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**Translating Cultural References: A Cognitive Approach to  
Literary Translation**

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**Abstract**

Gutt (2000) recognizes many challenges in explaining the role of cognition in translating implicit meanings. Cultural references (CRs) are recognized as the most problematic elements of translation because they are loaded with presuppositions, implicatures and many implicit information. To successfully translate them, translators resort to using different translation strategies. The present paper applies the strategies proposed by Díaz-Cintas & Remael (2007) in accordance with Gutt's (2000) model of cognitive translation to *'alā Hameš Alsirah* (1933) by Taha Hussein as a source text (ST) and *Marginalia on the Prophet's Biography* (2021) by Mohamed Enani as a target text (TT). Thus, the main aim of this research is to explain the different cognitive and contextual effects embedded in cultural references (CRs) in both source and target texts. The results of the study show that both types of direct and indirect translation are used during translation process, but the translator depends more on indirect translation to make the implicit information explicit. Explication and substitution are proved to be the most suitable techniques in translating CRs in the selected data.

**Key Words:** *Literary Translation, Cultural References (CRs), Cognitive pragmatics.*

ترجمة المفاهيم الثقافية: منهج معرفي للترجمة الأدبية

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مما لا شك فيه أن ترجمة المفاهيم الثقافية تعد من أصعب المهام التي يتعين على المترجم القيام بها لما تحملة من إفتراضات ومعاني ضمنية عديدة. ولذلك تعد ترجمة المفاهيم الثقافية من أهم إشكاليات الترجمة ولكي يتغلب المترجم على هذه المشكلة فإنه يلجأ إلى استخدام إستراتيجيات عديدة. تعتمد هذه الدراسة على تطبيق تصنيف دايز-كينتاس وريميل (٢٠٠٧) لترجمة المفاهيم الثقافية بالإضافة إلى منهج الترجمة المعرفية للعالم جت (٢٠٠٠) علي رواية علي هامش السيرة لعميد الأدب العربي طه حسين ونسختها المترجمة إلى الإنجليزية لشيخ المترجمين العرب الدكتور محمد عناني. ومن ثم دراسة ترجمة المفاهيم الثقافية ومدى تأثير السياق و البيئة المعرفية في عملية الترجمة. وقد أوضحت نتائج الدراسة أن المترجم يستخدم كل من الترجمة المباشرة والغير مباشرة لإيضاح الغموض في بعض المفاهيم الثقافية المختارة كما أن أكثر الإستراتيجيات استخداماً في ترجمة هذه المفاهيم هي إستراتيجيات التوضيح و التبديل .

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

Language is a system of signs used by people as a means of communication to express their feelings, thoughts, ideas, opinions, experiences, beliefs, etc. Nasser (2019) believes that “language is an expression of the speaker’s culture and individuality” (p. 45). Newmark (1988) defines culture as “the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression” (p. 94). Culture exhibits the way that humans interpret and explain their environment. From this point of view, the translation of a literary work is considered a translation of the culture or the environment where this work of literature is produced.

In this regard, translation is "an act of communication which attempts to relay, across cultural and linguistic boundaries, another act of communication (which may have been intended for different purposes and different readers/hearers)" (Hatim & Mason, 2005, p. 1). Translation bridges the gap between cultures, and it is a means by which the meanings of the source text are replaced by the meanings of the target text. Translation also is concerned with building relations between languages, thus reproducing the intended messages of the source text (ST). Supporting this viewpoint, Nida (2003) argue that translation involves “reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style” (p. 12). From a linguistic point of view, Venuti (1995) defines translation as “a process by which the chain of signifiers that constitutes the source-language text is replaced by a chain of signifiers in the TL which the translator provides on the strength of an interpretation” (p. 17).

As a form of cross-cultural communication, literary translation is an ambitious task for the translator as he has to handle a big amount of implicit meanings, cultural references, presuppositions and implicatures. Meyr (1997) believes that literary texts contain a large chunk of implicatures and implicit information. Newmark (2009) describes literary translation as 'imaginative' translation "which is concerned with humanistic subjects and specifically with poems, short stories, novels, plays, and may call on a single readership (for a poem) or a substantial audience (for a play) and is often related to connotative meaning" (pp. 26-27). The translation of a literary work involves much more than translating texts from one language to another. It involves transferring thoughts, interests, emotions, cultural nuances and most importantly, achieving the same effect of the source text on the target reader.

According to Levinson (1983), pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that "concentrates on how linguistic expressions are encoded by their context" (p.8). Mey (1993) points out that research in pragmatics deals with how language speakers interact in various situations and contexts. Cognitive pragmatics deals with the interrelated relationship between language and cognition. It pays a great attention to the investigation of mental and conceptual characteristics of language. Cognitive pragmatics is seen as a mixture of contextual effects and processing efforts. Hussain & Khuddro (2016) believes that "it is a cognitive-pragmatic approach to communication which depends on both text-producer's two intentions: to inform and to communicate the text receiver's assumptions" (p.32). When it comes to translation, the key issue is how to capture indirectness in human communication and how to invest the resources or the stimulus available in both languages when rendering it. Here, the literary translator adopts the role of a double agent. On the one hand, the literary translator is a recipient and interpreter of the original text. On the other hand, he is the producer of the translation which has to reflect the different cultural aspects of the ST in the TT for readers and recipients in the target culture. This process is daunting and challenging, and it requires much linguistic and cultural awareness.

## 2. Statement of research problem

The current research analyses Taha Hussein's novel '*alā Hameš Alsirah*' (1933) and its English translation *Marginalia on the Prophet's Biography* (2021) by Enani from a cognitive-pragmatic perspective. The study focuses on the different strategies employed by the translator to transfer the meaning of cultural references (CRs) cognitively. Thus, investigating the basic concepts related to the multiple cognitive

processes employed in the transfer of meaning across two different cultures.

