

Couplet as a Translation Procedure of *Realia* in Jordanian Novels Into Spanish: *Cuadernos del Diluvio* as a Case Study

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Abstract—Translating *realia* from Jordanian Arabic into Spanish has tremendous challenges and requires a culturally sensitive approach to preserve authenticity and contextual meaning. *Realia*, which encompass material elements of Jordanian culture, represents a rich and a complex layer of the language that goes beyond words. This study focuses on the importance of understanding the cultural and contextual nuances associated with Jordanian *realia* and offers specific strategies for its translation into Spanish. There is a real need to consider not only linguistic equivalences, but also cultural, social and emotional load of these elements in the target language to ensure full or at least enough comprehension. Through a detailed analysis of specific examples of Jordanian *realia*, (food and dress), this study shows how translators can meet the challenges of transferring these elements effectively. The decisions, taken during the translation process to maintain cultural authenticity, are explored, considering the linguistic diversity and regional nuances present in Jordanian Arabic. The need for cultural sensitivity and linguistic flexibility is emphasized to capture the essence of Jordanian *realia* in the target language without losing its underlying cultural meaning. Ultimately, this study highlights the importance of choosing the suitable procedure when translating *realia*. Based on the discussion of the selected examples to conduct the study, a couplet consisting of transliteration and footnotes is the recommended translational procedure to have a deep understanding of the source culture and the need to maintain a balance between preserving source text cultural values and accessibility for Spanish-speaking readers.

Index Terms—*realia*, transliteration, footnoting, translation, novel

I. INTRODUCTION

Translation is the process of reproducing a text written in one language by another text in another language. It can help in bridging gaps between languages and cultures and has over time contributed in transferring knowledge and thoughts between nations. There are different ways and forms of translation and this depends on text-type, the intention of the author, and the readership among other things. Translation is not only a linguistic activity but also a cultural one, where the cultural aspect forms a considerable part of the text, which should be highly considered in translation.

Culture, which is the cornerstone of this study, is defined by Burgess and Gold (2016, p. 21) as "particular ways of life whose socially constructed meanings are expressed in the widest possible range of institutions, behaviors, practices and artifacts". Terms which are culturally exclusive have been given different conceptualizations and names; cultural words (Newmark, 1988, p. 94), culture-specific concepts (Baker, 1992, p. 21), *realia* (Robinson, 1997, p. 222), culture-bound phenomena and terms or culture-specific items (Schäffner & Wiesemann, 2001, p. 32), and *culturem* (Lungu-Badea, 2004, p. 27).

In this study, the authors have chosen *realia* that reflects the material culture such as food and dress in the Jordanian novel *Cuadernos del Diluvio* (*Notebooks of Deluge*). According to Qulmamatova (2022, p. 429) *realia* is defined as "lexemes denoting objects or phenomena of material culture, ethno-national features, customs, rituals, as well as historical facts or processes and usually do not have lexical equivalents in other languages. "The concept *realia* as a plural form include according to Lewandowska (2010, p. 96) "items specific to a given cultural/linguistic community

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(clothes, money, food and beverages)". The concept *realia* was first introduced in translation studies to describe lexis with no equivalent in other languages. According to Florin (1993, p. 123),

Realia (from the Latin *realis*) are words and combinations of words denoting objects and concepts characteristics of the way of life, the culture, the social and historical development of one nation and alien to another. Since they express local and/or historical color, they have no exact equivalents in other languages. They cannot be translated in a conventional way and they require a special approach.

Most of translation scholars agree on the untranslatability of *realia* due to their culture-specific meaning in the source culture. Such scholars confirm that the *realia* are cultural linguistic terms that are identifiable for the SL¹ audience and they are relevant to their encyclopedic knowledge; when translating them into the TL, they are converted into ambiguous and insignificant terms if the wrong translation procedure is chosen. Therefore, the translator should adopt the suitable procedure to transfer *realia* into the TL to let the readers embark on the enriching cultural meaning that they have in the ST correctly. According to Kujamaki (1998), some translators opt for deleting or reducing *realia* in the TT using omission or generalization, while others try to transfer them with all their cultural and historical meaning opting for some translation strategies like transliteration and notes.

