Cross-Cultural Transference in Translation: Translator Preferences in Translating Cultural Elements from Turkish to English in *Madonna in a* Fur Coat By Sabahattin Ali

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Abstract

This study aims at examining the translation process of culture specific items (CSI) in Sabahattin Ali's Kürk Mantolu Madonna (1943) and English translation entitled Madonna in a Fur Coat (2016) in a descriptive manner. To achieve this primary aim, the researchers have classified the cultural elements in the source text according to Javier Franco Aixelá's (1996) 'Categorization of Culture-specific Items' and analyzed the samples according to the taxonomies proposed by Franco Aixelá's (1996) for the translation of culture-specific items. In order to set a general framework, the analysis has focused upon the answers of the questions that; which procedures and strategies are used by the translators in the process of transferring the culture-specific items from the source language into the target language; which translation procedures of Javier Aixelá's are used more or less frequently by the translators; and which one of the translation strategies suggested by Venuti is generally referred to by these strategies; either domestication or foreignization. Besides, to what extent the otherness of Turkish culture has been recreated in the English translation of Kürk Mantolu Madonna according to the dominance of either of these strategies has also been clarified. Consequently, the general approach of the translators who have transferred the novella into the target language will be detected by the researchers. Likewise, a number of translation strategies necessary to deal with the translation of CSIs have also been illustrated; and also some categorization types of those CSIs to be employed during the classification process of cultural elements in the literary texts have been presented.

Keywords:
Madonna in a fur coat
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1. Introduction

Translation, from all aspects, is a primary professional branch in itself as well as being an academic activity in the globalized world of this era. It can be regarded as a multicultural activity of socialization employed in developing communication among the communities, enhancing the languages, and sometimes prospering the ranges of literary genres. Within this scope, has it been lately regarded not only as an independent activity; it is seen as an interdisciplinary and multifaceted literary field, as well. Moreover, the study field of translation, accepted as an interdisciplinary field of 'translation studies', is actually, approved as a somewhat new academic discipline (Even-Zohar (1981); Toury (1995), Gentzler (2014), Nida&Taber (1969). This newly introduced discipline was founded by James Holmes in the 1970s. In his seminal paper conveyed in the Translation Section of the Third International Congress of Applied Linguistics, in Copenhagen, James S.

Holmes (1988) has assumed that this discipline 'has two main objectives: (1) to describe the phenomena of translating and translation(s) as they manifest themselves in the world of our experience, and (2) to establish general principles by means of which these phenomena can be explained and predicted'.

Notwithstanding the theories of translation going back to Cicero, when the scholars and researchers leaning over the translation field highlights the art of translation, James S. Holmes (1988) differed from the other scholars and researchers as he points to an in-depth and systematized structure of targets for translation. Additionally, he made the study prominent before the others and expressed what translation studies necessarily cover. In the progress of time, the studies on the art of translation have developed and increased rapidly and established offering extensive and effective multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research areas for translation researchers and scholars. As a consequence, the number of 'specialized translating and interpreting courses at both undergraduate and postgraduate level' increased in the universities all around the world. There has been a proliferation of conferences, books and journals on translation in many languages' (J.Munday, p. 6).

As a natural outcome of this soaring process, translation has begun to be regarded as a main academic and professional field in this century. It has also been assumed by the scholars that translation is both independent and interdisciplinary study and field of practice in this globalized world. These features mentioned in the introductory sentences of the literature part refer to the multi-dimensions of the translation study. However, before examining the relationship between the concepts mentioned above, it would be favorable to have a look at the various definitions of translation from different perspectives. Thus, these descriptions can help us grasp of the nature of the study more comprehensively.