### **3. Research objectives and questions**

The major aim of this research is to present a cognitive analysis of implicit meanings embedded in the different cultural references (CRs) in the Arabic novel *'alā Hameš Alsirah* (1933) by Taha Hussein and its translation *Marginalia on the Prophet's Biography* (2021) by Enani. The research investigates the different contextual effects of cultural references and the strategies used by the translator to convey those contextual effects. In order to achieve the previous objectives, the study tries to answer the following questions:

- 1) Which strategies does the translator employ to convey the intended meanings of the source text?
- 2) To what extent does the translator consider the target readers' cognitive environment?
- 3) How are CRs translated in accordance with Gutt's (2000) cognitive model of translation?

### **4. The Methodology of the Research:**

The theoretical framework adopted in this research focuses on relevance theory and its related concepts such as context, contextual effects, processing efforts, shared knowledge, cognitive environment and interpretative intention. Gutt's (2000) cognitive translation model is adopted along with Díaz-Cintas & Remael (2007) translation strategies of cultural references.

In order to achieve the aims of the research, firstly, the researchers have looked at some instances of cultural references (CRs), along with their corresponding translations. Secondly, they have compared the source text with the target text, cognitively, highlighting any change in meaning (e.g., omission, addition, substitution, explicitation, implicitation etc.) or any problematic areas that can suggest shifts in the translation. After that, Gutt's (2000) model has been applied to determine whether the translator uses direct or indirect translation approach. Finally, Díaz-Cintas & Remael (2007) strategies have been examined in the selected data.

### **5. The Theoretical Framework**

#### **5.1. Literary Translation**

Translation is a multidisciplinary communicational activity that combines language studies and culture studies together. Attempting to define translation, Bassnett and Trivedi (1992) state that translation “is not an isolated act; it is part of an ongoing process of intercultural

transfer” (p. 2). The process of translating involves transfer across not only linguistic but also cultural boundaries. Nord (2005) believes that translation is “the production of a functional target text maintaining a relationship with a given source text that is specified according to the intended or demanded function of the target text” (p. 32).

Various definitions are given to the term literature throughout its history. New (1999) argues that literature is a type of “writing that has a certain property, or certain properties, of literariness” (p. 18). On the other hand, Chapman (1982) assumes that Literature has “no single style” because “one of its features is an ability to accommodate any style or idiolect found in language”, and its distinctive quality “depends not on intrinsic novelty but on the way in which familiar features are used” (p.37). For Olsen (1978), the “aesthetic properties” of literary texts are what distinguish literary works from other works (p. 1). For Brooks (1964), literature “is wholly and inevitably rooted in language”, simply because it is a fine art and the fine art “is a matter of medium, purpose, and design” (pp. 99, 100). Palmer (1968) believes that the art of literature is distinct from language because “literature is an application of the linguistic science, but it is not the science itself, [it] is the history and practice of the written form of a language which has become classical” (p. 9). Obviously, Palmer’s view of literature is opposite to that of Brooks’. For Sapir (1949), what distinguishes the language of literature from any other type of language is that its “an unusual significance” (p. 221). As for Pilkington (2000), Literature is similar to language in the sense that it is “a system” representing “structures (e.g. narrative) and related structural elements, which underlies a reader’s ability to make sense of literary texts” (p. 23). For Wellek and Warren (1966), literature is considered as a structure that combines form and content that are arranged “for aesthetic purposes” (p. 141).

On the other hand, literary language "has been considered as sublime to, and distinctive from all other types of language, written or spoken, due to the special use of language that is deviant, or 'estranged' from ordinary, everyday, non-literary language" (Ghazala, 2011, p.2). Sound, imagery, rhyme, rhythm and narrative features are among the most prominent features of literary text. Literary translation, according to Wittman (2013), is understood as “the product of a translator who takes seriously the literary nature of the original and translates with the goal of producing a text that has a literary merit of its own, a work that is designed to be read as literature” (p. 438). Enani (1997) defines literary translation as the translation of the various types of literature such as poetry, novel, short story and drama. Literal translation is concerned with

both the referential meaning of words and their significance and effects in a given text. Literary translation has some features that should be taken into consideration for the sake of creating designated effect on the target reader. The following 9 points summarize the characteristics of literary translation, as given by Belhaag (1997, p. 20):

- 1- focusing on both form and content
- 2- expressive
- 3- connotative
- 4-symbolic
- 5- subjective
- 6- allowing multiple interpretation
- 7- timeless and universal
- 8- using special devices to 'heighten' communicative effect
- 9- tendency to deviate from the language norms

Ghazala (2011) believes that the literary translator must possess some specific features to be able to transfer a literary text including "creativity", "inventiveness", immense knowledge of both languages and flexibility (p. 20). Bush (1998) argues that literary translator must be "bilingual and bicultural" (p. 127). "As the creator of the new work in the target culture, the literary translator operates at the frontiers of language and culture" (p. 128). Literary translation's goal is to leave the reader of the translated work with an impression similar to that of the source text. Landers (2001) upholds that the "facets of the work, ideally, are reproduced in such a manner as to create in the TL reader the same emotional and psychological effect experienced by the original SL reader" (p. 27).

From a cognitive perspective, Ingarden (1973) believes that in any literary text, there are two values: artistic value and aesthetic value. Those values are explicated, but the information relevant to them should be implicit and it is the role of the translator to tackle these meanings and create a shared cognitive environment. Zhoggang (2006) proposes three features of literary texts: artistic, aesthetic and informative. This informative feature is responsible for bringing changes in the readers' minds. This means that there are many steps that must be followed during processing information: firstly, the author writes a literary work that can be read by a source text reader. After that, through some contextual features, implicit information is processed by the translator. Finally, successful communication takes place.

