A Study into Cultural Mediation and Manipulation in the Translation of Moroccan Novel into English.  
Case study: “Like A summer Never to be Repeated”

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Abstract
Translation from Arabic into English is said to involve a high degree of intercultural manipulation. It is argued that western translators of Arabic literature tend to utilize representational devices intended to undermine the literature and respective cultures of these peoples. Manipulation as such is not limited to textual adjustments, but also applies to the selection process of the source texts. Subsequently, the TT reader is presented with a translation that conforms to a master discourse characterized by stereotypical images of the Arabs and Muslims. The present paper set out to investigate the dominant strategy (domestication or foreignization) employed in the transfer of cultural markers from Arabic into English. Two questions were addressed: What treatment (domestication or Foreignization) is given to cultural markers in the English translation of the Arabic novel “Like a Summer never to be repeated”? and how can these strategies promote or hinder intercultural communication? The data for this study was comprised of segments extracted from a novel written by a Moroccan writer known throughout the Arab world. The method adopted for this study was comparative text analysis. A parallel text was created in which ST and TT segments were arranged in a table and analyzed using local
procedures subsumed under domestication and Foreignization strategies. Based on the results, which showed a balance in the use of domesticating and foreignizing strategies, the translator made an attempt to foreground the cultural elements of the target culture, without compromising its readability.

**Keywords:** translation; intercultural communication; cultural manipulation; domestication; foreignization; translation strategies.

0. Introduction

Intercultural communication is probably one of the most important goals in the ‘translational action.’ “Translation is now being understood as an exercise, not only in understanding text, but in understanding cultural frames” (Katan, 1999, p. 126). Understanding cultural frames requires that the translator be an insider of both the source and target culture. Within this conceptual framework, translators become cultural mediators, offering solutions to cultural asymmetries. In this respect, Katan (1999) notes that “a successful mediator must be consciously aware of the importance of both text and context, which means both the words and the implied frames” (Katan, 1999, p. 126).

It’s been argued that translation has been under the influence of ideological and political agendas. Some even go as far as to say that translation is an act of violence perpetrated against minority cultures (Venuti, 1995). Venuti (2002) contends that literary works translated into English have been subjected to a process of appropriation whereby the cultural aspects of the source text culture are deliberately obliterated and replaced with the target culture norms.

Others view translation as manipulation. Hermans (1985) wrote: “All translation implies a degree of manipulation of the source text for a certain purpose” (p. 11). Dukate (2009) spoke of three types of manipulation: manipulation as handling (the ST is reproduced in a different language); manipulation as distortion (changing the meaning or purpose of the ST); manipulation as improvement (creating a TT that is easily readable and more idiomatic, coherent and organized). The various degrees of manipulation can be represented as points along a scale between the extremes of cultural manipulation and cultural mediation.
Regardless of their conflicting viewpoints on the nature of translation, scholars and translators unanimously acknowledge that the act of translation is predominantly a problem-solving process. A plethora of solutions or strategies have been proposed to fix problems during the transfer of cultural elements. These strategies or procedures can be subsumed under two overarching categories: domesticating strategies (Target-text oriented) and foreignizing strategies (Source-text oriented). Koskinen (2012) defines domestication and foreignization as two opposing ends of a spectrum where,

one set of translation strategies replaces all unfamiliar elements with domestic variants to help the reader approach the text with ease and familiarity, while the other one follows the original text very closely, ruthlessly ignoring all potential difficulties of comprehension or barriers of reception. (p.13)

For many translators, the real dilemma relates to whether to domesticate or foreignize the cultural elements in the ST. In either event, the choice of strategy can have major implications on the reception of the TT. Foreignizing strategies are believed to contribute greatly to intercultural communication. Domesticating strategies, on the other hand, may render a source text devoid of its cultural capital (Venuti, 2018).

It is also argued that westerner translators of Arabic literature utilize representational devices intended to undermine the literature and respective cultures of these peoples. Manipulation as such is not limited to textual adjustments, but also applies to the selection process of the source texts. Consequently, the TT reader is presented with a translation that conforms to a master discourse characterized by stereotypical images of the Arabs and Muslims (Faiq, 2004).