2. Theoretical Background

Translation is a field of study for which aiming at determining on a strict and specific definition is useless. It would be favorable to examine some sorts of explanations of the scholars so as to understand the translation study in a broad perspective. As regarded as one of the prominent definitions, translation is an incredibly broad notion which can be understood in many different ways. For example, one may talk of a translation as a process or a product, and identify such subtypes as literary translation, technical translation, subtitling and machine translation; moreover, while more typically it just refers to the transfer of written texts, the term sometimes also includes interpreting (Shuttleworth and Cowie, 1997). As a pointer to this fact, various descriptions have been made over the term from different viewpoints. Brislin (1976) for example, describes the transfer as the thoughts and ideas from one language (source) to another (target), whether the languages are in written or oral form or whether one or both languages are based on signs. According to Salevsky (1993), translation is a situation-related and function-oriented complex series of acts for the production of a target text, intended for addressees in another culture/language, on the basis of a given source text. Translation is also clarified as any utterance which is presented or regarded as a 'translation' within a culture, on no matter what grounds (Toury, 1995; quoted in Pöchhacker, 2004).

All of the scholars have approached the translation field of study from their points of views and have created their own definitions pointing to specific aspects of the subject. As Pöchhacker (2004) also underlines, when taking all of the points presented into considerations, it would be prominent to have some common features dealt by the scholars and if it is to be summarized, there are some basic conceptual ingredients contained in the various definitions of translation:

- an activity consisting (mainly) in
- the production of texts which are
- presumed to have a similar meaning and/or effect
- as previously existing texts
- in another language and culture.

The multi-facets of the translation and its close relationship with other disciplines prominently points to the intertwining relationship between the translation and culture. Wittgenstein (1958) states that, 'The limits of my language are the limits of my world'. According to him, language, as one of the parts of the cultural core unit, is one of the closest partners of the culture itself. What people do through language such as plays, songs, poetry, and narrative can all be created thanks to the content of the culture; since they are already the outputs of culture. It is assumed form his words that the cultural works owe much to the language in order to be a norm of the society; and the language also owes too much to the culture so as to have the material to convey it to the next generations. From this perspective, this study also tries to make an examination and analysis of the relationship between the language and culture on the base of translation studies.

Just in this context of interdisciplinary relation of translation, many researchers, in this area, have put forward some ideas which can be regarded in the similar category with this study enlightening the readers in terms of the close interaction between the culture and translation inside the literary texts. One of those is Hatim's (1997) which leans over the culture in audio-visual translation. The cultural elements' translation process in audio-visual materials is examined here. According to the scholar, the interpreter as the

communicator between the readers asserts that the distinction of the subjects into literary and non-literary, technical and non-technical useless and misleading fallacious. Instead of examining these differences in details, the researcher focuses on what common point exists between these distinctions. The suggested model is clarified in a series of case studies, from legal texts to poems, each of which deals with one specific characteristics of text constitution. The study may enlighten the readers from the literal aspects to the act of transferring the cultural items. The idea is advocated by B. Hatim and I. Mason (1997) in that, the role of the translator as a mediator is not only rendering words but also overcoming the incompatibilities which stand in the way of the transfer of meaning.

Toury (1995) supports the idea concluded from the study above by asserting that "being a translator cannot be reduced to the mere generation of utterances which would be considered 'translations' within any disciplines."

From the aspect of cultural elements, it is also worth to point to Newmark. He (1988) has also been one of those scholars taking the cultural items into consideration as one of the vital factors during the translation process. Newmark (1988) points to the impossibility of the successful transference process without considering the cultural items as the milestones of the process.

On the other hand, the studies related to the strategies and procedures used during the transference of cultural items have a long list indeed. One of the first studies on categorizing translation strategies are the ones, belonging to J.P.Vinay and Jean Darbelnet (1995-2000) who were able to order the alternatives of the strategies, displayed an impressive array of possible translation strategies. The scholars, strangely, did not put one of the common techniques, such as generalization, which is regarded as debatable by various scholars. The classification of translation strategies in the present study is inevitably similar to that of Leppihalme (1994). But since every scholar has a different perspective towards translation of CSIs, the researchers made some additions especially for the classification of CSI model of Aixelá's (1996).

One of the pioneers of the field, Venuti (1998) assumes that translation strategies "involve the basic tasks of choosing the foreign text to be translated and developing a method to translate it." He opts for utilizing "domesticating" and "foreignizing" terms for clarifying the strategies from the general point of view (Venuti, 1998). The concepts of domesticating and foreignizing which are regarded as the basic references of the field have been advocated and criticized by a great many scholars afterwards. The terms have been regarded as the poles of the translation strategies in the literary world. Many utterances are networked around them while determining the perspectives of the translators, thus the researchers also took these terms as the cornerstones in order to separate the strategies and determine the general approach of the interpreters.

