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Translation-Adaptation and Transcreation in *Netflix* English Epi-titles and their Arabic Equivalents (2016-2021): A Pragmatic, Socio-cultural and Socio-cognitive Approach

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Abstract

Whether transcreation is a type of "creative translation" or a subtle artistic style of translation, is a question that has been raised over decades within both the translation market and academia. Some preview transcreation as a process that adapts source concepts into the target culture making the audience feel its originality. Others perceive it as a refined artistic way of rendering the source text. Known for its manifold media content, Netflix is a platform that uses transcreation as a translation method for its publicity material including show titles. Nevertheless, little is known about transcreation in Translation Studies. Accordingly, this research paper aims to examine the translation approach Netflix translators follow in rendering titles of media productions, by applying Volkova and Zubenina's theory of pragmatic and socio-cultural adaptation (2015). This paper opens the way for further studies in the field of transcreation as a new branch of Translation Studies and media translation.

Keywords: trans-creation, *Netflix* epi-titles, media translator, socio-cultural adaptation, pragmatic adaptation

التكييف/الترجمة الإبداعيّة في عناوين العروض على منصّة نتفلكس بالإنجليزية ومقابلاتها بالعربيّة (2016 - 2021): مدخل تداولي وثقافي-اجتماعي ومعرفي-اجتماعي

مقدّمته إليكم الباحثة: شروق مجدي محمد أحمد درويش
دبلومة في الترجمة الفورية والتحريرية الإنجليزية والعربية
حاصلة على ليسانس اللغة الإنجليزية وآدابها والترجمة
مترجمة أولى تحريرية وفورية بشركة ميدلوكاليز

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المُلَخّص:

لطالما كانت هناك إشكالية في سوق الترجمة وأوساطها الأكاديمية بشأن عملية "الترجمة الإبداعية" (Transcreation)، إذ يراها البعض أنها ترجمة يُكَيَّف فيها النص المصدر ليُلائم ثقافة اللغة الهدف، فيفهم الجمهور المستهدف أفكار النص جيّدًا كما لو كان النص قد كُتب في الأصل بتلك اللغة، بينما يرى آخرون أنها ما هي إلا ترجمة للنص المصدر باستخدام أسلوب جمالي مصقول. وتُعتبر "نتفلكس" إحدى المنصات الشهيرة المستخدمة لهذا النوع من الترجمة بوصفها طريقة أساسية لنشر محتواها الذي تتعدّد أشكاله، بدءًا من ترجمة الأفلام إلى "موجزات الأفلام" و"عناوين الأعمال". ورغم استخدام مترجمي "نتفلكس" طريقة "الترجمة الإبداعية" بشكلٍ رئيس في الترجمة، لم تتناول دراسات الترجمة ترجمة هذه النصوص وخاصّة العناوين، على حدّ علم الباحث. ولذا، يهدف هذا البحث إلى استكشاف نهج الترجمة الذي يتّبعه مترجمو "نتفلكس" عند ترجمتهم لعناوين الأعمال إلى العربية، باستخدام نظرية "تاتيانا فولكوفا" و"ماريا زوبينينا" الخاصّة بعملية تكييف الترجمة من خلال النهجين التداولي، والثقافي-الاجتماعي (2015) في تحليل عناوين أعمال "نتفلكس"، ومقابلاتها بالعربية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الترجمة الإبداعية، عناوين أعمال نتفلكس، التكييف التداولي، التكييف الثقافي-الاجتماعي، مترجم المواد الإعلامية

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I. Introduction
1.1 Scope of the study

Netflix is a media platform providing streaming services to all viewers and members on multiple internet-connected devices. It is teeming with various shows, movies, series, documentaries, and others more, which are derived from multiple genres, cultures, and languages. *Netflix* is commonly known for its diversity and inclusion. Nevertheless, it cannot attain this publicity all over the world without an essential factor that is translation.

As a provider for media and entertainment content, *Netflix* has diverse types of texts and subject matters; synopses, meta-data, epi-titles, CS, and others. Hence, it incorporates varied kinds of translation; subtitling, dubbing, and transcreation. The researcher focuses in this study on a major element of *Netflix* material; titles and epi-titles, and their Arabic equivalents. Apart from synopses, titles are represented in titles of shows, movies, documentaries, or programs, including episodic titles (Epi-titles) which are specifically made for a TV series with multiple episodes and seasons. They are regarded as the adjacent attracting element which viewers or members of *Netflix* perceive when they first click to watch any show on the platform. They are usually created based on the overall idea of an episode, a movie, or a show, but they are frequently ambiguous to the viewer, in order to instill suspense and excitement in both the hearts and minds of the spectators to go and watch

the show. The dominant type of translation used within *Netflix* to render such material and other para-texts in other languages is "Transcreation".

Transcreation is well recognized in the labor market of localization, translation, and marketing industries. It is acknowledged as a kind of "creative translation" as it combines translation and creative style or writing. Several media and marketing companies use transcreation as a tool of branding and attracting more people to use their products. What distinguishes transcreation from ordinary translation is that it is more tailored to fit into the target culture as if it has been originally created and written in that culture or language. Some argue that transcreation is only about translating the text in a creative, refined and aesthetic style in the target language or culture. Others say that transcreation is about the adaptation of the source text into the target culture in order to make it sound original.