The present paper aims to investigate whether or not translation from Arabic into English is still the subject of intercultural manipulation. Based on findings by (Faiq, 2004; Niranjana, 1992; Bassnett, 1988; Lefevere, 1988; Venuti, 1995), the research hypothesis predicts that the translator of the Arabic Novel “Like a Summer Never Repeated” would proceed along familiar and established scripts. Venuti (As cited in Kelly & Johnson, 2009, p. 214) argues that the “Anglo-American translation
tradition, in particular, has had a normalizing and naturalizing effect. Such an effect has deprived source text producers of their voice and culminated in the re-expression of cultural values in terms of what is the dominant Western culture.” Two main questions will be addressed in this study:

1. What treatment (domestication or Foreignization) is given to cultural markers in the English translation of the Arabic novel “Like a Summer never to be repeated”?
2. How can these strategies contribute to or hinder intercultural communication?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Language and Culture

Language is primarily a means of communication. People use language to bond and transact. Language with capital L refers to this innate ability that every human being possesses. Some may go as far as to say that language shapes our thinking. In this respect, House (2018) views language as embedded in culture such that the meaning of any bit of language can only be understood with reference to the cultural context enveloping it” (p. 47).

Kroeber (1963) observes that language is a piece of culture and a historical phenomenon. Underhill (2009) concurs that “languages are the havens in which we deposit our lives. Languages contain our history” (p.4). The ability to use natural language to communicate is innate, but “the total aggregation of words, forms, grammar, and meanings which constitute [a single] language is the cumulative and joint product of millions of individuals for many centuries” (Underhill, 2009, p. 63).

Kroeber (1963) reasons that all languages have the ability to name any concept, be it concrete or abstract. This claim runs counter to the deterministic argument which claims that language limits the perception of reality. According to Baos (1966), language and culture are inextricably related, but he does not subscribe to the claim that culture is a by-product of language. In this respect, he remarks,
It does not seem likely … that there is any direct relationship between the culture of the tribe and the language they speak, except in so far as the form of the language will be molded by the state of culture, but not in so far as a certain state of culture is conditioned by morphological traits of the language. (p.63)

Boas (1966) made an interesting observation about the relation between language and reality. He maintains that languages differ in terms of mapping out reality. For example, Arabic has five pronouns to refer to number and gender, whereas English has only one. Given his deep-seated belief in cultural relativism, Boas highlights these structural differences to stress that the presence of these discrepancies does not prove the richness of one language and the poverty of another. Along the same lines, Crystal (2004) contends that there is no such thing as a primitive language, and that every language is capable of great beauty and power of expression. Cristal writes:

If diversity is a prerequisite for successful humanity, then the preservation of linguistic diversity is essential, for language lies at the heart of what it means to be human. If the development of multiple cultures is so important, then the role of languages becomes critical, for cultures are chiefly transmitted through spoken and written languages. (Cristal, 2004, p. 40)

There has been a debate over the causative relationship between language and thought. It is quite obvious that thoughts can be expressed through language. It is, however, impossible to conclude, at least until now, that language affects our thought patterns. If the latter is proved to be true, it follows then that different language communities experience reality differently. It is an entertaining thought, but the data to support it is scant. Another strong advocate of this hypothesis remarks that

We dissect nature along lines laid by our native languages. The categories and types that we isolate from the world of phenomena we do not find there because they stare every observer in the face; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscopic flux of impressions which have to be organized by our minds – and this means largely by the linguistic systems in our minds. (Carroll, 2008, p. 396)
Sapir assigns language a critical role in shaping reality. He writes:

The fact of the matter is that real world is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached.” (Sapir, 1985, p. 162)

World languages conform to an overarching system of rules called universals. For example, all languages have a tense system that expresses time frames. All languages have ways to express the plural. This diversity in linguistic forms and lexis among languages promoted researchers to draw the conclusion that language affects both thought and culture.

Humboldt even called language the formative organ of thought. Banich (2003) comments that “both thought and culture were eventually regarded as being affected by the nature of linguistic form and content. Extremely relevant was the recognition of the similarity in kind of linguistic and cultural phenomena” (p. 55).

Hofstede (2010) observes that “Language and culture are not closely linked that sharing a language implies sharing a culture, nor should a difference in language always impose a difference in cultural values” (p. 389).

“Vocabulary is the only part of language that is “a very sensitive index of the culture of a people” (Sapir, 1949, p. 27 as cited in Banich, 2003, p. 26). Knowing a foreign language, however, does not necessarily imply knowing a second culture. Cultural awareness entails more than just knowing the formal and lexical systems of a foreign language. Successful cross-cultural interaction involves the ability to read and respond to subtle cultural signs.