Realia are normally limited to the literary texts rather than technical ones. According to Shuttleworth (2014, p. 144),

When seeking the most appropriate strategy, the translator should seek to retain some local color without encumbering the reader with an excess of new, frequently impenetrable lexical items, and should also be mindful of the influence, whether enriching or polluting, which the new coining may exert on TL.

As most researchers in translation studies refer to *realia* as the non-equivalent lexicons, they need a special attention of the translator to transfer them adequately to the target language. According to Ischenko (2012, p. 275),

Translation of the *realia* demands the translator to be especially careful. Although we mean the notions and objects which may be accurately described and defined, while translating them into the target language, there may occur remarkable deviations and variations. It is connected with the frequency of use, the role in the language, and the household meaning; the words naming the *realia* do not have any term coloring; they do not outstand even in the most everyday content of the source text thus being usual for the source language which is the biggest difficulty for the translator.

When translationally dealing with *realia*, the translator should have enough awareness because translating from language to another can be tricky and difficult. To put that in Bagsheva-Kolevak's (2017, p. 49) words:

The translation of *realia* has always been the most difficult and 'tricky' part in translation studies. In translating *realia*, the translator has to be fluent not only in the source language, but also in the culture, history, traditions, social order, political life, national and regional specifics of the source and target languages. Insufficient awareness of these specifics can result in erroneous translations, which can fail to be perceived by the recipient or be perceived in a wrong way. The problem arises from the fact that *realia* in most cases are 'untranslatable', i.e. they do not exist and they have no linguistic counterparts in the target language.

II. METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this study is descriptive qualitative which analyzes the couplet (transliteration and footnotes) as a suitable translation procedure for *realia*. *Cuadernos del Diluvio* is a Jordanian novel where all the dialogues are written in Jordanian colloquial Arabic. The Arabic version of the novel is written by Samihah Khreis, and it is translated into Spanish by Pablo Garcia Suarez.

The theoretical data of this study is derived from books, references, articles about translation and *realia* and the illustrative examples contain foods and dresses that resemble material culture in the novel. The couplet (transliteration and footnotes) is found as the best procedure among the procedures employed in the translation of the novel when dealing with *realia*.

Vlahov and Florin (1980, p. 92) suggested two main procedures to translate *realia*. In this study, the authors follow these strategies when analyzing the translation of Jordanian *realia* into Spanish. The strategies recommended by the Bulgarian translators are the following:

- 1) Transcription or transliteration of the *realia*.
- 2) Translation of *realia* (introducing neologism, approximate translation or contextual translation like omission).

III. CUADERNOS DEL DILUVIO

Cunaderno del Diluvio (English translation: *Notebooks of Deluge*) is one of the most important works of the Jordanian novelist Samiha Khreis. This novel won Abu Al-Qasim Al-Shabi Award in the nineteenth session of 2004. The first edition of this novel was published in Amman in 2003, and the second edition was published by the Egyptian Lebanese Publishing House in Cairo in 2004. The novel handles the urban life in the Jordanian capital, Amman, in the late third decade of the last century, socially, economically, and politically. It was shown in a radio drama on Amman Radio and was directed by Nasr Al-Anani on Jordanian TV and shown in 2013.

¹ SL(source language), TL(target language), ST (Source text), TT (target text), OT (original text), SPT (Spanish Translation).

This novel is selected for the study because it is considered an excellent demonstration of Jordanian culture in general and Jordanian *realia* in particular. All the dialogues in this novel are held in Jordanian Arabic, where Jordanian *realia* are profusely used.

Novels, as literary works, can be a good example and illustration of a specific culture. In novels, writers usually express their own culture to the readers, and the expression of culture is supposed to be represented in the receptive language. Translators of novels should have enough knowledge and competence of the novelist's culture in order to successfully render the cultural implications and values to TL readers.