Translators of *Netflix's* para-texts or meta-data follow multiple procedures and use several strategies during the process of translation. Para-texts or meta-data such as shows' titles and synopses within *Netflix* are those promotional materials which form the first impression and relationship between the viewers or audiences and the shows. They "range from movie reviews to advertisements and promotional material, digital and cultural shifts have driven new iterations, shaping modern cinematic reception and engagement." (Sendur, 2019, p. 1). Among these kinds of para-texts are titles of shows and episodic titles. A show's title is "a concise statement that is to provide insights into the subject matter of the film storyline" (Krasina & Moctar, 2020, p. 2). As capturing as it is for the audience, a title is the doorway into the world of any show and displays the atmosphere which surrounds it. That is why, a title plays a paramount role in the process of marketing for a specific show, movie, series, or even program.

The mission of finding or creating a title for a specific show or movie has become of no less importance than the show itself. Its translation is of equal significance and represents a considerable challenge. This is due to the fact that translators have to think of an equivalent that conveys the meaning accurately, matches the original context, and has a far-reaching effect worldwide after its release. The title is, in fact, a multiplex unit of so many elements, from the intra-linguistic to the para-linguistic. So, the translator has to take into consideration the complexity and multi-dimensionality of a title, from its semantic meaning, structure, and tone to its surrounding context, pragmatic and socio-cultural characteristics and

functionality, in order to render the titles' translation accurately. Title translation is very challenging, even more than that of synopses or subtitles, as it should be comprehensive of all of the different aspects which the source title reflects. That is why, language and culture are intertwined when it comes to the challenge of translating a film title because "The translation process demands effort – to transform or modulate the senses and simultaneously preserve the information and, thus, in consequence, convey the right sense and idea supported by a tagline: one should study the entire work in depth to fully understand it and always keep in mind intra- as well as extra-linguistic factors." (Krasina & Moctar, 2020, p. 12).

Titles within *Netflix* has two different types; titles of shows, movies, series, or programs, and episodic titles which are included in each season of a specific series. Due to the diverse content viewed on *Netflix*, from the manifold genres and categories to the greatly miscellaneous languages in which the shows are created and presented, multiple and convoluted procedures are followed during the process of title translation. Some titles are translated directly, others are localized, transcreated, or kept in the universal language, English. This is due to the linguistic and cultural dissimilarity. That is why, the translation of para-texts, in general, and shows' titles within *Netflix*, in particular, is regarded as a multilateral process which involves so many parties and elements. In fact, the transcreation process of epi-titles within *Netflix* is not only confined to the linguistic or cultural sides like any other kind of translation. It is, in reality, an exhaustive intricate process that comprises various aspects precisely as an emerald that has so many facets, including but not limited to, linguistic, social, cultural, contextual, psychological, mental, and socio-cognitive ones. Transcreators, within this process, deal with all of these elements when translating an epi-title, which is also seen as an audio-visual text that requires translators to go beyond the text itself and its linguistic elements, and unwillingly indulge in socio-cognitive constituents.

Therefore, this constitutes a complication for *Netflix* translators, but, at the same time, it is what makes this transcreation process distinctive. Yet, it is not clearly displayed how such process goes and the exact approach followed by *Netflix* translators. Thus, this study aims to examine the translation approach followed in translating *Netflix's* paratextual content of epi-titles. It also attempts to examine how *Netflix* translators work during the process of translation, what affects their choices in translation, whether their transcreation of *Netflix's* para-textual context, is similar to pragmatic and socio-cultural adaptation or not, and how far does the

process of transcreation entail a socio-cognitive approach. This is done through focusing on the analysis of selected English epi-titles of different *Netflix* shows during the period from 2016 to 2021, and their Arabic translations published on the website of *Netflix MENA*. The website is typically personalized and designed for the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA) audience, among which is the Arabic audience. These English para-texts are examined in this study within the framework of Volkova and Zubenina's Theory of Adaptation (2015), which explores a text from a pragmatic as well as a socio-cultural point of view, with an emphasis on the discourse and communication approach, in addition to the socio-cognitive context perspective.

1.2 Significance of the study

Transcreation, in general and *Netflix*'s transcreation of paratextual content, in particular, are a newly explored areas within the field of Translation Studies. So little has been discussed about transcreation, and its relation to adaptation and the socio-cultural situation. Para-texts such as titles are crucial to *Netflix*'s viewers as they are the first thing they behold when they click to watch a show. They give them a briefing about the show and even make them decide whether to watch it or not. In spite of their essentiality to viewers or members when watching shows or movies, titles (meta-data) have never, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, been carefully examined for analysis and interpretation in the translation academia. Moreover, applying a translation model that is related to adaptation, which is considered a major element in Translation Studies, to a newly discovered area like transcreation, is a significant step towards filling this knowledge gap concerning the relationship between translation, adaptation and transcreation. Additionally, exploring transcreation from a socio-cognitive viewpoint raises questions and opens doors for research on the connection between transcreation and cognitive linguistics.