Cross-cultural communication has the added value of seeing the world through a new pair of lenses. Misunderstandings among people from different cultures can have far-reaching effects. Cultural stereotypes and prejudices are the result of misinterpreting cultural signals. We
tend to interpret verbal or non-verbal behavior through our inherited cultural filter. “All communication takes place in the matrix of culture; therefore, difference in culture is the primary obstacle to intercultural communication” (Novinger, 2001, p.4). With a modicum of humility and open-mindedness, intercultural communication becomes a possibility.

Venuti strongly believes that translations that do not establish cultural mediation are nothing but scandalous acts committed against minority cultures. He complains that in the absence of cross-cultural communication as the primary goal of translation, what kind of communities can translation possibly foster? What communities can be based on the domestic inscription of the foreign that limits and redirects the communicative aim of translation?

2.2. Linguistic Barriers

Grammar represents “a dynamic tool for the packaging of information that allows the speaker to focus the hearer’s attention on a particular discourse referent in order to satisfy context-specific communicative needs, and thereby contribute to efficient information packaging.” (Gonzalez, Mackenzie, & Alvarez, 2008, p. xvi). In translation, having a deep knowledge of the linguistic systems of two languages is not only desirable, but mandatory for the optimal interpretation of the source text.

Translators of Indo-European languages have several advantages over those who translate from and into languages of different language families. For example, Dutch is considered to be the closest language to English in terms of the linguistic system. Both languages have a similar verb system, follow the basic subject-verb-object pattern, use definite and indefinite articles in much the same way and have a great number of cognates (Aarts, 2013). These similarities invariably ease the task of the translator.

In contrast, Arabic belongs to the Semitic language family. Arabic grammar differs considerably from that of English, which further complicates the work of the translator. Dickins (2017) notes that “it is
the grammatical level where translation loss is generally most immediately obvious” (p. 127).

At the morphological level, both English and Arabic have distinct ways to form words. The most common morphological processes include derivation, affixation and compounding. While English uses stems and affixes to create English words, Arabic employs a system of root morphemes and pattern morphemes. At the level of syntax, VSO is the preferred word order in Arabic. It is, however, not uncommon to find constructions along the lines of SVO in modern Arabic. English has a stricter arrangement of words.

Regardless of the difficulties presented by grammatical differences, “translators give priority to the mot juste and to constructing idiomatic TL sentences, even where this entails translation loss in terms of grammatical structure or economy.” (Dickins, 2017, p. 132). Below is a summary of the main grammatical differences between Arabic and English (Ryding, 2005).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Linguistic differences between Arabic and English</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Verb system</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Word Order</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Nouns</strong></td>
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<td>Arabic</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Adjectives</strong></td>
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<td>Arabic</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Adverbs | adding accusative suffix / prepositional phrases/ absolute accusatives/circumstantial accusatives | Adding the suffix -ly/ Prepositional phrases
---|---|---
Affixation | Prefixes and suffixes/ Root morphemes and pattern morphemes Tansfixing | Prefixes and suffixes attached the stem
Compounding | Analytical/ Genitive structure | Noun-noun/ Adjective-noun/ Clipping/ Blending

2.3. Cultural Barriers

In translation, cultural barriers refer to problems pertaining to those elements of the source culture that have no cultural equivalents in the TL. Many translation scholars weigh in on the issue of culture and the challenges faced by translators when dealing with cultural differences. Dickens (2017) points out that “general cultural differences are sometimes bigger obstacles to successful translation than linguistic differences” (p. 36).

Andre Levere (2016) explains that “since language is the expression of a culture, many of the words in a language are inextricably bound up with that culture and therefore very hard to transfer in their totality to another language” (cited in Al-Sarrani, p. 56). In the same context, Leppihalme (1997) notes that “Interest in intercultural translation problems arises from recognition that culture-bound concepts, even where the two cultures involved are not too distant, can be more problematic for the translator than the semantic or syntactic difficulties of a text” (p. 2).

Some, however, argue that language is practically a separate entity from culture. (Newmark, 1988). Nikcevic-Batricevie (2008) counteracts this argument by stating that “if we permit the claim that language is not a component of culture, nevertheless, it still has to reflect, by its very own nature, certain cultural notions and concepts” (p. 67). Nida concurs that (1994, p. 157 as cited in Farghal, 2015) “words only have meaning in terms of the culture in which they are used, and although languages do not determine culture, they certainly tend to reflect a society’s beliefs and practices” (p. 92).
Newmark (1988) differentiates between cultural, universal and personal language. He maintains that words such as ‘door’, ‘eat’, and ‘car’ are universals and, therefore, do not pose a problem for the translator. Personal language refers to the language or speech of one individual at a particular period in life. ‘Monsoon’, ‘Steppe’, ‘dacha’, ‘tagliatelle’, ‘tagine’ are all cultural words belonging to the cultural repertoire of a language. In this regard, Nikcevic-Batricev (2008) comments that “Probably the most difficult problem the translators encounter while dealing with culture-bound texts is the translation of the word referred to as culture-specific or culture-bound” (p. 67).