IV. TRANSLATION AND CULTURE

Translation is a language activity that transfers a linguistic text from one language into another with its cultural context. The culture of a specific society is reflected in the language that people employ. Language and culture are inseparable, where the former expresses the latter. According to Bassnett (2002, p. 23) "language, then, is the heart within the body of culture, and it is the interaction between the two that results in the continuation of life-energy". Translation is a fundamental way to transfer one culture to foreign audiences. Culture plays a major role in facilitating or complicating translation because such a process is not only substituting words by others in different languages, but also transmitting cultures. When translating a text, translators should have in mind its cultural context, social norms, cultural reference and cultural values. The successful translator should be conscious and aware of the cultural differences between languages to produce an effective communication. According to Deka (2020, p. 1122),

A translator is a cultural mediator, who may move from the source culture to the target culture choosing as much as he/she thinks appropriate to serve the aim of the translation. He/she translates the content and the style of the source text and introduces them into the target text. Translation is necessary for the spread of information, knowledge and ideas.

When we have more distance between the source culture and the target culture, the mission of the translator becomes more difficult and more challenging. For example, the Jordanian and the Spanish cultures are entirely different and highly distant; this complicates the mission of the translator and makes it difficult to achieve. The role of the translator crosses the linguistic borders into the cultural ones, where the translator attempts to give the TT readers the same cultural conception that the native readers get from the OT. Guo (2012, p. 343) maintains that:

Translation not only involves translator's or interpreter's linguistic competence, but also calls for the acquaintance with the respective cultures. In this sense, translation means more than merely translating the words, sentences or articles from the source language into the target language. It means also transferring between cultures.

V. COUPLET AS A TRANSLATION PROCEDURE OF *REALIA*

Realia are one of the challenges that face translators when transferring a text from one culture to another. As *realia* are culture-bound in nature, they are not easy to reflect in the receptive language. Therefore, the translator should select the most appropriate procedure to transfer them, maintaining the message that they have in the ST. Thus, the selection of the accurate procedure helps the translator to correctly transfer *realia* and makes them comprehensible to his readers. *Realia* are culture-specific terms pertaining to one culture and language; translating them by employing one procedure like literal translation converts them in insignificant words that may affect the comprehension and consistency in the TT.

As *realia* are specific to one society and very alien to another, translating them requires enough knowledge and extraordinary skills from the translator to transfer them correctly to his TL readers. They form one of the most diverse and complex challenges of translation. In the authors' point of view, and as such terms do not have full equivalents in the TT, it is recommended to transliterate them in the receptive language. As transliterating them is not enough, the translator should explain them in the TT. Notes in general and footnotes in particular are a very useful supportive method in addition to transliteration, which is termed 'couplet' by Newmark (1988). According to him, a couplet is a combination of two different procedures employed by the translator, and it is considered the most effective procedure when dealing with *realia*. Islomova (2023, pp. 1648-1649) maintains that,

The most effective way of translation for *realia* is transliteration. If the word or the text given by the transliteration is not interpreted, and not explained, the reader would not understand the description of the described events and words. When the transliterated word is described and explained in context, the meaning can be given in parentheses or explained below the text.

A. Foods

Food constitutes an essential and an integral part of people's cultural heritage and national identity. It is inherited from one generation to another with all its recipes, techniques and etiquettes, and is considered a mark or a brand of each nation. For example, pasta and pizza are brands or marks of Italy. Each nation has its regional foods, which have their special preparation method and specific ingredients, depending on its local products. Food is a living form of culture that is still practiced by people all around the world and is inseparably connected to culture; it is considered one

of the most important cultural activities that is practiced and continues to evolve each day. It is used in cultural and traditional gatherings, rituals and celebrations

Food plays a key role in shaping culture through reflecting its historical traditions and social interactions. It is nowadays an excellent symbol of cultural identity of all nations. There is a very strong link between food and cultural identity, and it is a purely socio-cultural element, which marks a specific nation.

Jordanian culture has many different foods that function as a symbol of its identity. *Mansaf*, for example, is the most famous dish that summarizes the Jordanian cuisine and Jordanian generosity. In the following examples, the authors will discuss how these material cultural elements are translated into Spanish language. The analysis will show that the task of the translator in dealing with food as a cultural element is not easy. Since the food examples in this study are *realia*, rendering them into Spanish would be of a high difficulty to comprehend on the behalf of the target language readers.