1.3 Corpus of Study and Tools of Analysis

The researcher chooses a corpus of multiple English titles of different shows and movies of *Netflix*'s production, as well as their Arabic versions, during the period from 2016 to 2021. These shows or movies belong to different genres as the content of *Netflix* is rather diversified. The corpus of choice is collected from the online website of *Netflix*; both the English and the Arabic interfaces are personalized and standardized for MENA region. As for the tool of

analysis, the researcher chooses Volkova and Zubenina's Theory of Adaptation (2015) as a theoretical framework to analyze such para-texts, in addition to the socio-cognitive context as a supporting element in the analysis of *Netflix* material. The analysis in this study explores both the pragmatic and socio-cultural aspects of adaptation with an emphasis on the discourse, communication, and socio-cognitive approaches, within the selected trans-created *Netflix* para-textual material.

1.I.1 Disclaimers

Netflix MENA is considered a bilingual version of the website which is personalized only for MENA viewers, whether in English or Arabic. It differs from the original US website. Therefore, the English titles and their equivalent Arabic versions are target audience oriented. They are tailored for MENA audiences. The content, therefore, might be different on the two websites; the one designed for the MENA region and the original U.S website. The source and target texts collected herein are published on the *Netflix* MENA website, in English and Arabic, at the time of writing this proposal. So, they might also change over time according to *Netflix* website. *Netflix* MENA is at least 40% personalized and standardized specifically for the audience of this region, whether they are natives or expatriates who live in this region. Thus, the English/Arabic epi-titles sampled in this study may not necessarily be the same ones that are featured for other users (Netflix Technology Blog, 2017).

II. *Review of Literature*
2.1 Transcreation

Transcreation has always been attached to the idea of adaptation and creative re-writing, or trans-editing. In his article, Jothiraj (2004) argues that in transcreation, the "very ideology espoused in the original is either reinforced or reshaped/resisted so that the position taken by the translator becomes very important" (p. 151). Both transcreation and adaptation include a process of extensive re-writing or editing to make the text appeal to a specific targeted audience. Adaptation can also include "visual elements, such as images, or other elements such as units of measure" (Acolad, 2019, p. 1). Unlike transcreation, adaptation is viewed to be more general as it can include all types of texts, has low commitment for

clients' instructions, can happen within the same language with different dialects, and can be applied to different lengths of texts (Acolad, 2019, p. 1).

It is not yet evident whether transcreation is another completely different type of translation and an isolated service on its own or not. The matter has been debatable over the years, as Morón & Calvo (2018) indicate in their study, and it is not certain whether "transcreation was just another fancy word to refer to what good translators traditionally do, i.e. transferring and adapting content to target cultures, or it meant the emergence of an essentially different service" (p. 2). Transcreation, unlike localization, is distinguished with more creativity and a great emphasis on the re-writing and re-creation of elements to have the same impact on the target audience (Morón & Calvo, 2018, p. 128).

2.2 Contemporary Theory of Adaptation (2015)

2.2.1 Adaptation in Translation

In their article "Pragmatic and Socio-cultural Adaptation in Translation: Discourse and Communication Approach", Volkova and Zubenina (2015) propose the contemporary view of adaptation as a translation technique applied to some isolated parts of a text or a translation strategy which can be applied to the text as a whole if the text represents a difficulty in understanding; they also name it local and global adaptation. They set a methodology that can be applied to the translation analysis of a pragmatic and socio-cultural source text that tends to provoke adaptation. They state that "translation" and "adaptation" are both parts of a universal interaction between different cultures (p.1). Adaptation is argued to be an essential and integral part of the translation process which creates a connection between the source and target texts, building bridges between cultures, and strengthening the relationship between the target audience and the text they read as well. There are some factors that can trigger adaptation in translation; namely: (1) "cross-code breakdown"; (2) "situational or cultural inadequacy"; and (3) "disruption of a communication process" (p. 91).

2.2.2 Types of Adaptation

Volkova & Zubenina (2015) divide adaptation into two types: pragmatic adaptation and socio-cultural adaptation. Pragmatic adaptation has several

definitions; among which is the one described by Panu Kosonen (2011) as "the modification of the source text in order to produce the text which conforms to the needs of a new language environment" (p. 63). Socio-cultural adaptation, on the other hand, is related more to bi-culturalism or bi-lingualism as it determines that 'translating means comparing cultures' (Nord, 2001, p. 34). There are some source-text criteria which make translators use either "pragmatic adaptation" or "socio-cultural adaptation" or sometimes both, as well as, some techniques that translators use to render them. (Volkova & Zubenina, 2015, p. 92-93).

2.2.3 Adaptation and Discourse and Communication Approach

Volkova & Zubenina (2015) establish their model based on 3 main levels: **Textual level, Discursive level** and **Communicative level**. Volkova & Zubenina (2015) divide the model criteria into 2 groups based on the 3 main levels as clarified in the table below:

Pragmatic Criteria	Socio-cultural Criteria
Textual Level	
Lexical and semantic parameters of a source text like colloquial or evaluative expressions (p. 98-99).	The use of idiomatic expressions and play upon words (puns) (p. 98-99).
Syntactic peculiarities of a source text which are related to structure of the sentence, word order, compound, etc. (p. 98-99).	The specific use of pronouns in the ST (p. 98-99).
The grammar of a source text (grammatical parameters) like modal verbs (p. 98-99).	The use of cultural lacunas and realia which may not exist in the TL (p. 98-99).
The stylistic aspect of a source text (stylistic parameters) such as metaphors and similes, proverbs, sayings, etc. (p. 98-99).	Lexical elements reflecting social and cultural peculiarities of the ST or the source culture (SC) and its reality like words describing gestures, etc. (p. 98-99).
Discursive Level	
Goals of discourse, discourse key concepts, field of discourse, and tenor of discourse (p. 98-99).	Implicit or explicit culture-specific values of a source discourse and interdiscursive elements of a source text (p. 98-99).
Communicative Level	
Functions of communication: cognitive, communicative, motivational, etc. and Typical features of communication that may appear unusual to the target readers like informativity, institutionality, accessibility, etc. (p. 98-99).	Intertextual elements of a ST like allusions, quotations, statistics, etc. (p. 98-99).