Culture-bound texts are texts with features deeply embedded in the source culture. They are regarded as a verbal receptacle through which different cultures express and preserve their cultural heritage. Snell-Hornby (1988, p. 41, as cited in Leppihalme, 1997) points out that “the translatability of a text depends on the extent to which the text is ‘embedded in its own specific culture’ and also on how far apart, with regard to time and place, the ST and TT receivers are” (p. 4).

Transferring culture-bound texts into a target language requires that translators have a high level of cultural awareness. “To be truly bicultural means to perceive in a unique way the signs, symbols and even taboos of both cultures; to pick up signals even at a subconscious level; and to share in the collective unconscious.” (Landers, 2001, p. 77). In short, Biculturalism is a critical prerequisite for the successful transfer of the cultural content. To achieve this feat, Farghal and Almanna (2015) hold:

The translator should be an insider in both the SLC and TLC while dealing with culture-bound expressions. In other words, she or he needs to be an insider in the source culture using his or her knowledge to understand the SL culture-bound expression on the one hand, and be an insider in the target culture to record such an experience of the world in the TL. (p. 95)
Newmark (1988) classifies culture-bound concepts into eight categories. He considers all cultures to be essentially equal and calls upon translators to treat all cultural categories with due respect:

Table 2. Newmark’s cultural categories

| 1. Ecology | Flora, fauna, winds, plains |
| 4. Organizations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts | (a) Political and administrative (b) Religious: ‘dhrama’, ‘karma’, ‘sufi’ (c) Artistic |
| 5. Gestures and habits | ‘cock a snook’, ‘spitting’ |

Hofstede (2010), on the other hand, conceptualizes culture as a set of overlapping mental programs. Hofstede (2010) states that “we unavoidably carry several layers of mental programming within ourselves, corresponding to different levels of culture” (p, 18):
- A national level according to one’s country
- A regional and/or ethnic and/or religious and/or linguistic affiliation level
- A gender level
- A generation level, associated with education opportunities and with a person’s occupation or profession
- For those who are employed, organizational, departmental, and/or corporate levels according to the way employees have been socialized by their work organization

It is generally true that cross-cultural differences are steadily decreasing due to advances in communication technology. Today, we live a globalized world where business transactions and communication occur on virtual platforms supported by the Internet. Social media and Web 2.0 technologies make it easy for people belonging to different cultural blocks to interact and share personal experiences. In such a globalized world, powerful cultures have the political and economic leverage to export their worldview to the rest of the world. It is estimated that
English is the most widely published language in the world. According to the latest available statistics from UNESCO, the UK, the US, Canada, and Australia combined publish an average of 400,000 English language books per year (Crystal, 2012).

These culture-bound expressions are commonly found in works of literature and are used strategically to perform an aesthetic function. A literary translator is faced with two types of challenges. First, the SL expressions need to be unpacked and reassembled in a way that shows a complete understanding of the SL term or expression. Second, rendering the culture-bound term or expression requires the choice of a local strategy that can minimize the inevitable cultural loss. Deciding not to render the cultural nuances embedded in some vocabulary items may cause no harm to the overall meaning of the text. But the translator may eventually fall short of his primary task a ‘courier of culture’ (Landers, p.72).

2.4. Literary Translation

Since the 1960s, literary translation has undergone important changes in attitudes. The world has become increasingly connected and translated books were one way for countries to engage in cultural exchange. Second, many great books are translated versions of original works which were originally conceived by writers from other countries. The notable success of these books paved the way for the unanticipated popularity of literary translators. Third, the prevailing scientific mindset in Europe prompted many scholars to put the process of translation under a microscope. The result of this new perspective is the conception of a new discipline, spurring a rapid increase in the numbers of scholars, university courses, institutions, conferences and learned journals dedicated to the vigorous study of the theory and practice (Classe, 2000).

