food and drink, clothing, housing, tools, public transit, dances and games, measuring units, and money); and 4) territorial administrative divisions or units; divisions; professions; titles; salutations; institutions; religious and nationalistic groups. Identifying and classifying these cultural words helps translators identify and analyze them during the process of translation. These different categorizations do not contradict each other. Petrulionė (2012) asserts that the nature of the text governs which categorization to choose. Indeed, the categorization of CSIs by Newmark (2001) is applicable to the current research since it is the most comprehensive.

### *C. Culture-Specific Items Translation Procedures*

Translators interested in translating culture-specific items (CSIs) of the ST utilize various translation procedures to render them from ST to TT language. The following are some procedures used to translate the CSIs:

1. **Functional Equivalence:** This is one of the equivalence types in translation in which TL has the same function as the original text in a specific context. De Waard and Nida in 1986 used this term instead of dynamic equivalence because it has fewer opportunities for misinterpretation. It emphasizes how translation serves as a means of communication (Shuttleworth & Cowie, 2014).
2. **Cultural Equivalence:** Newmark (2001) defines this as the approximate translation of an SL culture word by a TL cultural word. Moreover, it has pragmatic impact.
3. **Modulation:** This translation procedure entails a change in the point of view and perspective (Newmark, 2001). Vinay and Darbelnet (2000) employ this approach to indicate an unsuitable or unidiomatic translation.
4. **Borrowing:** Waliński (2015) defines this as the appearance of SL words in the TT because of the lexicon gap in the TL. Borrowing is one of the simplest translation processes, requiring only the use of foreign words within the TT. Additionally, Vinay and Darbelnet (2000) note that loanwords, or borrowings, frequently enter a language

after being introduced in a translation and that many of these words become so usual in TL that they are no longer considered alien objects.

5. Free Translation: Free translation is a translation in which the goal is to create a TT that reads naturally rather than maintaining the original ST phrasing (Shuttleworth & Cowie, 2014). Newmark (2001) defines this translation process as mimicking the subject matter but not the style or structure of the ST. Typically, the paraphrase is substantially longer than the ST.
6. Endnote: Newmark (2001) states that notes are supplementary information the translator adds to provide more information about the ST for various purposes. These purposes could be linguistic, technical, or cultural to reveal more differences between the source and TT language. Venuti (1998) asserts that this translation procedure is employed to indicate the limitations regarding certain renderings. Moreover, Venuti (1995) mentions that the use is an indication of the translator's visibility in the TT.
7. Explication: This process often results in the TT stating ST information in a more explicit manner than originally written. This translation procedure is initiated when the translator fills up the ST, adding connectives, more explanatory sentences, or spelling out implicatures to "help" the text flow more logically and make it easier to read (Shuttleworth & Cowie, 2014).

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Research Approach

This study applied the descriptive qualitative research to investigate the translation of culture-specific items (CSIs) from Arabic into English in the novel *Season of Martyrdom*. This paper includes the following sections: (a) introduction, (b) literature review, (c) method, (d) results, (e) discussion, (f) conclusion, and (g) references.

#### B. Data Collection

The data were collected manually at the micro-level. The identification of data at this level helped to investigate the translation procedures of CSIs in the translated text (Saldanha & O'Brien, 2014). The source text (ST) was read to identify the CSIs within it. Then, the researchers identified the occurrences in accordance with Newmark (2001). Next, the source CSIs were compared with the target text (TT) to analyze the translation procedures employed by the translator to render them in the target language (TL). This study limits itself to the translation of the CSIs and their translation procedures from Arabic into English. The occurrences of the CSIs were categorized and their cultural meaning explained, then they were compared with their translations to assess their translatability in the TL.

### IV. RESULTS

Table 1 below presents the CSIs found in the novel *Season of Martyrdom*, along with their transliteration and their translation. In addition, it shows the translation procedure used to translate them:

TABLE 1  
CSIS AND THEIR TRANSLATION PROCEDURES

No	Category	ST	Transliteration	TT	Translation Procedure
1	Fauna	قطعة شيرازية	<i>qitātu shīrāzīātī<sup>n</sup></i>	Persian cat	Cultural Equivalence
2	Fauna	الحيوانات الأليفة	<i>alḥayawānātu alqalyfī</i>	house pets	Modulation
3	Fauna	القردة	<i>alqirdātu</i>	monkeys	Functional Equivalence
4	Flora	ازهار التوليب	<i>azharaltwlyb</i>	tulips	Cultural Equivalence
5	Flora	الميرمية	<i>almyrmyī</i>	marjoram	Cultural Equivalence
6	Flora	العناب	<i>al'unābu</i>	jujube	Functional Equivalence
7	Geographical	صويلح	<i>ṣwylḥ</i>	Sweileh	Borrowing
8	Geographical	جبل الحسين	<i>jabalu alḥisāyīni</i>	Jabal Hussein	Borrowing
9	Geographical	العبدلي	<i>al'abdaltū</i>	Abdli	Borrowing
10	Geographical	عن النهر	<i>'ani alnāhri</i>	Jordan River	Explication
11	Geographical	التغر	<i>althāghru</i>	hideout	Modulation
12	Geographical	جبل عمان	<i>jabalu 'amāni</i>	Jabal Amman	Borrowing
13	Geographical	الشعاب	<i>alshī'ābu</i>	brush	Modulation
14	Social Culture	الباشا	<i>albāshā</i>	Basha	Borrowing
15	Social Culture	ام عياش	<i>am 'ayāshā<sup>n</sup></i>	Umm Ayyash	Borrowing
16	Social Culture	العنوسة	<i>al'unūsātū</i>	spinsterhood	Cultural Equivalence
17	Social Culture	عاهرة	<i>'āhira<sup>n</sup></i>	whore	Cultural Equivalence
18	Social Culture	صباح الخير	<i>ṣabahā alkhayri</i>	Good Morning	Functional Equivalence
19	Social Culture	مساء الخير	<i>masā' alkhayri</i>	Good Evening	Functional Equivalence
20	Social Culture	هلل	<i>halāla</i>	greeted him with such exuberance	Explication
21	Social Culture	سيدتي	<i>sayīdatuy</i>	Madame	Functional Equivalence
22	Political	العجم	<i>al'ajamu</i>	the Persian	Cultural Equivalence
23	Political	أحد الوزراء	<i>āḥadū alwuzarā'ī</i>	government minister	Cultural Equivalent
24	Political	رئيس الوزراء	<i>rayīysu alwuzarā'ī</i>	Prime Minister	Cultural Equivalent
25	Political	عساكر النظام	<i>'asākīru alnīzāmi</i>	the Syrian regime soldiers	Explication
26	Administrative	مجمع النقابات المهنية	<i>majma'u alnīqābātī almiḥnīātī</i>	the white-collar union complexes	Cultural Equivalent
27	Administrative	طيران شركة "عالية"	<i>ṭayarānu sharikātī "ālatā<sup>n</sup></i>	The Royal Jordanian Airlines	Modulation
28	Administrative	الشهادة الجامعية	<i>alshāhādātū aljami'tātū</i>	Degree	Functional Equivalent
29	Administrative	شهادة البكالوريوس	<i>shāhādātū albakalwryws</i>	a Bachelor's degree	Functional Equivalent
30	Administrative	البنك المركزي	<i>albanūku almarḥkazī</i>	the Central Bank	Functional Equivalence
31	Religious	شرح صدي	<i>sharḥa ṣadray</i>	opening my heart	Free Translation
32	Religious	الحج	<i>alḥaj</i>	the Hajj	Borrowing
33	Religious	"يا سارية الجبل الجبل"	<i>"yā sāriyāta aljabali aljabala "</i>	"O Sariyah! The mountain, the mountain!" xiii	Endnote
34	Religious	ابن حلال	<i>aiḥna ḥalālī<sup>n</sup></i>	My good boy	Free Translation
35	Religious	يوم القيامة	<i>yawmu alqīāmātī</i>	Judgment Day	Cultural Equivalence
36	Religious	الانبياء	<i>alānbyā'</i>	the prophets	Functional Equivalence
37	Religious	يتشهد	<i>yatashahādū</i>	say the shahada	Explication
38	Religious	المجاهدين	<i>almujahidīna</i>	the mujahideen (125)	Borrowing
39	Religious	تعوذت	<i>ta'awādhāt</i>	an incantation seeking God's protection from the devil	Explication
40	Religious	الى ما شاء الله	<i>aly mā shā' a allhu</i>	Indefinitely	Free Translation
41	International	بي بي سي	<i>bī bī sī</i>	BBC	Functional Equivalence
42	International	الجزيرة	<i>aljazīrātā</i>	AL-Jazeera	Borrowing
43	Artistic	أغاني هندية	<i>āghany hindīātā<sup>n</sup></i>	Hindi songs	Functional Equivalence
44	Artistic	الموسيقى الكلاسيكية	<i>alḥmūsiqay alkilāāsikīātū</i>	classical music	Functional Equivalence
45	Food	المقبلات	<i>alḥmuqbilātū</i>	hor d'oeuvres	Functional Equivalence
46	Food	حمص و فول	<i>ḥimṣī<sup>n</sup> wa fūlu<sup>n</sup></i>	hummus and fole (ix)	Endnote
47	Clothes	النقاب	<i>alniqābu</i>	niqab	Borrowing
48	Clothes	سراويل الافرنجة وقمصانهم و بزاتهم	<i>sarāwīlu alafṛnījī waqumṣānahum wa bizāqtuhum</i>	Western pants and shirts and suits	Cultural Equivalence
49	Clothes	الجلابيب	<i>aljalāabību</i>	robes	Modulation
50	Gestures	رشقتني بنظرة ترفع	<i>rashaqatī binazarātī<sup>n</sup> tarfa'u</i>	Then she gave me a scornful look.	Modulation