III. Methodology

This study encompasses a corpus of English epi-titles of different shows and movies of *Netflix*'s production as well as their Arabic versions, during the period from 2016 to 2021. These shows belong to different

genres and revolve around different topics, whether romance, drama, action, tragedy, comedy, religion, politics, thrillers, etc.; as the content of *Netflix* is rather assorted. The researcher chooses this time span because *Netflix* has been founded in 1997, however, it rose to prominence and fame and it has begun streaming on the internet in more than 190 countries all over the world beginning from 2016 up till now.

The analysis is conducted in 3 steps. The first is analyzing the source text according to the pragmatic and socio-cultural criteria of adaptation on the 3 main levels of the discourse and communication approach set by Volkova and Zubenina (2015). This is done by extracting all of the pragmatic and socio-cultural features of the source text on the textual, discursive and communicative levels. In the second step, the researcher analyzes the target text as per the cultural elements that trigger pragmatic and socio-cultural adaptation, as well as the techniques and linguistic features used to render this adaptation in the target text by translators. Also, the researcher resorts to both the techniques of "Back translation" and "Literal translation" to clarify the differences between the source and target texts which might trigger adaptation and help in the analysis. In addition to that, the researcher uses the function of "socio-cognitive context" as a supporting element to the analysis of the target text choices. Finally, the researcher qualitatively displays the findings of the analysis and the ideological purposes of both the source and target texts.

IV.   *Discussion and Findings*

Name of Show	Genre/Topic	Season	Season	Season	Release Year	Age Category
Selling Sunset	TV Dramas, Lifestyle	1	2	3	2019 / 2020 (respectively)	18+
		Episodes	**Episodes**	**Episodes**		
عمالقة العقارات		1 and 4	8	3 and 5		

English Epi-title (Source Text)	Literal Translation	Arabic Translation (Target Text)	Target text Back-translation	Pragmatic and Socio-cultural Adaptation Strategy/Technique
Selling Sunset **(Main Title of the Show)**	• بيع صن سيت • بيع غروب الشمس	عمالقة العقارات	• Real estate giants • Real estate experts	- *Pragmatic*: • Creation • Trans-editing • Omission • Re-writing - *Socio-cultural:* • Generalization • Functional Equivalence • Domestication
Can't Have Your Cake and Eat It Too **(S01, E01)**	• لا يمكنك الحصول على الكعك بعد أكلها • لا يمكنك تناول الكعك والاحتفاظ بها أيضًا	لا يُمكنك الحصول على كلّ شيء	• You can't have everything	- *Pragmatic*: • Creation • Explicit change • Interpersonal change (from informal to formal) • Trans-editing/re-writing • Approximation - *Socio-cultural:* • Generalization • Translation by a cultural substitution • Translation by paraphrase and illustration • Functional equivalence • Domestication

Loose Lips Sink Relationships **(S01, E04)**	• الشفاه السائبة تغرق العلاقات • الشفاه الطليقة تفسد العلاقات	لسانٌ بلا لجام يُثير المتاعب الجسام	• A tongue with no bridle causes great trouble	- *Pragmatic:* • Expansion • Creation • Explicitness change • Trans-editing • Approximation - *Socio-cultural:* • Specification • Translation by cultural substitution • Functional equivalence • Domestication
The Gloves Come Off **(S02, E08)**	• القفّازات تظهر • أشهر القفّازات	بلا رحمة	• Without mercy • No mercy	- *Pragmatic:* • Creation • Trans-editing/re-writing • Approximation - *Socio-cultural:* • Generalization • Translation by a more neutral equivalent • Domestication
The Biggest Agent in the Room **(S03, E08)**	• الوسيط\العميل الأكبر في الغرفة • أكبر عميل في الغرفة	وراء كلّ نجاح عظيم حقد دفين	• Behind every great success lies a deep grudge	- *Pragmatic:* • Creation • Trans-editing/re-writing • Approximation • Explicitness change - *Socio-cultural:* • Generalization • Translation by edition • Descriptive translation • Translation by paraphrase and illustration • Reformulation

| Let Sleeping Dogs Lie **(S04, E05)** | • دع كلاب النوم كما هي
• دع كلاب النوم مستغرقة في النوم كما هي
• دع الفتنة نائمة | الأفضل ترك الأمور على حالها | • It's best to leave things as is
• Better to leave things as they are | - *Pragmatic:*
• Creation
• Trans-editing/re-writing
• Approximation
• Explicitness change
• Interpersonal change (from informal to formal)
• Illocutionary change (from imperative/directive to indicative)

- *Socio-cultural:*
• Generalization
• Translation by edition
• Translation by paraphrase/illustration
• Reformulation
• Domestication |