## 5.2. Cultural References (CRs)

The term CRs is used to refer to words, terms, expressions and concepts that are created for a particular culture and are only comprehensible to that culture. This means that people outside that culture may understand them but still cannot experience them in the way that natives do. One manifestation of culture is the usage of words and phrases that refer to cultural entities. Baker refers to cultural entities as —culture-specific concepts, Newmark defines them as cultural words, Nord employs the term "cultureme", Robinson uses the terms "realia" and "culture-bound phenomena" (Baker 1992, p.21; Newmark 2010, p .173; Nord 2005, p. 34; Robinson 1997, p. 35). Even though many scholars have tried to provide some typologies in order to include as many CRs as possible, it still seems difficult to define the limits of each category. The research applies Díaz-Cintas & Remael (2007) model of translating cultural references (CRs) and it is explained thoroughly in the following section.

### 5.2.1. Díaz-Cintas & Remael's (2007) translation strategies of cultural references

According to Lörscher, translation strategy is “a potentially conscious procedure for the solution of a problem which an individual is faced with when translating a text segment from one language to another” (1991, p. 76). Hejwowski (2004) offers a broader definition of the term strategy as “a translator’s (consciously or unconsciously) preferred procedure within an entire text or its significant passages” (p. 76). Translation strategies are “procedures, often of a highly individual kind, which are applied when a source-language text is transferred into the target-language” and which “can, but need not, result in an optimal translation” ( Lörscher, 1991, p. 70).

Díaz-Cintas & Remael (2007) are among other scholars who have categorized selected strategies to be used when dealing with Cultural References (CRs). These strategies are Loan, explicitation, transposition, calque (literal translation), substitution, lexical recreation or neologism, compensation, addition, and omission. The analysis of the selected data is limited to explicitation and substitution as they are proved to be the most frequent strategies used by Enani, the translator, in translating CRs.

#### **Loan:**

Díaz-Cintas & Remael (2007) defines loan as when “the source text word or phrase is incorporated into the target language and text, because no translation is possible and both languages use the exact same word” (p.202). Loan strategy is used when the ST word is transferred in the TT the same without any changes (Ávila-Cabrera, 2013, p.90).



**Explicitation:**

Explicitation is a strategy utilized by translators in order to make the ST word or phrase more explicit among target audience rather than being implicit (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1958 & 1995, p.242). Díaz-Cintas & Remael (2007) defines explicitation as a strategy through which “the subtitler tries to make the source text more accessible by meeting the target audience half way, either through specification, using a hyponym, or by generalization, using a hypernym or superordinate” (p.203).

**Transposition:**

Transposition means changing the " word class" or the part of speech of specific words. (Chesterman, 2016).

**Calque:**

Díaz-Cintas & Remael (2007) has defined calque as “a literal translation” strategy (p.202). Calque is similar to word-for-word translation that transfers the meaning of each word or phrase of ST into TT literally and continues faithful to ST meaning (Altahri, 2013, p.130).

**Substitution:**

Substitution is to substitute or replace a source language word by another word or phrase which has the same meaning. Substituting helps the translator to replace a cultural element in source language by another reference that is understood in target culture.

**Lexical recreation:**

Díaz-Cintas & Remael (2007) defines lexical recreation as the invention of new words in TT. By lexical recreation or neologism, words in TT that are transferred from ST are marked by quotation marks to be distinguished as taken from ST (Hove, 2018, p.83).

**Compensation:**

Compensation strategy is concerned with compensating the lack or shortage in translation of specific terms or expressions by the addition or the increase of some information in other parts (Newmark, 1988, p.90).

**Addition and omission:**

Addition means adding units of meaning to target text (Schjoldager, 2008). On the other hand, Omission is to delete or erase words from the source text during translation processes.

**5.3. Equivalence**

Equivalence is known as a challenging and important area of interest within translation studies that is concerned with the act of translation through which a transfer of source text in one language into target one into another language. As Catford (1965) has suggested, equivalence is considered an important issue for translation that is

concerned with determining the suitable equivalents in target language (p.21). According to Halverson (1997) , equivalence is defined as the existing relationship between two concepts or entities and this relation is characterized by some sort of sameness, equality and similarity in specific features, since equivalence should depict similar and equal characteristics for two or more entities in terms of power, value, effect, and force (p.207).The concept of equivalence has a Latin origin that is ‘eqi’ and ‘valence’, which indicates the same value of the two entities and shows that both sides are equal (Salih, 2014, p.349). This is considered as a difficult task for the translators.

Languages are not identical even in the meanings or in the means of arrangement of specific terms, but the target text has a strong relationship with the source one through equivalence that erases the gap between source and target texts (Koller, 1995, p.191-222). Equivalence in translation has been defined as being a logical or common-sense expression for depicting the real relationship that the audience would hope to exist between a source one and its translation (Baker & Saldanha, 2009, p.98). Equivalence is considered a bilingual synonymy or similarity that depends on cultural interferences and lexical universals (As-Safi, 2011, p.54).

#### **5.4. Relevance theory:**

Sperber and Wilson (1987) believe that human's cognition is relevance-oriented. According to Sperber and Wilson (1986) , the main purpose of relevance theory is to explain the different ways humans communicate with each other and to show how implied meaning and implicit information are communicated. Sperber and Wilson (2004) see that in the process of attaining cognitive effect, the hearer poses some cognitive effort which is closely related to the degree of relevance of the input. This cognitive effort enables the recipient to make assumptions and inferences about the utterance and this is the core of relevance theory.