Even-Zohar (1990) made valuable contributions to literary translation. He posed a new set of questions. His questions were intended to move the debate away from traditional notions of translation which regarded it as a copy of an original. He set out to investigate the correlations between translated works and the target system and the role of
translated literature in both enriching and changing the dominant literary canon.

Even-Zohar ushered in a new era for translation studies where the “notion of translation as a crucial instrument of literary renewal was a very radical one, and one which traditional literary history had tended to downplay” (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1998, p. 126). The work of Even-Zohar put western literary works on an equal footing with literatures from other cultures. That being said, the prevalent attitude toward literary translation and translated books prior to the 80s was not a favorable one.

The conventional approach to literary translation, then, starts from the assumption that translations are not only second-hand reproductions, but also generally second-rate, and hence not worth too much serious attention. In other words, a translation is regarded as merely a stepping-stone to an original work, and “Translators are rarely regarded as more than industrious intermediaries, running messages between two national literatures” (Hermans, 1985, p. 8).

Today, the status of literary translators has come a long way. Landers (2001) maintains that “although glory is unlikely to attach to a translator’s name, for better or worse he or she is now recognized as part of the literary world.” (P. 5). Wright (2016) writes: There is a generational move toward an image of the translator as an intellectual figure empowered with agency and sensibility who produces knowledge by curating cultural encounters. Translators have certainly become more visible. They are generally given credit for their work in newspapers and journals and are articulate in their protest when they are not (p.3).

It is worth noting that the social status of the target language determines the destiny of a translated book. Regardless of its literary merits, a book translated into a language other than English may not reach a wider audience, and hence be consigned to oblivion. Landers (2001) comments that “English is a prestige language, especially in developing countries, and writers are very cognizant of the role that translation into English plays in making their works known beyond their own linguistic boundaries.” (p.6)
Creativity is indeed what separates literary translation from other forms of translation. “Of all forms that translation takes – such as commercial, financial, technical, scientific, advertising, etc. – only literary translation lets one consistently share in the creative process.’ (Landers, 2001, p. 4). In addition, literary translators enjoy a higher degree of latitude. “More than in other branches of the translator’s art such as legal, technical/ scientific, financial/ commercial, or in interpretation (simultaneous or consecutive), literary translation entails an unending skein of choices’ (Landers, 2001, p.9).

The concerns of literary translators are not only limited to the transfer of aesthetic features from a source text into a target text. Decisions have to be made regarding the rendition of cultural features of the ST. Some cultural elements of the ST are usually sacrificed and rewritten to conform to the cultural norms of the TTC. Lefevere (2016) writes:

Translation is, of course, a rewriting of an original text. All rewritings, whatever their intention, reflect a certain ideology and a poetics and as such manipulate literature to function in a given society in a given way. The history of translation is the history also of literary innovation, of the shaping power of one culture upon another. (p. vii)

The interplay between translation and culture can be seen in three areas: translation as rewriting, translation and gender and translation and postcolonialism. Lefevere maintains that a predetermined set of criteria controls the production, reception and rejection of literary texts. Translation, in this sense, is regarded as a fraudulent act governed by people who have a hidden agenda. As a result, literary translation is submitted to a process of mutation and reconstruction motivated by ideological motives.

2.5. Translation Strategies

Chesterman (2016) defines a translation strategy as “a potentially conscious procedure for the solution of a problem which an individual is faced with when translating a text segment from one language into
another” (p. 91). A translation strategy is goal-oriented and problem-centered. “It seems reasonable to assume that it is mainly at the problem points that translators have recourse to strategies, as ways of overcoming temporary hitches in the translation process” (Chesterman, 2016, p. 87).

Translation strategies can be divided into two types: global strategies and local strategies. To use Schreiber’s terminology (1993 as cited in Dukate, 2009), “General translation strategies are applied to the whole of the text and partial strategies only to certain elements or units of the text” (p. 77).

Global strategies (aka Comprehension strategies) relate to the preliminary stages of the translation process. At this level, a number of questions need to be answered. For example, what is the text type and genre? What is the target readership? What are the purpose and the function of the ST? Local strategies (aka production strategies) refer to a set of solutions intended to compensate for linguistic differences between the source and target text.

Translation shifts are a commonly used term to denote local or partial strategies. There is a difference between obligatory and optional shifts. Obligatory shifts are used between asymmetrical translation units and optional shifts are resorted to by the translator in order to align the source text with the cultural, stylistic norms of the target text (Bakker, Koster & Van Leuven-Zwart, 2001).