Name of Show	Genre/Topic	Season	Season	Season	Release Year	Age Category
Rick and Morty	TV Comedies	3	4	5	2017, 2019, 2021 (of seasons respectively)	18+
		Episodes	**Episodes**	**Episodes**		
The title is the same in Arabic as it is preferred to be kept and known in English to the Arabic target audience and in the local Arabic market according to *Netflix*		1	1, 3, and 10	1, 5, and 8		

English Epi-title (Source Text)	Literal Translation	Arabic Translation (Target Text)	Target text Back-translation	Pragmatic and Socio-cultural Adaptation Strategy/Technique
The Rickshank	• ريكشانك ريكديمشن)Translitera	ريك خلاص	• The Redemption of Rick	- *Pragmatic:* • Creation • Trans-editing/re-

Rickdemption **(S03, E01)**	tion(• ضرب ريك وتخليصه • طعن ريك وافتراءه • طعن ريك والكمّ العظيم		• Rick's Repentance	writing • Approximation • Explicitness change • Interpersonal change (from informal to formal) - *Socio-cultural:* • Generalization • Translation by edition • Translation by paraphrase/illustration • Reformulation • Domestication • Transliteration
Edge of Tomorty: Rick Die Rickpeat **(S04, E01)**	• حافة تومورتي: موت ريك والتربة	انهيار مورتي واستنساخ ريك	• Morty's breakdown and Rick's cloning	- *Pragmatic:* • Creation • Trans-editing/re-writing • Approximation • Explicitness change • Interpersonal change (from informal to formal) - *Socio-cultural:* • Generalization • Translation by edition • Translation by paraphrase/illustration • Reformulation • Domestication • Transliteration
One Crew over the Crewcoo's Morty **(S04, E03)**	• طاقم واحد فوق مورتي كروكو	سرقة حماس مورتي	• Stealing away Morty's excitement • Robbing Morty of his enthusiasm	- *Pragmatic:* • Creation • Trans-editing/re-writing • Approximation • Explicitness change • Interpersonal change (from

				informal to formal)
				- *Socio-cultural:* • Generalization • Translation by edition • Translation by paraphrase/illustration • Reformulation • Transliteration • Domestication
Star Mort Rick Turn of the Jerri **(S04, E10)**	• مورت النجم وتحوّل ريك لجيري • النجم مورتي وقلب ريك لجيري	حرب النجوم: عودة جيري	• Star Wars: The Return of Jerri	- *Pragmatic:* • Creation • Trans-editing/re-writing • Approximation • Explicitness change • Interpersonal change (from informal to formal) - *Socio-cultural:* • Generalization • Translation by edition • Translation by paraphrase/illustration • Reformulation • Transliteration
Mort Dinner Rick Andre **(S05, E01)**	• عشاء مورتي وريك وأندريه	عشاء مورتي وريك والعدوّ القويّ	• Morty's Dinner, Rick, and the Powerful Enemy	- *Pragmatic:* • Creation • Trans-editing/re-writing • Approximation • Explicitness change • Interpersonal change (from informal to formal) - *Socio-cultural:* • Generalization • Translation by edition • Translation by paraphrase/illustration

				• Reformulation • Domestication • Transliteration
Amortycan Grickfitti **(S05, E05)**	• أمورتيكان غريكفيتي	مورتي وسيّارة ريك الفضائية	• Morty and Rick's Space Car	- *Pragmatic:* • Creation • Trans-editing/re-writing • Approximation • Explicitness change • Interpersonal change (from informal to formal) - *Socio-cultural:* • Generalization • Translation by edition • Translation by paraphrase/illustration • Reformulation • Transliteration
Rickternal Friendshine of the Spotless Mort **(S05, E08)**	• ريك والصديق اللامع لمورتي الناصع • صداقة ريك الأبدية لمورتي الطاهر	ريك وصديقه وذكريات أليمة	• Rick, His Friend, and Painful Memories	- *Pragmatic:* • Creation • Trans-editing/re-writing • Approximation • Explicitness change • Interpersonal change (from informal to formal) - *Socio-cultural:* • Generalization • Translation by edition • Translation by paraphrase/illustration • Reformulation • Transliteration

Name of Show	Genre /Topic	Season	Release Year	Age Category
Ghost in the Shell: SAC_2045	Action Anime	1	2020	16+
The title is the same in Arabic as it is preferred to be kept and known in English to the Arabic target audience and in the local Arabic market according to *Netflix*		**Episodes**		
		1, 2, 4, 6, 7, and 11		

English Epi-title (Source Text)	Literal Translation	Arabic Translation (Target Text)	Target text Back-translation	Pragmatic and Socio-cultural Adaptation Strategy/Technique
NO NOISE NO LIFE - Sustainable War **(S01, E01)**	• لا حياة بلا ضوضاء – الحرب الدائمة • لا ضوضاء لا حياة – الحرب الدائمة	لا حياة مع السلام - الحرب الدائمة هي الحياة	• No Life with Peace – Life is all about Sustainable War • No Life with Peace – Sustainable War is Life	- *Pragmatic:* • Creation • Trans-editing/re-writing • Explicitness change • Expansion - *Socio-cultural:* • Specification • Translation by edition • Translation by paraphrase/illustration • Reformulation • Descriptive translation
AT YOUR OWN RISK - Divided by a Wall **(S01, E02)**	• على مسؤوليتك الخاصّة – منقسمون بحائط / منقسمة بحائط	المجازفة هي مسؤوليتك - حاجز الثروة	• Risk is Your Responsibility – The Barrier of Wealth	- *Pragmatic:* • Creation • Trans-editing/re-writing • Explicitness change • Expansion - *Socio-cultural:* • Specification • Translation by addition and edition • Translation by paraphrase/illustr