(a). *Helqum*

OT: (p. 12) الطرابلسية الى عمان لأول مره وصلت الراحة (p. 12)

SPT: El *helqum* hecho en Tripoli llegó por primera vez a Amman (p. 21). (The *Helqum* made in Tripoli arrived for the first time in Amman)

In the above example, *الراحة* is a *realia* that causes a translation challenge. What is surprising here and in the novel itself is that the novelist has used this food with two different names, which are *راحة* and *حلقوم*, although they are not interchangeably used in all Arab countries. The translator has opted for the word *helqum*, which is not used by the novelist in this example. He may have opted for this choice because *helqum* is more commonly used than *راحة* in most Arab countries, Turkey, Iran and Greece.

In the first place, the translator was not faithful when he replaced *راحة* by *helqum*, a food term that is used by the novelist. In the second place, he has wrongly footnoted *helqum* when defining it as a Syrian-Lebanese sweet. Originally, this sweet was originated in Turkey and was then spread in the Arab World during the Ottoman Empire. Besides, the translator was inaccurate when he explained the ingredients of *راحة* in the footnote as “*Sirio-Libanesecho de almidon, almáciga y pistachio y bañado en azúcar*” (a Syrian-Lebanese sweet that is made of starch, pine nuts and pistachios, and then coated with sugar).

As far as translation procedure is concerned, the translator has adopted a suitable translation procedure, which is transliteration. However, he has misguided the reader when he provided wrong details about the ingredients in the footnote. It is known in translation studies that the main function of footnoting is to provide useful explanatory details that can help the reader in understanding the source culture. Transliteration as a procedure in rendering *realia* is suitable as far as it is followed by footnotes that compensate any translation loss. Since a transliterated word may seem weird, the footnotes with explanatory information permit the TL reader to be familiar with it. Therefore, a couplet of transliteration and footnotes is a recommended procedure in order to make the ST fully comprehensible by the TL readers.

As *helqum* does not have a cultural equivalent in Spain, the translator has correctly chosen the couplet of transliteration and footnotes. Although some may consider footnotes as a disadvantage in translation because of interrupting the flow of reading, it is recommended and is indispensable when dealing with a transliterated *realia*. According to Hsieh (2015, p. 145), this couplet is often used by translators to “compensate for the cultural ignorance and/or difference in perspectives of an audience unfamiliar with the cultural context of the subject matter (...) and to cross the cultural gap between the source text and the target audience”.

(b). *Kunafa, Muchabbak & Zalabia*

OT: الذين تعودوا على الكنافة النابلسية, والمشبك, والزلابيا: (p. 14)

SPT: Tan acostumbrados a *la kunafa* de Nablus, *al muchabbak* y a *la zalabia* (p. 22). (So used to the *kunafa* of Nablus, the *muchabbak* and the *zalabia*)

In the present example, there are three types of sweets which are *kunafa*, *muchabbak* and *zalabia*. Originally, these sweets are from Palestine but they have become common in the whole Levant, which includes Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Palestine. In the receptive culture, the sweets are not known and that is why the translator has opted for transliteration as a translation procedure. This procedure is suitable for *realia* conditioned that enough details be provided in a footnote.

The footnotes that the translator supported his rendition with are general, and therefore target language readers would not be able to seize the exact meaning of the three sweets mentioned in the example. Instead, he should have given more details that can help the reader in the comprehension of these transliterated sweets. For example, *Zalabia* is similar to the Spanish *churros* in terms of ingredients and taste. Had the translator included *churros* in the footnote or used it as a cultural equivalent within the text, he would have enabled the TL reader to be familiar with this Jordanian sweet. In this manner, the translator would bridge the gap between the SL culture and TL readers. Nasser (2018, p. 8) maintains that:

The translator tries to find the most acceptable word in the TL that gives the function of the SL word. This word should also be the most frequently used in the TL. If a cultural equivalent is nearer to the SL word in terms of giving the same meaning, it will be used instead.

The main goal of footnoting is to assist the reader in directly understanding the meaning of transliterated *realia*. In the current *example*, the translator has given general information about these sweets and therefore the readers would not be able grasp the exact meaning of these *realia*. The translator has adopted what Dickins (2002, p. 32) calls “Cultural borrowing translation approach” where a “SL expression is transferred verbatim into the TL.” In other words, through the cultural borrowing translation approach, we can introduce the foreign ST element into the TT. Cultural borrowing involves the rendering of a culturally specific expression by a transliteration”. The authors of the article oppose this view because transliteration is insufficient to convey the meaning of *realia* and it misguides readers. In the same vein, Wiersema (2004), suggests that when translating, the translator has the option to adopt the foreign words to the TL with or without any explanation. They partly disagree with the latter view as explanation (footnoting) is essential to guarantee the compensation of any translation loss.