Context is of great importance in relevance theory. According to Sperber and Wilson (1986), context is " a set of premises used in interpreting it" (p.15). In this regard, context can be viewed as " a part of the hearer's cognitive environment" (p.44). Wilson (1994) defines and explains relevance according to contextual effect and processing effort. When the new information and the given context meet or combine together, contextual effects are brought. These contextual effects facilitate understanding. To be relevant, the translator has to pay attention and provide " adequate contextual affects that the target reader can perceive in the translated text" (Gutt, 1996, p.51). When the target reader understands

these contextual features, the implicit information are processed without any effort.

Sperber and Wilson (1986) see translation as "an instance of interpretative use of language" (p.46) because it represents what the author says. In relevance theory, the assumptions the writer intends to communicate are expressed in two different ways: explicatures and implicatures. Hall and Cartison (2012) define explicature as "that content which ordinary speaker-hearer intuitions would identify as have been said or asserted by the speaker" (p.9). Sperber and Wilson (1986) believe that explicatures are those assumptions that have been conveyed clearly by the text. Implicatures, on the other hand, are "the contextual implications of an utterance" (p.64). This means that they are the intended and the implicit meanings that the author wants or aspires to convey. In this sense, intuition plays an important role in the distinction between implicature and explicature cognitively. Gutt (1996) believes that in order to be relevant, the text must convey some implicit meanings because in cognitive theory "implicit information presupposes relevance" (p.51).

#### **5.4.1. Gutt's (2000) cognitive-translation model**

Gutt (2000) recognizes many challenges in explaining the role of cognition in translation. He believes that inadequate use of cognition in translation leads to miscommunication. This miscommunication stems from the translator's perplexity to explicate or implied contents in the source text. In other words, the role of the translator is to achieve a kind of relevance between source text and target reader and in order to do this, the translator must consider the target readers' cognitive environment. As a result, two thoughts have been born in the recipients' cognition: informative thought and intended thought. If the recipient understands the intended meaning of the source text, there will be successful communication and if he fails, communication fails.

In order to avoid miscommunication, Gutt (2000) proposes the relevance theoretical framework that combines cognition and translation. Gutt (2000) presents two strategies in translating between cross culturally different languages and they are: direct and indirect translation. Gutt (1989) believes that direct translation "preserves what was said and indirect translation gives an indication of what was meant" (p.197). According to Gutt (2000) "a receptor language utterance is direct translation of source language utterance if it purports to interpretively resemble the original" (p.177). So, the main aim of this strategy is to resemble the source text or in Gutt's (1989) it must "corresponds to the idea that translation should convey the same meaning as the original"

(p.2). On the other hand, indirect translation means communicating the intended message of the source text in target text. Unlike, direct translation, indirect translation does not need the recipient to have prior knowledge of source text.

## 6. Data

Taha Hussein is a great Arabic scholar whose views and opinions dominated the intellectual life of the Arab world in the first half of the 20th century. He is known as "The Dean of Arabic Literature" and his language has distinguished him as a pioneer scholar. He was nominated for a Nobel prize in literature 14 times. Taha Hussein is famous for his distinctive style which can be noted in his novel '*alā Hameš Alsirah*'. Hussein is a steadfast defender of classical Arabic, in an attempt to revive our ancient Arab culture.

M.M. Enani is a professor of English language and literature at Cairo University. He has written plays and poetry in Arabic. In addition, he has written many books in translation in both Arabic and English. He also has translated many works by Taha Hussein; for examples: *Marginalia on the Prophet's Biography*, *The Fulfilled Promise*, and *The Shaykh's Marriage Proposal*. Thus, Enani is considered a pioneer of cultural, literary translation in the modern era. Enani (2000) discusses the translation of Arabic as a cultural exercise, distinguishing two kinds of Arabic: the archaic variety, with roots in cultural tradition, and the modern variety which includes both written variety (modern standard Arabic) and the spoken one (Egyptian Arabic).

In his story '*alā Hameš Alsirah*' (1933), Taha Hussein recounts different incidents well-known for the Muslims. He begins the novel telling how the Well of Zamzam was digged. Abdul-Mttalib was visited repeatedly by a nightly visitor who ordered him to dig the well of Zamzam, the well from which pilgrims drink. Moreover, the novel goes back to the sixth century to recounts the invasion of Arabia by Abyssinia and the trail of the invading army to cruch the Holy Kaaba. Besides explaining many Islamic historical incidents, the novel also shows the features of the Arab society in Hijaz before and during the Islamic call. The last part of the novel recounts Prophet's Mohammed birth. Though specific real historical events and characters, this novel employs some modern techniques of fiction to liberate the historical incidents from recorded history.

## 7. Analysis

In this research, 14 examples of cultural references (CRs) embedded in 11 situations have been analysed from a relevance theoretic perspective in the light of direct and indirect translation approaches. The cognitive

pragmatic background (CPB) for each extract or situation is exposed to assist in understanding the translated text. The following table illustrates the results according to Gutt's (2000) cognitive translation model:

*Table 1: Frequency of Gutt's (2000) cognitive translation model (direct and indirect translation)*

Translation approach	Number	Frequency
Direct translation	5	35.7%
Indirect translation	9	64.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Extract 1

**ST:** يحدث هذا : الأقطار غرائب عن التجار أحاديث فسمع ، السامريين مع الفتى سمر وقد " يصف وهذا غمدان، يذكر وهذا ، والسدير الخورنق عن وهذا ، وعظمتها بصرى صور عن "العرب لغربان وانخداعهم الشام أهل سذاجة عن يتحدث وهذا ، بالتجار ومكرهم اليمانيين أخلاق

**TT:** "Abdul-Muttalib joined the circle of men gathered for conversations in the early hours of the evening. He heard the strange tales told by travelling merchants about various places: one spoke of the magnificent sights of the city of Busra , another about **al-Khawarnaq and al-Sudair** , a third about Ghomdan . One described the manners of the Yemenis and their deception of merchants , another talked about the naivety of the Levantines , and how easily they were gulled by **the Arabian 'ravens'**."