				• ation • Reformulation
SACRIFICIAL PAWN - Emissary from the Divide **(S01, E04)**	• بيدق التضحية – مبعوث الانقسام	من سيكون كبش الفداء؟ - ومن سيُبعَث من الخارج؟	• Who Shall be the Scapegoat? – Who Will be Sent from the Outside/ beyond?	- *Pragmatic:* • Creation • Trans-editing/re-writing • Approximation • Explicitness change • Expansion • Locutionary change (from declarative to interrogative) - *Socio-cultural:* • Translation by edition • Reformulation • Functional equivalence • Translation by cultural substitution • Domestication (كبش الفداء instead (بيدق التضحية of
DISCLOSURE - Quantized Gospel **(S01, E06)**	• الانكشا ف – البشارة المحدَّدة • الانكشا ف – البشارة المصدَّقة	انكشاف الحقيقة - ظهور بشر من نوع جديد	• Truth Revealed – A New Kind of Humans Arise • Truth Unraveled – The Emergence of New Humans	- *Pragmatic:* • Creation • Trans-editing/re-writing • Approximation • Explicitness change • Expansion - *Socio-cultural:* • Translation by edition and addition • Reformulation • Functional equivalence • Domestication • Generalization

English Epi-title (Source Text)	Literal Translation	Arabic Translation (Target Text)	Target text Back-translation	Pragmatic and Socio-cultural Adaptation Strategy/Technique
PIE IN THE SKY - First Bank Robbery **(S01, E07)**	• فطيرة في السماء – أوّل سرقة لمصرف	الفاكهة المحرّمة – أول سرقة لمصرف	• Forbidden Fruit – First Bank Robbery	- *Pragmatic:* • Creation • Trans-editing/re-writing • Approximation • Explicitness change - *Socio-cultural:* • Translation by edition • Reformulation • Functional equivalence • Domestication
EDGELORD - The Revolution of the 14-year-olds **(S01, E011)**	• شخصية متطرفة / غريبة الأطوار – ثورة ذوات الأربعة عشرة عامًا • مَن يثير الجدل – ثورة ذوات الأربعة عشرة عامًا	جنون العظمة - ثورة المراهقين	• Paranoia/Megalomania – The Revolution of the Teens	- *Pragmatic:* • Creation • Trans-editing/re-writing • Approximation • Explicitness change - *Socio-cultural:* • Translation by edition • Reformulation • Domestication • Generalization • Translation by more neutral equivalents • Translation by illustration

Name of Show	Genre/Topic	Season	Episode	Release Year	Age Category
Bridgerton بريدجرتون	Period Pieces	1	1	2020	18+

English Epi-title (Source Text)	Literal Translation	Arabic Translation (Target Text)	Target text Back-translation	Pragmatic and Socio-cultural Adaptation Strategy/Technique
Diamond of the First Water **(S01, E01)**	• جوهرة المياه الأولى • الجوهرة الصافية	جمال استثنائي	• An Exceptional Beauty	- *Pragmatic:* • Creation • Trans-editing/re-writing • Approximation • Explicitness change

				- *Socio-cultural:*
				• Translation by edition
				• Functional equivalence
				• Domestication
				• Translation by paraphrase/illustration

Name of Show	Genre/Topic	Season	Episode	Release Year	Age Category
Nailed it!	Family Watch Together TV	4	1, 3, and 4	2020 and 2021 (respectively)	18+
The title is kept the same in English when presented to the Arabic market too.		6	1		

English Epi-title (Source Text)	Literal Translation	Arabic Translation (Target Text)	Target text Back-translation	Pragmatic and Socio-cultural Adaptation Strategy/Technique
Let's Get Lit **(S04, E01)**	• !لنصبح متحمّسين • !لنضيء • دعونا نفهم الأدب!	لنحتفل بصفوة الأدباء!	• Let's Celebrate Literature Elites! • Let's Celebrate Elite Writers!	- *Pragmatic:* • Creation • Trans-editing/re-writing • Explicitness change • Interpersonal change (from informal to formal) - *Socio-cultural:* • Translation by edition • Functional equivalence • Translation by paraphrase/illustration • Descriptive translation
Indiana Fails and the Temple of Slop **(S04, E03)**	• فشل إنديانا ومعبد الوحل	الكنوز المُشوّهة وكعكة أبي الهول	• Distorted Treasures and the Sphinx	- *Pragmatic:* • Creation • Trans-editing/re-writing • Approximation • Explicitness

			Cake	change • Expansion • Addition - *Socio-cultural:* • Generalization • Translation by edition • Functional equivalence • Domestication • Translation by paraphrase/illustration • Descriptive translation • Domestication
Im-Paw-sible Cakes **(S06, E01)**	• كعكات مستحيلة • كعكات ومخالب	كعكات مستحيلة وأليفة	• Imposs ible and Pet Cakes	- *Pragmatic:* • Creation • Trans-editing/re-writing • Approximation • Explicitness change • Expansion - *Socio-cultural:* • Translation by edition • Functional equivalence • Domestication • Translation by paraphrase/illustration • Generalization