Basic translation information can be fed to the translator through a translation brief. A translation brief stipulates the scope of the project, the language combinations, the deadlines and priorities, the source files and the reference materials. In this regard, Hatim and Mason (1997, p. 11 as cited in Farghal & Almanna, 2015) point out that “translators’ choices are constrained by the brief for the job which they have to perform, including the purpose and status of the translation and the likely readership and so on” (p. 15).
2.6. Classification

A number of classifications have been proposed to capture the totality of the translation strategies. The most celebrated typologies have been put forward by Vinay and Darbelnet (1958). Since then, other scholars have applied new labels to the same procedures. Below is a summary of the most-known translation strategies.

Table 3. Typologies of translation strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scholars</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E. Nida (1964)</td>
<td>Change of order</td>
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<td>Omission</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Change of structure</td>
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<td>Addition</td>
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<td>J.C. Catford (1965)</td>
<td>Level shifts</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Category shifts: ‘structure shifts’, ‘class shifts’, ‘Unit shifts or rank shifts’, ‘intrasystem shifts’</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. L. Malone (1988)</td>
<td>Matching: (equation versus substitution)</td>
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<td>Zigzagging: (divergence versus convergence)</td>
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<td>Recrescence: (amplification versus reduction)</td>
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<td>Repackaging: (diffusion versus condensation)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reordering</td>
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<td>M. Baker (1992/2011)</td>
<td>Translation by a more general word (Superordinate)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Translation by a more neutral/less expressive word</td>
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<td>Translation by cultural substitution</td>
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<td>Translation by paraphrase using a related word</td>
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<td>Translation by paraphrase using unrelated words</td>
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<td>Translation by omission</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Translation by illustration</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Chesterman (1997, 2016)</td>
<td>syntactic: Literal translation, loan, calque, transposition, unit shift, phrase structure change, clause structure change, cohesion change, level shift, scheme change</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Semantic: synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, converses, abstraction change, distribution change, emphasis change, distribution change, emphasis change,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pragmatic: cultural filtering, explicitness change, information change, interpersonal change, illocutionary change, coherence change, partial translation, visibility change, transediting, other pragmatic changes.</td>
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</table>
2.7. Domestication and Foreignization Strategies

In general usage, the word manipulation denotes an insidious scheme designed to deceive. In translation, manipulation has double meanings. First, textual features can be changed or skewed to achieve certain ideological goals. In this sense, manipulation is seen as an unethical strategy. Second, manipulating a text in order to achieve some form of textual equivalence is viewed in a positive light (Dukate, 2019).

A much-debated issue in translation involves the distinction between domestication and Foreignization. Domestication is “a translation strategy which aims to present the reader with a translation free from any foreign or exotic elements from the source culture, giving the reader the impression that he or she is reading an original work.” In the regard, Venuti (2008) declares:

- A translated text, whether prose or poetry, fiction or nonfiction, is judged acceptable by most publishers, reviewers and readers when it reads fluently, when the absence of any linguistic or stylistic peculiarities makes it seem transparent, giving the appearance that the translation is not in fact a translation, but the original. (p.1)

In fact, domestication is a misnomer. It is an umbrella term that covers a wide range of strategies whose primary aim is to manipulate the source text to fit ideological and/or political agenda. Venuti (2013) clearly describes this manipulative act as an interpretation, reconstruction and reinvention of the source message according to “different sets of values and always variable according to different languages and cultures.” (p. 13). Venuti (2008) regards this autonomous creation of a ST as an act of violence:

- The violence of translation resides in its very purpose and activity: the reconstruction of the foreign text in accordance with values, beliefs, and representations that pre-exist in the target language, always configured in hierarchies of dominance and marginality, always determining the production, circulation and reception of texts. (p. 14)
Lefevere (1992) succinctly summarizes this general tendency by saying that “the ideology dictates the basic strategy the translator is going to use and therefore also dictates solutions to problems concerned with both the universe of discourse expressed in the original and the language the original itself is expressed” (p. 41).

Foreignization is the exact antithesis of domestication. The former is “a translation strategy whereby a TT is produced which deliberately breaks target conventions by retaining something of the foreignness of the original” (Dukate, 2009, p.77). This strategy dates back to Friedrich Schleiermacher’s notion of a translation method that foregrounds the linguistic and cultural differences of the source text.