(c). *Kaak, Maamul, Madluga & Samid*

OT: *يكتظ المتجر بحلويات أخرى، كعك، ومعمول، ومدلوقة، وحلاوة السميد* (p. 16)

SPT: La pastelería estaba llena de otros tipos como *el kaak, el maamul, la madluga, el samid de nata* (p. 25). (The pastry shop was full of other types, such as *kaak, maamul, madluga, and samid* sweet)

There are four cultural terms in the current example that are all transliterated in Spanish language without any further explanation. Transliteration is a very useful procedure to follow in translation as far as it is accompanied with notes or explanatory information. Using this technique exclusively without such notes misguides the reader and deforms the translation. Some translators may purposefully use the procedure to urge TL readers to search for the meaning of such a word. In the example under discussion, not all readers can comprehend or grasp the whole meaning of these *realia* since they are not familiar with the Jordanian culture.

In the present example, the translator has employed transliteration to deal with *realia* without footnoting or providing explanatory details. This approach not only distracts the reader and buffers the flow of the text especially in literary works, but also causes a decline of interest on behalf of the reader. This translation procedure is repeatedly noticed throughout the whole translation of *Cuadernos del Diluvio*. Nasser (2018) maintains that a translator may adopt transliteration when he feels that target language readers can understand *realia*.

Transliteration can partly be helpful when dealing with *realia* because such terms do not have cultural equivalents in the TL. In the example above, the four *realia* are alphabetically written in the TL and in such a case, they remain ambiguous and meaningless to the TL readers. The argument being so, the use of transliteration without additional information or explanatory information in the authors’ point of view is not useful, making the comprehension of the source text more difficult. This contrasts the main goal of translation, which is concerned with transferring the source text in a simple and a comprehensible way to TL readers, enabling them to overcome the language and cultural barriers.

Transliteration without footnoting as in the above example orthographically but not semantically preserves the four Jordanian *realia* in Spanish. The translator has failed to relay the content of the original text as he does not support his transliteration with footnotes. According to Veckracis (2020, p. 174), the couplet of transliteration and footnotes “provides an opportunity to convey both the “culture aspect” (through the use of transcription) and the “message aspect” (through the use of descriptive footnotes)”.

(d). *Mansaf*

OT: *منسف داخل، منسف طالع* (p. 201)

SPT: *Comida va, comida viene* (p. 317). (**Food** goes, **food** comes)

One of the procedures that may be followed in cultural translation is generalization. However, this translation procedure is not always practical since *realia* have specific and peculiar cultural values. The Jordanian *realia* *منسف* in the current example is a case in point. *Mansaf* is a Jordanian well-known festive and traditional dish that is communally served in Jordanian’ socio-cultural events. It is symbolic in the sense that it resembles the Jordanian identity and social cohesion and fabric. Jordanians’ hospitality or generosity is depicted and mirrored in the provision of this luxurious dish to guests. In the novel, Mostafa is highly appreciated when he is served *mansaf* on a daily basis.

In the current example, the translator has generally rendered *manaf* into Spanish as *comida* (food). This general translation of the *realia* resulted in a real translation shortcoming since the target text lacks illuminating details that uncover any misunderstanding. The translator should have opted for another procedure that suits the rendition of such a *realia*. The couplet (transliteration and footnotes) can be a suitable procedure in this situation. The translator of the novel should not only understand Arabic as the language of the source text, but he should also understand the Jordanian culture to correctly convey the message of the ST into Spanish. According to Pitaloka et al. (2018, p. 66) “a good translator should not only understand the language but also the culture of both languages”.