Chesterman (1997) listing the characteristics of the strategies also explains how to apply them. He notes that the classification of translation strategies can be formed according to one common criterion: change something. In his points, Chesterman (1997) does not indicate to the substituting of items in the source text by their equivalents as the only strategy for transference; that is, he points that substitution should not be the only task of a translator and it is not adequate.

In Hans Vermeer's (2000) Skopos Theory, which also handles the issue of transference of CSIs, cultural items are transferred according to the aim of translation. The purpose of the translation process shapes the act of translation. This idea is related to Gayatri Spivak's (1993) asserts indicating that focusing on the cultural studies during the last a few decades it is clearly seen that the ideology and beliefs of colonizers influenced the pattern of how are the texts of colonized countries to be translated. It also explains how the aim of transference leads its output in the head.

Upon discussing the scholars and their views based on their studies on the translation process and its integral part cultural items as a vital concept, it is regarded as useful to mention about the purpose of the study which is to analyze translation strategies based on Aixelá's taxonomy (1996). The present study bears some applications such as determining the cultural items, analyzing the transference process of the cultural items by using the strategies, describing the situation of otherness of the source cultures in the target culture, and determining the macro strategy referred by the micro strategies.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the translation process of culture-specific items in translating Turkish novel, *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*, into English. The theoretical backdrop for the study includes Javier Aixelá's (1996) *Classification of Culture-Specific Items* and *Strategies for Translation of Culture-Specific Items*. Through this analysis, the researchers will be answering the following questions posed:

- Which micro-strategies proposed by Aixelá (1996) have been used in the translation of CSIs in Ali's *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*?
- Which macro-strategies proposed by Venuti (1995) has been predominantly used during the transference of CSIs in *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*; domestication or naturalization? To what extent has the otherness of Turkish culture been recreated in the English translation of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* according to the dominance of either of these strategies?
- What probable motives and reasons have led the translators to employ the related micro/macro strategies during the transference of CSIs in *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*?

The study discusses the translator decisions or preferences while making the translation of the cultural elements in the literary work. It analyzes which methods and strategies are employed during the transference of cultural components in the literary work. Having a universal dignity, Sabahattin Ali represents an important role in contributing the development of Turkish literature. Accordingly, in terms of enlightening readers about the cross cultural transference process, the analysis and presentation of his works, together with the codes of Turkish culture, is of great significance. Since it harbors the favored translation strategies and seeks for the equivalence of the cultural elements through the analysis at the same time, it can be regarded as a comprehensive and qualitative study. In this context, the study has a great importance in sense of that it serves as guidance for the translators by clarifying how the translators convey the meaning of the cultural elements into the target language and presenting the strategies employed to their attentions.

Since the current study will be a qualitative research based upon analyzing the translation process of cultural elements of the literary work; *Madonna in a Fur Coat*, it will constitute the major theme and the context of the study as the findings and result. It is assumed that the analysis of the transference process of the cultural elements from source culture into target culture will enable the researchers to see; which translation strategies of Aixelá's are used more or less frequently and, what sorts of macro translation strategies suggested by Venuti are used as a general strategy during the translation process. It also enables the readers to see to what extent has the otherness of Turkish culture been recreated in the English translation of *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* according to the dominance of either of these strategies. The study also presents the readers with various sorts of useful suggestions and recommendations as strategies which would work for them during their translation works.

3. Method

This study concerns with the CSIs as the data analysis. Hence, it is a descriptive qualitative research. The data for this study was derived from the work *Madonna in a Fur Coat* by Sabahattin Ali. 169 CSIs have been selected from the work. This work has been used; because it has really a good number of authentic CSIs indigenous to source and target cultures, it is a significant novella which is very well-known in Turkey and which has been the best sellers in Turkey for years. Besides, it also has had very good positive reviews from all over the world. In this study, a documentation method was employed. The data collection was applied through data analysis.