The dominant translation strategy in the west (esp. in the US and UK) has been” to suppress differences through assimilation or to marginalize them through neglect” (Venuti, 2013, p. 2). Schleicher and Berman argue that the foreignness of the source text should remain unchanged in the translation process. Translators, therefore, ought to adhere closely to the textual feature that produce this foreignizing effect. Foreignisation (aka naturalization) aims above all to counteract the violence perpetrated against marginalized cultures.

The unfortunate victim of this sort of violence is the Arabic culture. Carbonell (1996 as cited in Faiq, 2004) explains that “manipulation through translation not only violates the Arabic original but also leads to the influencing of the target readers and their views of the source culture and its people” (p.4). The orientalist view of the Arabs and their cultures still linger in the subconscious of the westerner. Books and translations that perpetuate this orientalist representation of the Arabic culture are extensively commercialized and enjoy a high status in the western markets (Faiq, 2009).

3. Methods
3.1. Corpus

The source text is an Arabic novel entitled Like a Summer Never to Be Repeated. It is a captivating and highly experimental story based loosely around the author’s own life in Egypt as a Moroccan student
and visiting intellectual. The story is set in Cairo from the heady days of the 1950s and 1960s. The narrator, Hammad, spells out the minute details of his life as a young man caught between his corporal desires and intellectual musings. The story culminates in the protagonist turning into a renowned intellectual completely engrossed in the Arab life and culture.

Exploring themes of change, the role of culture in society, memory, and writing, in a text that combines narrative fiction with literary criticism, philosophical musings, and quotation, Like a Summer Never to Be Repeated is among the most innovative works of modern Arabic literature and a testimony to Mohammed Berrada’s position as a leading pioneer (AUC press).

3.2. Source Text Writer

Mohammed Berrada (born 1938 in Rabat) is a Moroccan novelist, literary critic and translator writing in Arabic. He is considered one of Morocco's most important modern authors. From 1976 to 1983, Berrada was the president of Morocco's writers union. He teaches Arab literature at the faculté des lettres of the Mohammed V University in Rabat. He is a member of the advisory board of the Moroccan literary magazine Prologue. Berrada belonged to a literary movement that wanted to experiment with new techniques of writing (what Moroccan critics call attajrib (experimentation). The text does not give much weight to the plot and is written in independent scenes, images, thoughts and portraits. In the field of language, dialects take on an important role, such as Fassi (the dialect of Fez) together with wordplay and allusions (Philips, 2009).

3.3. Translator

Christina Phillips has a PhD in modern Arabic literature. She lives in London and is currently pursuing postdoctoral research in modern Arabic narrative and poetry. She is the translator of Naguib Mahfouz’s Morning and Evening Talk (AUC Press, 2007).

At the end of the book, Phillips (2009) includes a translator’s note in which she reveals her attitude toward literary translation:
“In terms of translation, Like a Summer, with its variety of styles and often abstract language, posed something of a challenge. Nevertheless, it has been my great pleasure to work on this unusual and highly experimental text. Literary translation is always, in the end, interpretation, and I can only hope that my interpretation does justice to the original” (p. 181).

3.4. Patronage

The translation is commissioned by the American University in Cairo Press. The AUC press is the Middle East’s leading English-language academic book publisher. Its mission statement centers around bridging the cultural gap between East and the Middle East:

Drawing on an international author and editor community, the AUC Press publishes—in both digital and print formats—reviewed scholarly books, fiction, Arabic teaching books, Egypt-focused books, and general interest publications. The Press currently produces up to 80 new books each year, and maintains a backlist of some 800 titles mainly for distribution worldwide through Oxford University Press (North America) and I.B. Tauris (rest of world, excluding North America). It also operates six bookstores in Cairo, including a flagship store in Tahrir Square.

3.5. Data Collection

The data constitutes segments extracted from a literary text. The ST is a novel written by a Moroccan writer known throughout the Arab world. Given its position in the literary canon of the Arabic literature, the book stands as an ideal candidate for the purposes of the present paper.

The segments are selected based on the density of the cultural markers embedded in the SL. The size of the data is commensurate with the objectives of this study. In this regard, Gabriela and O’Brien (2013) write:

It is not always possible to analyze very large data sets. Also, the nature of the data collected in translation research – for
example, written or spoken linguistic data, behavioral data, narratives – compared with the natural sciences, means that automatic analysis is challenging and not always desirable. This, in turn, tends to restrict the amount of data analyzed. (p. 22)

3.6. Unit of Analysis

Gabriela and O’Brien (2013) point out that “an important question to ask about the data to be collected and analyzed pertains to the unit of data. Newmark (1988,) also notes that “the only unit of translation is the text, and that almost any deviation from literal translation can be justified in any place by appealing to the text as an overriding authority” (p. 68).