The translator attempts to domesticate the Jordanian *realia mansaf* when he opted for generalization as a translation procedure. According to Loughridge et al. (2003, p. 67), generalization “implies that the TT expression has a wider and less specific literal meaning than the ST expression. That is, the TT is more general, omitting details that are given by the ST”. In the authors’ point of view, generalization is inappropriate when dealing with *realia* because it results in a translation loss. This loss lies in failing to display the Jordanian social culture which is implied in hosting Mostafa with *mansaf* on a daily basis, which is a symbol of luxurious lifestyle. Dickins et al. (2002, p. 57) maintain that “Generalizing translation is not acceptable if the TL does offer suitable alternatives, or if the omitted details are

important in the ST but not implied or compensated for the TT context". Therefore, transliterating *mansaf* with a compensation in form of a footnote can convey the social value of *masaf* that the novelist tries to convey to the reader. When dealing with specific *realia* like *mansaf*, it is highly recommended not to opt for generalization because the *realia* in this case has a special significance in the original text. Tomaszczyk (2010, p. 97) maintains that:

If the ST *realia* have no function in the text, i.e. it makes no difference what a given character eats, drinks or wear, then it can be either generalized or omitted, while if for some reason it has special significance, translators generally give explanatory additions (explicitation) or provide a descriptive translation.

(e). *Mlabas & Quthamah*

OT: يتركني صاحب المكتبة الى جوار قطر ميزات الملبس والقضامة (p. 34)

SPT: Lo suele colocar junto a los tarros de almendras bañadas en azúcar y de los garbanzos torraos (p. 50). (He usually places it next to jars of almonds dipped in sugar and roasted chickpeas)

There are two culture-bound foods in this example, which are *mlabas* and *quthamah*. The two foods are served to children as well as to adults. The first food, *mlabas*, is a typical Jordanian sweet, which is usually served on happy occasions and gatherings; it is made of an almond that is coated with colored sugar. The second food, *quthamah* is served for children as a salted snack and was, on the time of writing the novel, a daily demand for children in Jordan.

As far as translation is concerned, the translator has adopted two procedures, one is descriptive and another is cultural. The descriptive procedure is not recommended since it lengthens the text and stretches it further. Besides, co-text translation distracts the reader and obstructs the flow of the text, which consequently affects its comprehension and understanding in the receptive language. The translator here failed to convey the meaning using a wrong procedure. Therefore, the couplet is highly recommended especially when the translator ignores the meaning of the *realia* or its equivalent in his own culture.

In the case of *mlabas*, the translator provides a descriptive equivalent, which is according to Newmark (1988, p. 67) "the meaning of the cultural words explained in few words". The failure of the translator is the ignorance of the Jordanian *realia*'s meaning, because the Spanish culture has the same snack *peladillas*, defined in the *Dictionary of the Real Spanish Academy* as "*Almendra confitada con un baño de azúcar*" (candied almonds with a sugar coat). In this special case, it seems that the translator is not enough acknowledged in the two cultures involved in this study, the Jordanian as well as the Spanish.

Opting for the descriptive equivalent is a strong evidence of the translator's ignorance of his own culture, which has the exact equivalent of the Jordanian *realia* *mlabas*. According to Gijón, Inés and Beeby (2009, p. 110), the translator should not only have a linguistic competence in both languages, but also a "cultural competence, which provides the necessary knowledge of source and target languages' cultures".

Unlike his wrong rendition of *mlabas* into Spanish in this example, the translator has succeeded in translating *quthamaeh* as *garbanzo torraos* (toasted chickpeas) which is the accurate Spanish cultural equivalent of the Jordanian *realia*.

(f). *Harisa*

OT: الهريسة التي تصل محمضة من الشام (p. 57)

SPT: La Harisa que llegaba de Siria (p. 91). (The Harisa that arrived sour from Syria)

Harisa is one of the Jordanian popular sweets that are served more noticeably in cold times. It is made of semolina, yogurt, butter, sweet syrup and adorned with almonds or peanuts. It was locally made in Jordan, and the good quality was imported from Syria. For such cultural *realia*, transliteration can be a suitable translation procedure, which is adopted by the translator. In order to ensure preserving the cultural implications of *harisa*, it is recommended that additional information be provided. The translator has succeeded when he supported the transference of *harisa* with footnotes where he explains its ingredients. Footnotes are very useful to explain hidden meanings of cultural terms. However, the problem arose when he provided the target language text with completely irrelevant or wrong details. These details have not only misinformed the reader and lengthened the text, but have also deformed the original text when irrelevant ideas are supplied.