First of all, it should be clarified that during the analysis of the translation process of the novel *Madonna in a Fur Coat*, the 169 CSIs in the novella together with their counterparts in the translated version have been detected and listed by classifying them according to their categories. The CSIs have been analyzed under the following categorization headings:
• Proper nouns (personal names, geographical designations, names of institutions and catering facilities, other names (book titles, names of ships, newspapers, brands of cigarettes, drinks, guns, etc.)
• Common expressions/nouns (titles and terms of address, food and drinks, legal terms, units of measurement, etc.)

It is noteworthy that the CSIs in the source text have been classified depending on whether they are proper nouns or common expressions/nouns; and the ones which are not regarded in these categories have been grouped under the following titles which are compiled from the categorization styles of other scholars.
• Socio-Political Concepts
• Religious References
• Idioms/Slang/Metaphor
• Everyday Life Objects

The translator preferences during translating cultural elements from Turkish into English in *Madonna in a Fur Coat* have been examined and analyzed, as well. Since the gap between the cultures existing in the literary texts is significant to some extent, there would be a great many instances to be clarified. That is, the study has focused on the categorized items and examined them by detecting the translation strategies employed in order to transfer these CSIs. In this context, the preferences of the translators have been analyzed under the following groups.
Conservation Strategies
- repetition/borrowing
- orthographic adaptation (only changes in the written form)
- linguistic [non-cultural/literal] translation,
- extratextual gloss (transference + explanation in the footnote)
- intratextual gloss (transference + explanation inside the text)

Substitution Strategies
- synonymy
- universalization (replacement with another common noun)

- naturalization (replacement with cultural equivalent)
- deletion/omission
- autonomous/lexical creation

Later on, when the preferences of the translators are examined and the strategies are detected according to the titles above, another goal is reached by determining which macro translation strategy of Venuti's is generally signaled or referred to by the strategies used by the translators; domestication or foreignization? Finally, the possible and reasons leading the translators to use the related strategies are clarified in the conclusion part of the study.

4. Findings and Discussion

The CSIs in the source (Turkish) text and target text were detected and categorized according to groups of *proper nouns, common expressions, socio-political concepts, religious references, idioms/slang/metaphor,* and *everyday life objects* to be analyzed in order to find out the translation strategies applied and to find the frequencies of translation strategies in the CSIs. Besides, the general translation approach of the translators is also revealed. The process is applied in a descriptive way and the frequency values of the CSIs and strategies are presented in the tables.

Table-1. The statistics of the frequency of the CSIs used in the novella according to the categorization of the cultural items

Proper Nouns	Common Expressions/Nouns	Socio-political Concepts	Religious References	Idioms/Slang/Metaphor	Total
23 items	62 items	5 items	17 items	62 items	169 items

Source: Taken from the Ph.D. thesis study by Hakan Hilmi DEMİREL.

Firstly, it is important to present that the same two or more consecutive CSIs are counted just for once. Table 1 shows that 169 CSIs are detected by the researchers while examining the novella. From 169 CSIs, 23 items are regarded in the category of proper nouns; 62 items are regarded in the common expressions/nouns category; 5 of them point to socio-political concepts; 17 of them is under the title of religious references; and finally 62 of the CSIs are grouped in the idioms/slang/metaphor category.

4.1. Analysis of the Cultural Elements According to the Aixelá's 'Translation Strategies for Culture Specific Items'

The CSIs are examined on the basis of which translation strategies are employed and how often they are used. In the table below, the statistical data pointing to the variety of the strategies and their frequencies are presented.

Table-2. The frequency of the translation strategies

Conservation Strategies					
Borrowing (Repetition)	Orthographic Adaptation	Linguistic Translation	Extratextual Translation	Intratextual Translation	Total
15	7	61	-	1	84
Substitution Strategies					
Synonymy	Universalization	Naturalization	Deletion/ Omission	Autonomous/Lexical Creation	Total
17	22	15	14	37	105

Source: Taken from the Ph.D. thesis study by Hakan Hilmi DEMİREL.