The table above shows that the novel ST has a plethora of the different categories from Newmark's (2001) CSIs categorization. Table 2, below, shows the utilization frequencies for each translation procedure used to render these CSIs:

TABLE 2  
TRANSLATION PROCEDURE FREQUENCIES

Translation Procedure	Frequency	Percentage
Free Translation	3	6%
Functional Equivalent	13	26%
Cultural Equivalence	11	22%
Modulation	6	12%
Explicitation	5	10%
Borrowing	10	20%
Endnote	2	4%

The above table shows that the Functional Equivalent translation procedure had the highest number of frequencies. However, the Endnote translation procedure received the least numbers. The Figure 1, below, shows the relationship between the translation procedures and the frequency of use during the process of translation:

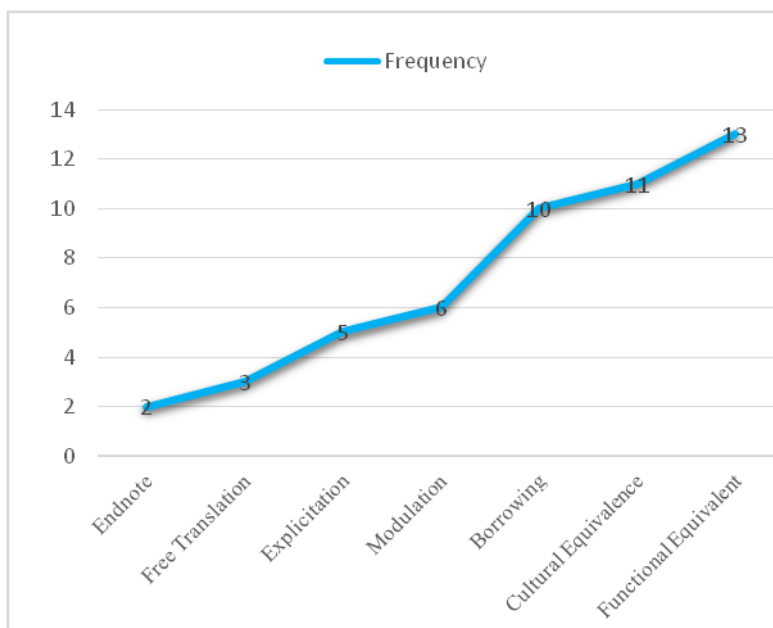


Figure 1. Translation Procedures and Their Frequency of Use During the Translation Process

Figure 2 shows the percentage of each translation procedure:

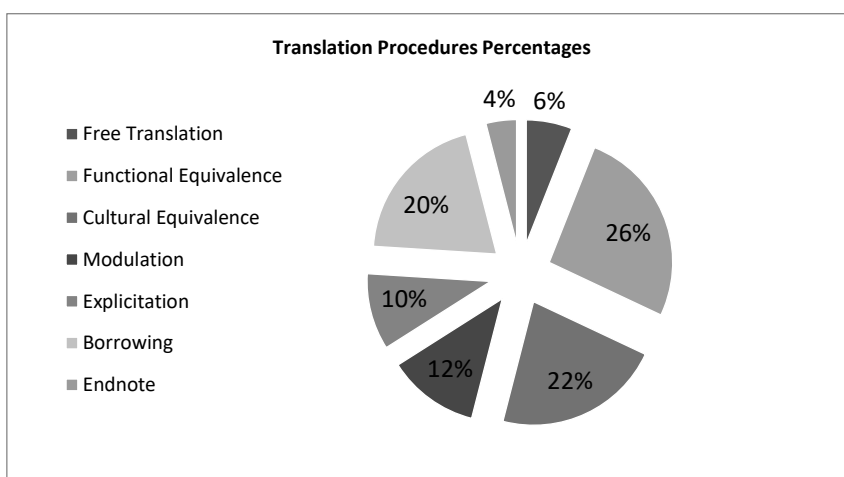


Figure 2. Percentage of Each Translation Procedure

### V. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The translation of culture-specific items (CSIs) can be challenging. The translator utilizes various translation procedures to render the CSIs from one language into another. The translator of *Season of Martyrdom* used seven

translation procedures to translate the CSIs. These translation procedures are: Free Translation, Functional Equivalent, Cultural Equivalence, Modulation, Explication, Borrowing, and Endnote.

The results and analysis of the CSIs selected from the novel ST and their translation procedures reveal that the translator utilized Functional Equivalence as the most frequent translation procedure. Although the translator employed the Endnote procedure, this was the least procedure used. Out of 50 instances, the translator used Functional Equivalence to translate 13 CSIs with a percentage of 26%. The translator used Cultural Equivalence to render 11 CSIs at 22%. She used Borrowing, Transliteration, or Transference to translate 10 CSIs at 20%. She used the Modulation translation procedure to render 6 CSIs with a percentage of 12%, followed by Explication to render five CSIs with a percentage of 10%. Endnote and Free Translation were the least utilized translation procedures. The translator used Free Translation to translate three CSIs with a percentage of 6%. Finally, she used Endnote to render two CSIs with a percentage of 4%. The following are examples of applying each translation procedure to render the CSIs of the ST:

**Functional Equivalence:** Since the translation is communication means between languages, the translation of the CSI function can be transmitted to the target language (TL). The translator employed this translation procedure because it has the same function as the source text (ST) CSI in the TL. She used it to translate 13 CSIs, of which the following is an example:

"مساء الخير منتهى. سنذهب لتناول العشاء معا..... جاهزة؟" (p. 66)

"**Good evening**, Muntaha. We will go have dinner together. Are you ready?" (p. 52)

The text CSI refers to one of the everyday greetings. The translator in the above example was able to find the equivalent of the ST greetings. "مساء الخير" is an everyday greeting SL people use. The translator replaced the source "الخير" with "good" and "مساء" with "evening." The TT equivalent has the same function as the source. Thus, the translator conveyed the meaning.

**Cultural Equivalence:** The translator employed this procedure to render the CSI with cultural approximation in the TL. The following example illustrates the use of the translation procedure:

كانت تنظر بحذر بين فينة و أخرى الى **قطه شيرازية** اليفة (p. 7)

She would cautiously look over at a friendly **Persian cat**. (p. 5)

In the above example, the CSI refers to a certain species of cat. The translator rendered the well-known animal's name as it is. However, she replaced the ST "شيرازية" with the TL cultural word "Persian." Shiraz is the capital city of Fars province in Iran. The SL refers to the city, but the translation of TL refers to the country. It is the same animal type intended in the source text with different attributions to the place between the two cultures. Arab culture attributes that type of cat to the Persian city of Shiraz, but the English culture attributes it to the country. Therefore, the translation conveyed the meaning.

**Borrowing, Transliteration, Transference:** CSIs translated to the TL using this translation procedure can be seen in the following example:

تحججت بالحساسية من **النقاب** و بأنه يكتم الأنفاس (p. 101)

I claimed I was allergic to **niqab**, that it stifled my ability to breathe. (p. 80)

The CSI in the above example refers to an Islamic type of clothing used to cover the face without covering the eyes. The *niqab* is famously used in Arabic Gulf region countries as well as by some other Muslim women in different Islamic and non-Islamic countries (Jaffery, 2023). The translator transliterated the CSI to the TL due to the absence of an English equivalent. She borrowed the term from the SL.

**Modulation:** The translator used this translation procedure to translate six CSIs. The following example illustrates the use of this procedure:

ذلك المحل الصغير لا تزيد مساحته على ستة عشر مترا مربعا مليء **بالجلابيب** و الملابس النسائية الاسلامية... (p. 233)

It was a small shop, no more than sixteen square meters in area, and was filled with **robes** and Islamic women's clothing (p. 183).