While *harisa* is typically a type of sweets in Jordan, it denotes a hot sauce in Arab Maghreb countries such as Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria. The translator should be faithful to the OT and avoid imposing his personal knowledge on TT reader. He has the right to add supplementary information, conditioned that they serve the TT and its readers. What is wrong in the translation attempt here is that the translator has displaced the novel itself from the Jordanian culture into Maghreb culture.

Thus, the translator should transfer what the author means or intends in the OT and not what he wants, expects, thinks, or likes to convey. In the current example, the translator is imposing his own knowledge of the Arabic term *harisa* on his readers. According to De Carvalho (2010, p. 78),

Respecting the *desire* of the author would inspire the search for meaning and determine the degree of faithfulness of the translation with regard to the "original" discourse. Thus, translation should not only take into consideration the individual words and context of the original text, but also *the intention of the author*.

(g). *Boza*

OT: (p. 59) عقله كان منشغلا بالتفكير في مصنع البوزا

SPT: Ya su cabeza estaba completamente concentrada en la fabrica de *boza* (p. 93). (His head was already completely focused on the *boza* factory)

There is a *realia* of food in the current example which is بوزا, an ice cream mainly made of milk and pistachios. The translator has opted for transliteration as a translation procedure to render *boza* into Spanish. This procedure is suitable when dealing with a *realia* with supplementary details that can help to bridge any linguistic and cultural gaps between the ST and the TT.

In this example, the translator has provided the translation of *realia* with false information in the footnote. Footnoting *boza* as an ice cream made of cheese and pistachios has harmed the original text and wrongly displayed it in the target language. In fact, *boza* is made of milk and not cheese. Had he translated *boza* into Spanish as *helado* (ice cream), he would have successfully rendered it as the source term and the target term are totally equivalents. Therefore, generalization can be an appropriate translation procedure because *boza* is a well-known ice-cream and is not a main Jordanian traditional food like *mansaf* as shown in an above example.

Footnoting, as a target language procedure, can be helpful to target language readers in explicating the meaning of some cultural terms and unveiling any ambiguity. According to Sumarni (2020, p. 117), footnoting is “indispensable so that the foreign language readership could benefit from the text as much as the ST readers do”. However, transliteration and footnoting as a translation couplet is not necessary in this example since *helado* (ice-cream) is the accurate cultural equivalent of *boza*.

B. Dress

Realia as culture-specific material terms include dress. Every culture has its own clothing or dress and this depends on the material that exists in its regions. For example, some Jordanian dresses are made of wool, black sheep’s hair and camel’s hair. Due to dress cultural exclusiveness, a real translation challenge arises when rendering a cultural dress from one language into another. In the novel, *Tirwak*, *Abaya* and *Thoaob Ad-Dobait* are three cases in point.

(a). *Tirwak*

1. **OT:** فسمح لها بارتداء الترواك المدني (p. 21)

SPT: La permitía vestir a la última (p. 31). (He allowed her to dress the most modern dress)

2. **OT:** فنجمة لا تقصر ترواكها (p. 23)

SPT: Ya que **el vestido** de Nachma no era especialmente corto (p. 35). (Since Nachma’s **dress** was not particularly short)

Tirwak is a formal female dress that was worn in Jordan at the time of the novel’s events. It might be a one-piece dress or a two-piece dress, consisting of a top part and a skirt. This type of dress was mainly worn in cities. Jordanians living outside cities were not familiar with such a type of dress and they used to wear a long one-piece dress.

In translating *tirwak* into Spanish, the translator has followed two translation procedures. In the first case, he omitted the term *tirwak* and has descriptively relayed it in the TL as *vestir a la ultima* (dressed in most modern style). Nachma is from Maan, a city located in the far south of Jordan, where people are Bedouins, and women wear long dresses to cover the whole body. Moving to Amman, where *tirwak* was a common dress, she has abandoned her normal dress and started mingling with the new community, where people are open and wearing a shorter dress. This style of dress does not have any social opposition or social rejection in Amman.

In the second case, the translator has generally translated *tirwak* as *vestido* (dress). The case being so, the translator should be consistent and should have opted for one procedure rather than two when dealing with a repeated *realia* in the same novel. Consequently and in the case here, the translator confuses the TL readers and misguides them.