To adequately analyze the linguistic and lexical shifts in the target text, it is critically important to quote the context and co-text of the cultural elements under study. Therefore, 34 segments ranging from sentences to short paragraphs form the units of analysis. In this respect, Gabriela and O’Brien (2013) write:

Another important concept is the unit of analysis. The unit of data might be at the micro-level of text and, while a researcher might analyze text in general, it is quite likely that the unit of analysis will be further broken down into measurable concepts such as lexical items, sentences, clauses, phrases, collocations and so on. (p. 24)

3.7. Text Analysis

For the purposes of this study a qualitative approach is adopted: comparative text analysis. In translation, comparative text analysis aims to identify the translation strategies employed by the translator to render the source text. A parallel text is created in which ST and TT segments are arranged in a table. Local strategies and procedures go by many names and labels. Because of their overlap and volume, data analysis will be based on a limited number of procedures subsumed under domestication strategies and Foreignization strategies:
Domestication strategies | Foreignization strategies
---|---
Compensation | Literal translation
Paraphrase | Borrowing
reduction / expansion | Notes and glosses
Descriptive / cultural / Functional equivalent | Through-translation
Synonymy | |

Target cultural markers of the present study include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural markers</th>
<th>Number of occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metaphors</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proverbs</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idiomatic expressions</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colloquialism/ vernacular</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Names</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marked collocation</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural references</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simile and symbolism</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binomials</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swear words</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literary allusions</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious allusions</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Results

The analysis of the TT segments reveals that the translator has relied on two main strategies: literal translation and cultural equivalent to use Newmark’s terminology. Other strategies include: addition, deletion, transference (calque). It can also be noticed that the translator is not consistent in her treatment of the culture-bound items. The results below show a balance between the use of domesticating and foreignizing strategies.

Table 4. Comparative analysis results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural markers</th>
<th>Domestication</th>
<th>Foreignization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metaphors</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proverbs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idioms</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colloquialism/ vernacular</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Names</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Discussion

The main thrust of the present study is to evaluate the dominant translation strategies employed in the English rendition of *Like a Summer Never to be Repeated* by Mohamed Berrada. Venuti’s model of domestication and foreignization is used as the theoretical framework for this study. Identifying the dominant translation strategy can help discern the degree of cultural mediation and/or manipulation in the target text.

Analyzing over 60 cultural-bound terms, I have found that the translator has adopted a combination of domestication and foreignization strategies. 50.82% of the culturemes in the source text segments are domesticated and 49.28% of them are rendered using foreignizing strategies.

It is argued that foreignization strategies ought to be used to promote intercultural mediation and to minimize cultural manipulation. Based on this premise, it can be said that the translator has been fairly successful in raising awareness of the source text culture. It is neither feasible nor desirable to foreignize all aspects of the source text as this may yield a target text that is impossible to understand.

During the analysis of the data, a number of unjustified deviations from the source text are observed. In one segment, for instance, the translator provides no historical reference to Abd al-Karim al-Khatabi who is
simply presented as a regular person. In the source text, Abd al-Karim al-Khatabi is introduced as a political leader and a poet. The translator unjustifiably chose to obliterate the identity of the aforementioned personality. This mistranslation may be attributed to the following factors,
1. The translator tries to manipulate the source text for political or ideological reasons.
2. The translator probably misunderstands the intended message of the source text, which leads to a mistranslation.

In another segment, the translator opts for functional equivalence to render a religious allusion. The translator inserted the word ‘barbarism’ which has no trace in the source text. This addition is quite unjustifiable and may raise a few eyebrows. It is worth noting that this suspicious usage of the word reeks of orientalist discourse. To add an ideologically loaded word which does not exist in the original text is an irresponsible act and may be interpreted by some critics as an extreme case of text manipulation.

In the final analysis, the target text exhibits signs of both manipulation and cultural mediation. This small-scale study does not intend to assess the quality of the translation. Rather, it attempts to yield useful insights into how cultural mediation and manipulation can be realized. Much of what is observed in this study is of an exploratory nature, generalizing from a limited amount of data. Clearly, more data is needed to further research the role of translation in promoting cross-cultural understanding.

References


Philips, C. (2009). Like a summer never to be repeated. New York, the US: the American University in Cairo Press