### Cognitive pragmatic background (CPB)

In the example above, after being disturbed by a fearful nightmare, Abdul-Muttalib ventures abroad, seeking in action and the tumultuous world a means of forgetting the nightly visitor who disturbs and tempts him. He joins a group of men gathered for conversations hoping to forget the fearful nightmare.

### Discussion

CRI	Translation of CRI	Used Strategy
غربان العرب	Arabian 'ravens'	Calque - direct translation
الخورنق	al-Khawarnaq	Loan – direct translation
السدير	al-Sudair	Loan- direct translation

The noun phrase 'العرب غريبان' is a cultural-bound expression that refers in the Arab culture, according to Mujaam Almaany, to the black tramps or mavericks; criminals and trickers who were rejected by their tribes and considered an outcast because of their misbehaviour. In addition, their fathers didn't acknowledge them as their sons because their mothers were slaves, which led them to be rebels and dissidents despite their super skills as soldiers. They are likened to ravens in colour. They resorted to Mekka as a refuge because of the cooperation of some people of Quraysh with them which increased their numbers there.

With the use of direct translation, the translator attempts to achieve complete interpretative resemblance between the source and target text and this means that the translator has not adopted such culture specific item to the cognitive environment of the target reader. From the relevance theoretic perspective, since the target readers do not have such background information in their current cognitive environment, and since the background information of this cultural-specific item is unfamiliar in their context, this may make them have difficulty in getting adequate contextual effects when compared to the Arabic readers. Thus, exerting a big effort to process the translated text due to cultural differences.

The use of the direct translation approach here may arise from the desire of the translator to focus on the exact message by the ST author and to convey the original cognitive environment. However, the required context for target readers to draw the assumptions and understand the original message has not been provided by the translator. In this sense, communication may not be successful due to the irrelevant stimulus to the target readers and they begin to ask about the relation between Levantines' naivety and **the Arabian 'ravens'**." In such a case, the target readers need to put their own effort to get the message.

In this example, target readers are expected to read the text in their own language but in the source context. However, reading the text in the source context makes the accession to the message of the culture-specific item impossible due to the unshared cognition of both sides of the readers. One suggested solution to achieve relevance principle is to use the strategy of explicitation to explain the cultural-specific item to the target reader. On the other hand, the translator succeeds in creating the same cognitive environment while adding the adjective phrase "various places" to explicate the names of cities and palaces like "Busra" , "**al-Khawarnaq and al-Sudair**". **Thus, the target reader does not need to exert effort to understand the meanings of these Arabic names.**

Extract 2:

**ST:** ثم أقبل عمه فانترعه من إقليمه السهل الهين، إلي إقليم آخر صعب عسير، تجذب فيه " الأرض، ولا تبتسم له السماء إلا قليلا"

**TT:** "His paternal uncle then took him from his easy, comfortable region to another one, hard and rugged. There the land is arid, **the sky rarely smiles.**"

**Cognitive- Pragmatic Background (CPB):**

In the example above, after Abdul-Muttalib's father's death, he brought up among his maternal uncles, he was influenced by their way of life and their manners. Then, when he nearly reached maturity, his paternal uncle took him from his easy, comfortable region to another one, hard and rugged.

**Discussion**

CRI	Translation of CRI	Used Strategy
ولا تبتسم له السماء إلا قليلا	<b>the sky rarely smiles</b>	<b>Calque- direct translation</b>

The source text utterance “ لا تبتسم له السماء الا قليلا ” is an idiomatic expression in which the sky is described as a person who smiles. This personification gives rise to the following implicature: "the sky rarely rains in that region." The source text reader is aware of this implicature and the translator who is originally source text reader is aware of this implicit meaning impeded in the strata of the passage. On the other hand, the target reader has to exert much effort in processing this idiomatic expression with its implied meaning. It is so clear, that the main goal of the translator, here, is to convey the same cognitive environment of the ST, so he has given the exact correspondence of the idiomatic expression in the target text using direct translation approach. Actually, the use of direct translation approach, here, might distort the implicated meaning of the original utterance and it also may cause a kind of miscommunication. The main reason of this misunderstanding is that when the idiomatic expression " لا تبتسم له السماء الا قليلا " is literally translated into English by 'the sky rarely smiles', the receptor language audience will not grasp the correct propositional content intended by the source language author and mental processing will stop because the principle of relevance to the cognitive environment of the target language reader is broken. So, it is better for the translator to prepare the target reader mentally and to substitute the sentence " the sky rarely smiles " by "the sky rarely rain". So, shared cognitive background has been established between the target readers and the source text readers.

**Extract 3:**

**ST:** هذا لهم وانبطت ، شبيبة يا بقومك بررت لقد : وقالوا ، به ورفقوا له ابتسموا هنالك ' اليد هذه قریش لك لتعرفن ! رَحْم فوصلتُك ، الينابيع عليهم ضنَّت إذا ، منه يستقون الماء

**TT:** They now smile and feel sympathetic. One of them, representing the crowd, says, "You have done well to your kith and kin, old man! You have dug up this water for them to drink if the springs fail them. What charity to your people! Quraysh vows to be grateful for **this favor**."

**Cognitive Pragmatic background (CPB):**

After getting water from Zamzam, Abdul-Muttalib started to cry "Allahu Akbar". He has a drink of water himself, then passes the cup to his son. He sprinkles water all around him, as though meaning to water the earth, air and people. The people of Quraysh gathered, crowding the place, and thanked him for finding water for them to drink.