To resolve any potential confusion and misunderstanding, it is recommended that the translator opt for the translation couplet (transliteration and footnotes) in the first mention of the *realia*. In the next mention of *tirwak*, the translator does not need to add footnotes together with the transliteration as readers would be familiar with the transliterated *realia*. The importance of this recommendation springs from the fact that the omission and generalization as two translation procedures for *tirwak* deprive the ST of its Jordanian cultural identity. Enough knowledge of the Jordanian culture may facilitate the translation of Jordanian *realia* like *tirwak* in the above example. Omission and generalization in the above example inadvertently strip the source text of its Jordanian cultural identity.

(b). *Abayas*

OT: والعباءات من شتى الأصناف (p. 31)

SPT: *Abayas* de todo tipo (p. 49). (*Abayas* from all types)

Abaya is a *realia* that is used by the novelist in *Cuadernos del Diluvio*. It is a long dress that is worn by both males and females and is essentially made of wool, silk, cotton or other materials. It is dressed over other clothes and it is usually open.

Since *abaya* is a *realia*, the translator has transliterated it into Spanish as *abaya* and has footnoted it with *la abaya es una tunica de lana que visten tanto los hombres como mujeres en la zona de Oriente Medio* (a cloak made of wool and is dressed by both males and females in the Middle East). However, the *abaya* can be simply translated into Spanish as *tunica* (cloak) which is a cultural equivalent of it. What is surprising in this example is that the translator has opted for

transliteration and footnotes (as a couplet) which is recommended for *realia* that do not have equivalents in the TL. In this example, the translator should have opted for cultural equivalent as a translation procedure since *abaya* has a full counterpart in Spanish, which is *tunica*.

(c). *Thob Ad-Dobait*

OT: فرض عليها ارتداء الثوب الدوبييت (p. 20)

SPT: le impuso la obligacion de vestir una tunica (p. 31). (She was forced to wear a tunic)

Thob ad-dobait is a Jordanian black dress that is free from decorations and colors, and is dressed by Bedouins in Maan, where Nachma got married. This black dress is wrongly translated into Spanish as *tunica* (cloak). Of course, there is a big difference between these two types of dress. While the cloak can have many colors and is made of many materials, *thob ad-dobait* is always black and is made of velvet.

The translator has wrongly rendered *thob ad-dobait* into Spanish as *tunica* (cloak) as they are completely different. In the first place, the *thob ad-dobait* is not reflected in the TT and consequently there is no fidelity of such a *realia* in the TL. It seems that the translator is not fully aware of the Jordanian culture. As some *realia* have cultural equivalents in target culture, the translator should use them directly without transliteration and footnoting as is the case with *abaya* in the above example. Some *realia*, however, do not have cultural equivalents in the TL, as *thob ad-dobait* in the current example. The translator has erroneously rendered *thob ad-dobait* as *tunica*, which is not the TL correspondence. In order to avoid such translation loss, the translator should have enough cultural background of the ST culture.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The study has shown that translation of Jordanian novels into Spanish is not a simple task due to the *realia* they include. It has revealed that enjoying enough cultural background is an essential requirement to ensure the correct rendition of the *realia* in the receptive language. Foods and dresses as examples of the *realia* have proved that reflecting them into Spanish cannot be made successfully by following one translation procedure. After translationally investigating the illustrative examples of *realia*, the study has made clear that translation couplet (transliteration and footnoting) is the best procedure to deal with them. In other words, one of such couplet procedures does not serve the TT without the other as in (c) of food examples where the translator transliterated the *realia* without providing any footnote. The supporting footnotes should be correctly employed to disambiguate the meaning of the transliterated *realia* as lacked in (a) and (g) of food examples, where wrong information is given and in (f) where irrelevant information is provided. Likewise, generalization is not suitable either since it does not reflect the exact cultural meaning and semantic load of *realia* as shown in example (d). As for omission, which is employed by the translator in some examples, it can be useful as long as the omitted *realia* does not affect the message conveyed by the ST. *Realia* do not have full cultural equivalents, though opting for such a procedure can help in bridging cultural gaps as in (e). Descriptive translation has failed in conveying *realia* as this procedure lengthens the text and causes some boredom to the TT readers especially in literary texts such as novels. Based on these outcomes, it is recommended that more research be made on the translation of *realia* as main elements of novels.

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