Commentary:

In the framework of Volkova and Zubenina's theory of pragmatic and socio-cultural adaptation (2015) within the discourse and communication approach, it is evident that all of the above-listed source texts of English titles and epi-titles of various *Netflix* shows are loaded with textual, discursive, and communicative factors and difficulties which provoke the use of pragmatic and sociocultural adaptation as a translation approach. According to the pragmatic criteria, the English epi-titles are all-encompassing elements packed with textual and extra-textual idiosyncrasies as well as situational and contextual adversities that can trigger pragmatic adaptation which is applied to the given target texts, so as to cope with the intrinsic, structural, pragmatic, social, or cultural translation difficulties in the source texts. On the textual level, the text is full of lexical, semantic, syntactic, grammatical and stylistic parameters which indicate the author's implied intentions, from descriptive, evaluative, emotive, and informative expressions to compound, complex, or impersonal sentences, idiomatic proverbs, and metaphors. All of these

items might form a complication for both the translator and target readers as they may seem unnatural to the target audience. For instance, epi-titles which are in fact idiomatic and colloquial expressions such as "can't have your cake and eat it too", "loose lips sink relationships", "the gloves come off" or "let sleeping dogs lie" represent a major obstacle in the way of the translator to understand their meanings accurately, find cultural and linguistic creative equivalents for them that suit the target language or culture, and be smoothly understood by the target audience. Accordingly, they may hinder the process of translation and the understanding of the target audience.

On the discursive level, certain elements in the source texts should be clarified in order not to create discrepancies in meanings or intentions between the source and target texts. For example, the differences between source and target relevant discursive formulae, behavior patterns, participants, tone, or context which may be a hurdle in completing the process translation and trigger adaptation. Thus, the researcher reflects deeply on the goals of each source text of epi-titles set for analysis, its context, its nodal points, its field, and its tenor or tone which help in comprehending the communicative event in which the participants of each source text are involved. All of this also sets the base for the pragmatic analysis of each text and its target; for without knowing the context of the discourse, beginning from its main ideas to its intent, and its surrounding circumstances, including place, time, and characters, the translator will not be able to decipher the implicature of the source text and will not consequently render the target text accurately.

On the communicative level, functions and features of communication within the chosen English epi-titles herein, whether cognitive, communicative, motivational, emotive, interactive, or meta-linguistic, clarify the intent purpose of the discourse based on the main events and circumstances of the source texts. From informativity, institutionality, emotivity, and implicitation to informality, expressivity, explicitness, tolerance, and commonality, each source text differs in its intention as every epi-title is uniquely created for a specific motive that is related to the overall context of the show or episode based on what has been collected by the content writers themselves during the process of creating the specified epi-title. Accordingly, translators play a dual part of the viewer and the linguist within the process of translation/transcreation in such para-texts as epi-titles. The translator is forced to go beyond the text, watch the episode to understand all of the surrounding conditions and

context of the show in general, and of the episode in particular, and mediate between the source and target cultures to create the final creative, accurate, and meaning-comprehensive piece that is understandable to the target audience at the end. It is like an automatic cognitive process that *Netflix* translators go through when translating such para-texts as they deliberate them over and over again, and then finally come out with a creative, accurate, comprehensive, and context-specific product that ideally matches up with the target culture and language.

As per the socio-cultural criteria, the above-mentioned examples of *Netflix* English epi-titles are laden with lexical items which reflect the social and cultural peculiarities of the source culture and language. These culture-specific concepts and social traits may hinder the process of translation, and accordingly trigger socio-cultural adaptation. On the textual level, the ST has such instances of social and cultural conceptions such as idiomatic expressions, cultural lacunas, and realia, in addition to the specific use of pronouns, for instance, titles such as "Selling sunset", "Let's get lit", "Diamond of the first water", "Edgelord-The Revolution of the 14-year-olds", "Rickternal Friendshine of the Spotless Mort" which are all socially and culturally brimming. On the discursive level, the source text has many values or qualities such as creativity, suspense, ambiguity, and motivating the audience to watch the episode and incite them to go solve the puzzle of the title by watching the episode itself to decode the encrypted messages conveyed by the author to the audience through the title. Thus, the target text should carry instances of pragmatic and socio-cultural adaptation to handle such difficulties in the source text and fill in the gap between source and target texts or cultures. Hence, the ST shall be modified in the translation to produce a text which conforms to the new language environment (Arabic) and its linguistic, cultural, and contextual peculiarities.

As per the pragmatic and socio-cultural adaptation criteria, the *Netflix* translator seems to have used numerous strategies and techniques to make the target texts adaptable to the target audience and fit into the target culture. Due to the differences between the two cultures herein, American/English and Arab, whether in the culture-specific concepts, gestures, and ideas, or in the linguistic elements, the ST is full of cultural lacunas such as "Can't Have Your Cake and Eat It Too", "Let Sleeping Dogs Lie", "Loose Lips Sink Relationships", "The Gloves Come Off", "SACRIFICIAL PAWN - Emissary from the Divide", "PIE IN THE SKY - First Bank Robbery", "Indiana Fails and the Temple of Slop", and "Diamond of the First Water". Therefore, the translator follows the