**Discussion:**

CRI	Translation of CRI	Used Strategy
هذه اليد	This favor	Explicitation – indirect translation

In the example above, the author's intention and the implicit information are conveyed through some textual elements. Firstly, the example employs an implicature in which the word 'يد' refers to Abdul-Muttalib's great work and favour of digging up water for his people to drink if the springs fail them. Using a part of something to relate to the whole is called synecdoche in figurative language. Regarding the meaning of this implicature, the translator as well as the target readers are aware of this implied meaning, but the target reader does not have the same contextual effect. So, the translator tries to make a kind of connection between text and context and he translates the noun "يد" conceptually as "favor". Thus, substitution enables the translator to create a shared knowledge and to convey a related cognitive environment. Using indirect translation approach enables the translator to achieve relevance between target readers and source text.

**Extract 4:**

**ST:** والله إنى ! الدماء وإراقة ، الذِّمام وخفر ، الأرحام قطع فيم ياقوم قال المطلب عبد ولكن ' . بيننا فليقض حكم إلى فهل لى تؤمنوا أن أبيتم فإن . بشيء دونكم من نفسي أوثر ما

**TT:** But Abdul - Muttalib cried out loud , " Oh , listen , all of you ! Why should there be such **infighting among relatives** ? Why spill your honor and shed your blood ? By God , I swear I wouldn't keep what I would deny you ! If you will not believe me , let us defer to a judge for arbitration in our dispute . "



**Cognitive Pragmatic background (CPB):**

When Abdul-Muttalib discovered water in Zamzam well, people of Quraysh thought that he has dug up this water for them to drink if the springs fail them. But Abdul-Muttalib told them that it is his well, whose hidden structure he has revealed in compliance with an order descended to him from Heaven. He told them that he could if he wished offer it to them, but he should first offer it to pilgrims as God ordered him. Abdul-Muttalib's words aroused Qurayshi people's anger. They accused Abdul-Muttalib of being unfair to himself as well as unjust to his people, and that he imputes an untruth to Heaven. Banou Abd-Manaf were moved and expressed support for Abdul-Muttalib. They proceeded to defend him against the verbal Qurayshi attacks.

**Discussion:**

<b>CRI</b>	<b>Translation of CRI</b>	<b>Used Strategy</b>
قطع الأرحام	<b>infighting among relatives</b>	<b>Explicitation – indirect translation</b>

An internecine brawl was about to arise among people so Abdul-Muttalid said the sentence above. According to Mujaam Almaany, the noun phrase 'الأرحام قطع' is a culturally-bound expression related to Islamic religion. Merriam Webster online dictionary defines it as 'breaking ties with kith and kin' or severing blood ties. The opposite of 'الرحم قطع' is 'صلة الرحم' which means, according to Mujaam Almaany, to foster good relations with one's kin, to do good to one's kith and kin, to keep good relations with relatives, to treat relatives with mercy and forgiveness, to visit them, and to help them whenever they need. So, the word 'أرحام' in this context has an abstract meaning referring to kinship. Consequently, the expression 'الأرحام قطع', depicting kinship as something cut, and triggers the conversational implicature of infighting among relatives. Then, it is a culture-specific item for the target readers. Interpreting and understanding the Islamic context of this culture-specific item is too hard for cognitive environment of the target readers. Thus, it seems rational that the translator has preferred to explain the utterance by using indirect translation approach. This interpretative use of language across languages and cultural boundaries has facilitated the responsibility of the target readers and provide adequate contextual effects considering the Islamic context of the utterance. Thus, they may read the culture-specific item in their own context easily.

**Extract 5:**

**ST:** من حمل فيما خاله حملة الذي هُدَيْل عسل يمازجه للبنأ فيها وإن غريضا لشواء فيها إن! أيام منذ أخته يزور أقبل حين البادية هدايا

**TT:** 'Here were succulent cuts of roast meat, milk sweetened with the honey of the Hudhail tribe, which his maternal uncle had carried to them as part of the gifts from the Bedouin District, whence he had come to see his sister in Mecca a few days ago.'

**Cognitive Pragmatic background(CPB)::**

In the example above, while Abdul-Muttalib and his son were digging Zamzam, Samraa, Abdul-Muttalib's wife, sent them some food and drink.

**Discussion:**

CRI	Translation of CRI	Used Strategy
غريضا شواء	succulent cuts of roast meat	Explicitation – indirect translation
هُدَيْل عسل يمازجه للبنأ	milk sweetened with the honey of the Hudhail tribe	Explicitation – indirect translation

Types of food and names of places are considered a type of cultural presupposition. The adjective 'غريضا' is a cultural bound expression of an Arabic origin refers to 'soft', 'juicy', or 'ripe' meat (Mujaam Almaany). Allayani (2012) mentions that 'هُدَيْل' is an Adnanite tribe of western Saudi Arabia in Hijjaz. The translator, to make the cultural presuppositions of such expressions clear to the target reader, resorted to adding some explanatory words. He transferred 'غريضا شواء' into 'succulent cuts of roast meat' and 'هُدَيْل عسل يمازجه لبنأ' into 'milk sweetened with the honey of the Hudhail tribe', attempting to avoid processing any potential ambiguities for a reader from a different culture. Moreover, explicitation of the difficult Arabic words enable the translator to create an equivalent cognitive environment so that the target reader can process the input information easily without exerting efforts. In this regard, we have a source text and a target text that share the same interpretative resemblance. Therefore, the source contextual effect resembles the target contextual effects.