When the Table 2 is examined, it can be seen that the number of the strategies employed during the transference process is more than the number of the CSIs analyzed. The number of the CSI is 169. It points to the fact that during the translation of some CSIs, more than one translation strategy is employed. While the examination of the transference of the items, it is observed that more than one translation strategy are employed during the translation of 20 CSIs. The percentage of the conservation and substitution strategies bears changes according to these numbers. According to the Table 2, it can be regarded that during the translation process of the novella *Madonna in a Fur Coat* the borrowing/repetition strategy is used for 15 times; orthographic adaptation strategy is used for 7 times; the strategy of linguistic/literary translation is used for 61 times, and the strategy of intratextual translation is used for one time. It is detected that the strategy of extratextual translation is not used during the translation process of the novella. Totally, translation strategies which are regarded as conservation strategies are employed for 84 times.

On the other hand, the translation strategies which are regarded as substitution strategies are employed for 104 times. According to the analysis; the strategy of synonymy is used for 19 times; the strategy of universalization is used for 21 times; the strategy of naturalization is used for 14 times; the strategy of deletion/omission is used for 15 times; and the strategy of autonomous/lexical creation is used for 35 times.

4.2. Analysis of the Translation Strategies According to Venuti's 'Foreignization/ Domestication' Strategies

First of all, it is noteworthy to clarify Aixelá's strategies and their counter parts according to Venuti's strategies. Aixelá's conservation strategies involving borr*owing, orthographic adaptation, linguistic translation, extratextual translation,* and *intratextual translation* all point to the *foreignization strategy* referred by Venuti. They are employed in order not to make so many changes in the format of the CSI s in the source text. They serve for conserving or foreignizing of the items. On the other hand, Aixelá's substitution strategies involving *synonymy, universalization, naturalization, omission,* and *autonomous creation* all point to the *domestication strategy* of Venuti. These strategies are employed so as to make some changes on the CSIs with the aim of making them more comprehensible for the target readers. They serve for substituting and domesticating of the SCIs.

Table-3. The frequency of the translation strategies

Conservation Strategies					
Borrowing (Repetition)	Orthographic Adaptation	Linguistic Translation	Extratextual Translation	Intratextual Translation	Total
15	7	61	-	1	84
Substitution Strategies					
Synonymy	Universalization	Naturalization	Deletion/ Omission	Autonomous/Lexical Creation	Total
17	22	15	14	37	105

Source: Taken from the Ph.D. thesis study by Hakan Hilmi DEMİREL.

Table 3 shows that, conservation strategies are used 84 times in total. During the transference of 15 items the SCIs are borrowed into the target text; in 7 of the items, minor orthographic changes are made; in 1 process an intratextual explanation is made in order to make the meaning clear for the readers. Finally, the most frequently used (61 times) conservation strategy is the linguistic translation. In this kind of strategy, the SCIs are transferred in a literary way without any burden of considering cultural issues. They are translated by ignoring the cultural varieties.

During the transference of the CSIs, the substitution strategies are employed for 105 times That is, 105 CSIs are substituted with the counter parts of the target culture in the target language. 17 of the CSIs are exchanged with their synonyms; 22 of them are universalized in order for the target readers from different cultural backgrounds; 15 of the CSIs are naturalized in order to abstain from the culturally incomprehensible parts in the source text; 14 of the CSIs are omitted from text completely and 37 of the CSIs are rewritten with the translators' own words in an autonomous way.

When the frequency table of the translation strategies employed during the transference of CSIs is examined, it is considered that the data obtained from the analysis point to the fact that the more strategies cluster under the *domestication strategy* pointed by Venuti (1998); the frequency value of the substitution strategies used during the transference of CSIs is 56,6 %. It is also seen in the table that fewer conservation strategies are used in the transference process; the frequency value of the CSIs is 44,4 %. It can be claimed that all the alterations or substitutions employed by the translators during the transference of CSIs point to the fact that from the general point of view the strategies employed can be clustered around the domestication strategy referred by Lawrence Venuti (1998).