strategy of "domestication" represented in the techniques of "translation by edition, generalization, paraphrase, illustration, creation, trans-editing, and explicitness change" when translating such concepts in order to make them understandable to the target audience as clarified in the analysis above. The researcher uses both methods "literal translation" and "back-translation" of English epi-titles and their target texts to display the difference between an ordinary literal rendition and a transcreated culturally-oriented one. For instance, "Diamond of the First Water" literally means "جوهرة المياه الأولى" which does not make any sense in Arabic and does not give the Arabic audience a clue of what this is. However, the *Netflix* translator here uses the techniques of creative "creation" and "approximation" as well as others, to render its correct accurate meaning which is "جمال استثنائي" or "أجمل النساء" because according to the meaning of the expression in *Collins Dictionary*, it means "the highest degree of fineness in a diamond or other precious stone", and after examining the context of the episode carefully, it turns out that the expression is used to describe a woman of extraordinary beauty exactly like the finest diamond or stone in its glamour.

Another representation of how *Netflix* translators perform a unique role within the process of transcreation which entails various duties; a viewer, a cultural mediator, a language transporter, and a creative content creator as well, is the above-listed show of "Rick and Morty". The English epi-titles of this show are superbly linguistically complicated because all of its epi-titles feature one common characteristic which is "play on words", leading to other linguistic complexities such as "intertextuality", "allusion", and "cultural reference", which hinder the process of translation, trigger pragmatic and socio-cultural adaptation, and constitute a huge cognitive load on the minds of translators. For instance, "The Rickshank Rickdemption" is a cultural reference and an allusion to the 1994 movie of "The Shawshank Redemption" and the episode is mainly about the fact that Rick will get his redemption and that is why, it is transcreated by the Netflix translator as "خلاص ريك" by using the techniques of "generalization", "creation", and "trans-editing". This is also clarified in the epi-title of "Edge of Tomorty: Rick Die Rickpeat" which is also an allusion to the film "Edge of Tomorrow", which is also called "Live Die Repeat" and it is based on the manga "All You Need is Kill" by "Hiroshi Sakurzaka". Nevertheless, unless the *Netflix* translator watches the two episodes and reads about them thoroughly to get the socio-cognitive and socio-cultural traits behind them, he/she would have

never understood the overall ideas of these epi-titles or be able to translate them accurately, creating renditions suitable for the target audience.

Subsequently, there is a socio-cognitive side to the work of *Netflix* translators during the process of transcreation. As the researcher have stated previously, translators are considered a watching audience at the beginning of the process of transcreation, because they first witness the text, then try to understand the surrounding context by watching the show or episode, and later they immerse themselves completely or get involved into the fictional world of the show. They actually live the experience of the show and interact cognitively, emotionally, or imaginatively to create that accurate translation and the creative piece that reflect the idea, the world of the show and the text. It's like they get transported to another realm or an alternate reality.

Additionally, in the process of transcreation, translators manage the cognitive resources, as well as, the multiple resources of information that they use to know about the show or episode. The Netflix translator manifestly tries to juggle the information given by the text, the other resources of information about the context of the text, and the information acquired when watching the show or episode, in an attempt to comprehend the overall context (time, place, events, interaction, ideas, characters, etc.) within the video. So, his/her attention is distributed among many cognitive actions which denotes the immense amount of cognitive load that the translator has to endure. It also shows what cognitive processes the translator goes through when getting involved in the transcreation process and thus, the translator has a certain embodied cognition before attempting to collect all of the information concerning the show itself and its context. This occurs the first thing when a translator witnesses the text, which helps him in conceptualizing a specific idea about the translation or rendition of the epi-title at first. But, after carefully exploring the show, its context, the video, etc., the translator manages to constitute the correct, accurate, creative, and comprehensive rendition and conceptualization of an epi-title. So, the transcreation process within *Netflix* does involve a socio-cognitive approach as well.

Indeed, transcreation within *Netflix* can be considered one of the features or techniques of adaptation. Also, context, in general, and socio-cognitive context, in particular, within *Netflix's* paratextual content are of great importance as they cannot be separated from the texts themselves. This is attributed to the fact that *Netflix* translators can never work independently of the context of shows which includes all of the information about the

show; the events, the timeline, the place, the ideology, the source culture, and the participants. Without knowing all of these contextual elements, the *Netflix* translator will never be able to translate the texts accurately and suitably to the target culture. Therefore, the *Netflix* translator/trans-creator in translating these para-textual elements, resembles an intercultural mediator; one that has to delve into the source culture, its context, its cognitive, social, and cultural properties, and apprehend them perfectly so as to produce a target text that is totally meaningful and effective. This is because, in these media and creative contexts, the target texts must have the same effect on the target audience as that of the source text on the source audience. As a result, the *Netflix* translators have a huge responsibility towards the translations. They have to create the target piece with the right and suitable context that will be appropriate to the communicative situation and its participants. So, it is not only about creating a target text that has an aesthetic refined style, but also about creating a piece of text in the target language that is genuine in style, correct in meaning, and influencing the target audience as if it has been originally created in that language. Indeed, this research is one step towards opening more doors for other researchers to further investigate transcreation within *Netflix* and adaptation, and their relationship to cognitive linguistics, multi-modality, and cognitive socio-linguistics, which, due to time and resources' limitations in this study, has not been thoroughly explored by the researcher. However, the above-discussed findings shall lead other researchers throughout their way of future studies in this area, unlocking a new wide-range contemporary scope in translation, media, and linguistic studies.

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