**Extract 6:**

**ST:** الموت وتنتظرون بأيديكم تلقون أولاء أنتم ها ! كم أعجز ما ، قريش معشر يا ، إيلكم في وإن ، قوة من لبقية فيكم وإن ، الحياة أسباب من وولدكم أهلكم وبين بينكم ما وتقطعون . عليها يُكرهني حتى للموت نفسي بمُسَلِّم أنا ما والله لا !النشاط من وفضلا الحركة على لقدرة . فرجأ الضيق هذا من لكم يجد أن الله فلعل !الأرض هذه في فاضربوا هلم

**TT:** "O men of Quraysh! How vapidly lifeless you are! Here you are, hands down, waiting to die! You're so easily breaking the ties of life

binding you to your families and offspring! Your strength has not been all spent, and your camels can move and have some energy left! By God, I will not submit myself to death until death forces me to give up the ghost. Come on! **Advance in the land!** Perhaps God will enable you to break this impasse. "

**Cognitive Pragmatic background (CPB):**

After being lost for a long time without water or food on their way to Huthaym, the priests of Bani Sa'd for whom they resorted to decide whether the water of Zamaz would go for the pilgrims or for them, the people of Quraysh became desperate and decided to give up for death. Abdul-Muttalib said the sentences above urging them not to give up and attempting to revive their hope and renew their energy.

**Discussion:**

CRI	Translation of CRI	Used Strategy
فأضربوا في هذه الارض	<b>Advance in the land</b>	<b>Substitution – indirect translation</b>

Mujaam Almaany mentions that the collocation "ضرب في الارض" is used to describe someone who moves from place to another seeking better livelihood. In addition to that, Abdul-Muttalib's utterance describes the land as a person who is beaten. The personification here can give rise to a conversational implicature such as that "Abdul-Muttalib is urging people to strive for livelihood". In this example, the indirect translation method explicitates the personification. accordingly, the target reader is able to understand this implicature because it becomes close to their own cognitive environment. Thus, the source and target text share the same interpretative resemblance. Replacing the word "ضرب" by the verb "advance" creates an equivalent cognitive environment for the target reader and it facilitates the processing of information in the target reader's mind.

**Extract 7:**

**ST:**

براء أبو يصنع ماذا ! للثأر وكماتهم عامر بني فتیان ينهض لم'  
! يلاعبها لا له ما ! بأسنته

**TT:** 'The hardy soldiers of Bani Amer have not risen to take revenge ! By God ! I wonder why they have sharp blades with them . Why aren't they using them ?'

**Cognitive Pragmatic background (CPB):**

In the example above, Samraa wonders wearily why the soldiers of her clan did not use their sharp blades in fighting against their enemies who invaded their tribe. She condemns them for not defending their clan against the invasion of Bani Saad which claimed the lives of her father

and her brother and for not taking revenge. In addition, her mother and her sisters had been captured and enslaved.

**Discussion:**

CRI	Translation of CRI	Used Strategy
يلاعبها	Using	Substitution – indirect translation

The implicit information in the source text is conveyed via implicature which says " why they did not use their sharp blades". This implied information is not known to the target reader, so he needs an effort to process its original meaning. Here, the translator makes use of some contextual effects and he substitute the verb "يداعب" by another verb which is close and related to the cognition of the target reader that is "use". Creating a shared knowledge and shared cognition makes it easy for the target reader to absorb the intended meaning. Moreover, the original metaphor in which Taha Hussein describes the blade of a sword as a woman who is flirted is ignored in the target text and it is substituted by the lexical word "use" so the target reader becomes able to understand the meaning.

**Extract 8:**

**ST:** وكان : الآباء وحنو العطف منه تحس وأباً ، العين قرّة عنده تجد ابنا لها الحارث كان فقد ، أسرارها ويعرف ألمها يحس هو .

**TT:** ‘Al-Hareth was, for her, a son who **warmed the cockles of her heart**, and a father from whom she received paternal kindness and sympathy. On his part, he felt her pain and fathomed its depths.’

**Cognitive Pragmatic background (CPB):**

In this example Samraa talks about her son, Al-Hareth, who felt her pain and tried hard to find a cure for it, did his best to be with her, staying and talking long with her, letting her share his serious and frivolous concerns and consulting her. In most cases, he was his father’s surrogate, compensating with his love and charity for Samraa’s husband’s often protracted periods of desertion.

**Discussion**

CRI	Translation of CRI	Used Strategy
قرّة العين	<b>warmed the cockles of her heart</b>	<b>Explication – indirect translation</b>

According to Mujaam Almaany, the collocation ‘العين قرّة’ is a culturally bound figurative expression used to refer to what a person loves so passionately that he finds in it a substitute for everything and everyone. It is an idiomatic expression indicating something, and particularly a person, that one values and cherishes above all other things. The original

utterance 'عين قرّة' has some figurative meaning which may or may not be known in the target culture. The collocation 'Warms the cockles of somebody's heart' is a reference to something pleasant that makes us feel good. It refers to giving one warm and a comforting feeling which can serve the message as intended in the original context. As the relevant implicit information is available in the source audience's cognitive environment, the source text audience can achieve adequate contextual effects only with some effort.

The English audience, however, may have to expend much more effort in processing the text as they are not always familiar with the cultural context. To them, the source text cannot be optimally relevant. In view of this, having considered the expectations of the target audience with regard to the target language text and the causal interaction of text and context, the translator renders "warmed the cockles of her heart" as the substitute for "عين قرّة". The English audience usually processes these expressions on the basis of the combination of the text and the context, so the relevant information is also implicit. In other words, these English expressions are located where the translated text and the English audience's expectation meet. Thus, the English audience could also achieve adequate contextual effects without expending unjustified effort in processing the target text. In this way, the translator was successful in making his translated version as relevant as the source text, or approximately relevant to the extent that the source text is relevant to its original audience. The translated version brings the similar cognitive changes into the audience's context. So, it is safe to say that the translator has succeeded in achieving the interpretive resemblance of the passage to its source text.

#### Extract 9

**ST:** ذلك ومنذ لي ضرة منهن واحدة كل في رأيت لأنني جميعا النساء كرهت اليوم ذلك منذ ' . ابني فارقه ما البيت لهذا مفارقاً ، ابني فيه أقام ما البيت بهذا مقبما الموت شبح رايت اليوم

**TT:** ' On that day I hated all women, as I saw in each **another wife besides me!** Since that day I have seen the ghost of death living in my house for as long as my son lived in it, and departing from it if my son departs.