The CSI in the above example refers to typical Islamic women's clothing that is ubiquitously worn by most Muslim women. The translator used "robe" to translate the CSI. According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, in English, the term "robe" means a long, loose garment that is worn on ceremonial occasions as a symbol of an office or profession. On the other hand, a robe is also informal wear at home (bathrobe). Unlike the robes, Muslim women wear *aljalābīb*, the Arabic word used here, on both formal and informal occasions. Muslim women wear *aljalābīb* in everyday activities outside their homes. The translation partially conveys the meaning of the source text. The purpose of wearing this type of clothing in the ST and TT differs. The translation misleads TT readers about this Islamic clothing.

**Explication:** The translator employed this procedure to translate five CSIs. The following example below offers an explanation of this procedure utilization:

**هلل** له المراسل و استقبله (p. 38)

The clerk **greeted him with such exuberance**. (p. 29)

The CSI in the above example "هلل" refers to exaggeration when welcoming someone who is either very dear to you or who has high rank or social class. The translator explains that the clerk greeted someone showing exaggeration when

welcoming him at the office. She completes that verb (greeted) with an additional explanation (“with such exuberance”). The clerk was joyful and enthusiastic while welcoming that man. Moreover, the clerk displayed an exuberant act and expression when he saw him. The translation conveys the meaning.

**Free Translation:** This procedure was employed to render three CSIs with the following example:

نسيت نفسي قائلة: " ابن حلال ، كنت أفكر فيك قبل دقيقة." (p. 269)

Without thinking, I said, “**My good boy**, I was just thinking about you a minute ago”. (p. 213)

The CSI “ابن حلال” in the above instance has two meanings. First, it has religious meaning: “The boy is a legitimate boy” (<https://www.maajim.com/dictionary>) (Sarl, n.d.). Second, the CSI has social and figurative meaning. It means a man who has good morals and behavior. The term is a form of praise. The text is not religious. The translator uses the English equivalent idiom with the same figurative meaning as the ST. The idiom is used “to praise a child or animal for obeying” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, n.d.). The translation conveys the meaning.

**Endnote:** The translator used this procedure to render two CSIs; it was the least used translation procedure. The following example is an illustration of its usage:

و شرحبيل قال: " يا سارية الجبل الجبل " إنه إلهام من الله. (p. 250)

And Sharhabil said, “**O Sariyah! The mountain, the mountain!**” It was divine inspiration from God Almighty. (p. 197)

In the above example, the translator employed literal translation to translate the CSI “يا سارية الجبل الجبل”. She was unable to provide more information or explanation for the figurative usage of the expression between the quotations. It is necessary to understand the story behind this expression to comprehend the situation. However, since it is a story, the translator could not tell during the translation, it is considered out of context. Therefore, the translator used endnotes to provide more information about the situation in which this expression is used. The supplementary information is important for translation comprehension.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The results and discussion reveal the translator translated the culture-specific items (CSIs) of the source text (ST) using different translation procedures. The translation procedures used were functional equivalence, cultural equivalence, borrowing, modulation, explicitation, free translation, and endnote. The last two translation procedures were the least used. To bridge the gap between ST and the target text (TT), some translation procedures, notably functional and cultural equivalences, conveyed the meaning of the CSIs, whereas other CSIs needed to be explained for different purposes, such as exaggeration when doing something.

The free translation procedure rendered the content of the ST rather than the words themselves. Similar to Ayyad and Mahadi (2021), endnotes and footnotes are beneficial in translation. They support the TT translation by clarifying the TT, making it more understandable. Borrowing was employed when no equivalent in the target language (TL) is available to fulfill the source meaning linguistically or figuratively. This procedure helps encode the source text (ST) words in the TL. The CSIs borrowed by the translation form part of the target language.

The communicative purpose of translation was achieved by employing different types of equivalence to make the TT acceptable for the target readers. Some CSIs were fully transferred to the TT; others were partially rendered, which caused an illusion effect on the TT readers. A lack of full knowledge of the ST culture required the translator to use endnotes as a clarification method to justify the inability to find a suitable equivalent and the importance of a particular word, sentence, expression, and so on.

This study has significant implications as the findings can be used by translators, academics, and students of translation. The research presents valuable insights into the methods and procedures for translating CSIs from Arabic into English.

Based on the findings, the researchers recommend conducting future studies that can apply the present research’s methodology to other Arabic literary works translated into English. It is also suggested that other approaches and theories of translation be investigated in the context of Arabic literature in future research endeavors.

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