5. Conclusion and Suggestions

In this study, the work *Madonna in a Fur Coat* is examined by the researchers; they listed, classified and grouped the CSIs by taking Aixelá's principles as reference. In order to answer one of the research questions: *Which micro-strategies have been used in the translation of CSIs in Ali's Kürk Mantolu Madonna?*, it can be clarified that by assigning the CSIs in the novella, the researchers also detected what sorts of strategies are employed by the translators during the transference of those classified items. In this process, the frequency tables indicating what sorts of SCIs and strategies are used in what frequency are also created and according to the data obtained from the tables; 169 CSIs in *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* and 189 translation strategies regarded under the headlines of Conservation and Substitution Strategies are detected. From 189 strategies, 105 substitution micro strategies and 84 conservation micro strategies are employed during the translation process.

And this fact has also enlightened us on answering the next research question *Which macro-strategies have been predominantly used during the transference of CSIs in Kürk Mantolu Madonna; domestication or naturalization? To what extent has the otherness of Turkish culture been recreated in the English translation of Kürk Mantolu Madonna according to the dominance of either of these strategies?* It can be asserted that at the end of the examination and the analysis process of the novella *Madonna in a Fur Coat* in terms of the translators' preferences in translating CSIs from Turkish into English, it can be deduced that the domestication macro-strategy has been generally opted by the translators as their translation approach.

It is clearly evident that, during the transference of the work, more strategies regarded as domestication strategies are employed more frequently than the foreignization strategies. It can be put forward that the

translators generally preferred bringing the work to the readers of the target language instead of bringing readers to the author; they opted for familiarizing the work to the target culture as much as possible. If it is necessary to give a rate of the part in which the *otherness of Turkish culture has been recreated*, it is 56,6 % according to the data taken from the table above. It indicates that more than fifty percent of the *otherness of Turkish culture* has been recreated in the English translation of the work. But, the analysis also indicates that the frequency proportions do not seem so far from one another (domestication 56,6 %; foreignization 44,4 %) and the strategies of conservation or substitution do not outscore the other in a significant level. But still, this fact can clearly provide us with a strong bias in terms of deciding on the domestication strategy (pointed by substitution strategies) as employed or adopted by the translators.

Finally, it can be inspirational for the readers to answer the last research question regarding the possible motives and reasons leading the translators to use the related strategies during the transference process. There may be several underlying factors affecting the translators such as translators' feeling of faithfulness to domestic literary rules, their intention of being transparent and invisible in order to decrease the foreignness of the target text, etc. In this case, the translators may feel strongly faithful to the target culture and they may want to use the domestic cultural items of the target language in order to make them comprehended by the readers easily. When it is considered that the novella is translated is into seven different languages it may be possible that the translators may want to enable the readers from different cultural backgrounds to easily understand the source text in their own cultures. They may also opt for being transparent or invisible during transference with the motive that they make the readers read the text as if it was penned in their own language. The ideological sides of translation employing the *domestication* strategy may also be discussed among the other possible motives. The translator may not want to use some CSIs in the source text because of the ideological obsessions in their minds. Likewise, political situations may also be regarded as one of the reasons leading the translators not to use some CSIs in their original cultural forms. They may act under the effects of the intercultural or international political issues and may not want to use some CSIs as they take place in the source text. These are some of the possible motives and reasons which have led the translators to employ the related micro/macro strategies during the transference of CSIs in *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*.

There have been several studies into translation criticism in recent years. In fact, some of those studies focus on the specific parts of translation such as idioms, metaphors, poetry, cultural elements etc. But, some studies that we may encounter while seeking sources for our studies may involve instances of many different elements. A general theory, which is well-organized, and encapsulating evaluation criteria for each category, will serve the translation critics in good stead. Also, in any research about translation criticism, it will be a great use to make a comparative analysis of source text and target texts if the ST has more than one translation. If it is achieved, the critic will be able to make more objective and conclusive assessments.

Further research on the next translations of the novella is recommended in order to make a comparison between the translation strategies. Besides, a similar study can also be carried out on the translations into other languages (Germany, French, Russian, İtalian, Spanish, etc.) and the strategies used in English and other languages can also be compared and contrarsted from the similar perspectives of this study. By the help of further researches, the findings and conclusions will be compared to present us more reliable and applicable translation strategies.

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