#### Cognitive Pragmatic Background (CPB):

On the day he dug up Zamzam, Abdul-Muttalib voted that if he were to beget ten male sons, which he could see before him, to sacrifice one of them. That vow caused Samraa no end of misery as she knew that Abdul-Muttalib would marry more women. In addition, she feared that her son, Al-Hareth, would be the sacrifice.

**Discussion:**

CRI	Translation of CRI	Used Strategy
ضرة	another wife besides me	Explicitation- direct translation

The term 'ضرة', according to Mujaam Almaany, is a cultural specific item related to **social** customs and it triggers a cultural presupposition. The term is used to refer to one of two or more women who are married to the same man in polygamy. This lexical item has a cultural equivalent in the target culture which is 'co-wife'. However, in the target text the translator resorts to the explanation strategy. He translates the cultural bound expression into 'another wife besides me'. Providing this explanation, the translator increases the explicitness of the presupposed information of the original utterance. Moreover, the phrase "another wife beside me" is more relevant to target readers and it achieves relevance principle between target reader and source text. By using direct translation technique, the translator pays attention to the impeded meaning thus achieving complete interpretative resemblance.

**Extract 10**

ST:

رفادة إليه كانت  
'المطلب عمه بعد وسقايته الحاج

TT: 'He inherited from his uncle Abu Taleb the job of **hosting** and providing drinking water to the pilgrims.'

**Cognitive Pragmatic background (CPB):**

It was not an easy task for people of Mecca to collect and save as much money as they could in order to help unable pilgrims and to facilitate pilgrimage to them. It is a great Islamic custom show how Muslims seek to help each other in performing religious duties. The first to do this was Hashem bin Abd Manaf. Abdul-Muttalib inhereted this custom from his uncle Abu Talib.

**Discussion:**

CRI	Translation of CRI	Used Strategy
رفادة	Hosting	Substitution- indirect translation

In this example the author's intention is conveyed through translating the term 'رفادة' as 'hosting'. 'Hosting', according to Merriam Webster online dictionary, refers to inviting guests to a meal, a party, etc. or to have people staying at one's house. 'رفادة', on the other hand, is an Islamic cultural-bound expression refers to serving the pilgrims, especially the poor ones, providing them with food, housing and camels.

As regards the meaning of the unit "رفادة" is already known to the source text readers and to the translator who has the same shared knowledge. The target reader, on the other hand, needs to exert a big cognitive effort to get the meaning of serving the pilgrims. So, the translator has chosen to translate the word "رفادة" as "hosting" which is good cognitive equivalence to the target reader.

**Extract 11**

**ST:** " وكان الأدم من أحواض في الماء لهم يجمع ويسقيهم، البيت حجوا إذا الناس يطعم فكان " وعسرا جهدا الحجيج لسقاية الماء هذا جمع في يجد "

**TT:** " He provided them with food, and managed to collect water for them in basins made of animal hide, spending strenuous efforts and having difficulty collecting much water, for the pilgrims who visit **the shrine, the Kaaba (i.e., the cubic building) in Mecca.**"

**Cognitive Pragmatic background (CPB):**

In the above example, Abdul-Muttalib inherited from his uncle Abu Talib the job of hosting and providing drinking water to pilgrims, which was a very hard job.

**Discussion:**

<b>CRI</b>	<b>Translation of CRI</b>	<b>Used Strategy</b>
البيت	<b>Shrine, the Kaaba (i.e., the cubic building) in Mecca.</b>	<b>Explicitation – indirect translation</b>

By using the definite noun phrase "البيت" in the source text, Hussein presupposes the existence of specific entity. The word "البيت" is a lexical item in the Islamic religion and it might not be known for readers from a different culture if it is not explicitated. In other words, From the relevance theoretic perspective, since the target readers do not have such background information in their current cognitive environment, and since the background information of this cultural-specific item is unfamiliar in their context, this may make them have difficulty in getting adequate contextual effects when compared to the Arabic readers. So, it is the role of the translator to facilitate understanding. By using indirect translation strategy, the translator creates a shared cognitive knowledge and he substitutes the word "البيت" by " Shrine, the Kaaba (i.e., the cubic building) in Mecca." This translation is more familiar to the cognitive environment of the target reader.

**8. Conclusion**

The major aim of this research is to examine the complex contextual effects of some selected cultural references (CRs) and to

determine the strategies used by the translator to create a shared cognitive environment to the target reader in Taha Hussein's novel (1933) *'alā Hameš Alsirah* and its English translation *Marginalia of Prophet Mohammed* (2021). The research applies Gutt's (2000) model of cognitive translation along with Diaz-Cintas & Ramel (2007) model of cultural references translation strategies. The results of the research show that both direct and indirect translation approaches are used by the translator during translation process (5 to 9). Direct translation is used 5 times while indirect translation is used 9 times. The more use of indirect translation means that the translator pays a great attention to: 1) the cognitive environment of the target audience, 2) the manifestation of the cultural references to both the author and the target reader and 3) the context needed to create enough contextual effects that lead the target audience to exert less efforts in conceptualisation process. This means that Gutt's (2000) relevant theoretic approach is significant in explaining the different strategies the translators can use while translating on the cognitive level. The results also prove that substitution and explicitation are two key strategies and techniques that enable the translator to use indirect translation approach. By using explicitation and substitution, the translator succeeds in processing the cognitive stimuli displayed in translation and this facilitates the understanding of the target reader who succeeds in reading the text by his own mind and cognition. Hence, translation meets the target reader's expectations which is closely related to the source text expectations. Thus, Enani enables the target reader (English) to read Taha Hussein as he enables the target reader (Arabic) to read Shakespeare.



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