

The Cultural Mystery of Translating for Children : A Case Study of Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince

Mehdi Asadzadeh¹

¹*Assistant Professor, Department of English Language and Translation Studies, Maragheh Branch, Islamic Azad University, Maragheh, Iran*

ABSTRACT: The present research, incorporating the views on translation provided by Peter Newmark and the model of translation criticism by Drik Delabastita tries to explore the most frequently used strategies in translation of the culture-specific items of the children literature with a focus on select novel namely “Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince (part I, 15 chapters) translations by Vida Eslamieh and Mohammad Norollahi. The research compares the two translated versions. It needs mentioning that highly mysterious and fantastic aspects of Harry Potter’s novels is rooted in the source culture’s history and culture; the translation of which demanding deep familiarity with the culture of the target as well as the source context. The outlet of the research has been developed on the basis of practical models of translation that were gathered from a number of studies. The current product-oriented and descriptive research is an attempt to distinguish and describe the culture-specific items and analyze the strategies applied in dealing with them in the corpus of the research. Dealing with culture-specific items in the first part of the corpus of the research in their integrity, one hundred and eighty six culture-specific items were manually collected and systematically classified into five categories of 1- Material culture, 2- Ecology, 3- Concepts, Customs and Organizations 4- Social culture 5-Gestures and Habits and fifteen sub-categories including: 1- foods, clothes, towns, houses, transport, artifacts, 2- flora, fauna and plains, 3- social, religious, historical, political and artistic, 4- work and leisure (games and sports), 5-gestures and habits best on classification presented by Peter Newmark and in the second step, they were analyzed and studied based on the five strategies contained in the model of Delabastita namely: 1- Substitution 2- Repetition (partial-total), 3- Addition, 4- Omission and 5-Permutation. The present research reveals that material culture, especially food were the most frequently used Culture-Specific items in Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince also repetition-partial has been introduced as the most pervasive and frequently used strategy applied in translating the culture- specific items in this part of the corpus of the research.

KEYWORDS: Literary translation, Translation, Translation strategy, Children’s literature, Delabastita’s model and Culture-specific Items (CSIs).



1. INTRODUCTION

Children's book translation is not just a simple replacement of the target text linguistic elements with those of the source text. Many different factors play their roles in translation process. In other words, children's book translation is produced under certain social, cultural and political conditions. The translator should keep these conditions and factors in mind when s/he tries to choose a strategy for translation. The scholars who work in the field of translation studies have proposed different categorizations of translation strategies with each emphasizing on one specific condition. Children's literature is an important tool for children to gain knowledge not only about the world, but also about their language for it has direct educational impact on them. Translated children's books will introduce to them different cultures, beliefs, ideas, customs, etc. Today children's novels and movies are translated to be available all over the world within days of their release in the SL. But since children have a limited experience of the world, presenting cultural items in the text is a rather difficult task. According to Newmark (1988), the translator tries to determine the readership of the original and the translation, and if necessary, determines the level of education, social class, the age and the sex of the TL readers and takes these into account in their translation.

2. THE PURPOSE OF STUDY

This research aims at probing more and more of the strategy of Delabastita and demonstrate how transforming culture-specific items in the children's literary books can motivate them to keep up with reading. It establish the most commonly used strategies in rendering Culture-Specific items in context of Iran and shows that the translators who have used strategies of Delabastita are popular and their books will be sell more [1].

2.1 Research Question

What is the most frequently used strategy of translation Culture-Specific items in Harry Potter's novels in Persian based on Delabastita's model?

2.2 Theoretical Framework



This study adopted Delabastita's model as its theoretical framework. The reference source for conducting this research was the very article of regarding his model in translation criticism. Bases his own theory of translation criticism on two strategies called "cultural homology" and "cultural analogy" and furthers to divide this principle based on its application to language, culture and text. Furthermore, the classification presented by Peter Newmark [2] regarding Culture-Specific items was adopted as the theoretical framework in dealing with the CSIs recognized, collected, studied and analyzed.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Literary translation Oittinen (2000, p.84) defines literary translation is the substitution of the textual material of one language with the equivalent textual material of another. Literary translators, in addition to dealing with the difficulties inherent to translations of all fields, must consider the aesthetic aspects of the text, its beauty and style, as well as its marks (lexical, grammatical, or phonological), keeping in mind that one language's stylistic marks can be drastically different from another's.

Translation strategy Lorsch (1991, p.76) defines a translation strategy as "a potentially conscious procedure for the solution of a problem, which an individual is faced with when translating a text segment from one language into another."

Children's literature Oittinen (2000, p.84) defines children's literature is any literature that is enjoyed by children. More specifically, children's literature comprises those books written and published for young people who are not yet interested in adult literature or who may not possess the reading skills or developmental understandings. In addition to books, children's literature also includes magazines intended for pre-adult audiences.

Delabastita's Model Dirk Delabastita bases his own theory of translation criticism on two strategies called "cultural analogy" and "cultural homology." Analogy is something similar to "functional equivalent", because it is a strategy whose ambition is to find - and use - a statement that, in the receiving culture, has an analogous cultural meaning, i.e. that has a relational value that is similar as compared to the culture that receives it. According to the cultural homology strategy, the passage to be translated is considered both in terms of 'cultural signifiers' (form) and of 'cultural signifieds' (cultural semantic contents). In the discussed case, a homological translation into Italian could be "scarpe scricchiolanti", which



leaves the reader the task of filling the cultural gap between oneself and the text. "Nevertheless, we should not underestimate the problem-solving skills of text receivers": the reader is able to reconstruct the cultural connotation of the statements from the text as a whole, maybe through the aid of a critical apparatus. With this strategy the reader - and the critic - finds many "other" elements in the translation of "her own" culture [3].

The principle of the difference between analogous and homologous translation is further divided by Delabastita based on its application to language, culture and the whole text. Adding to such possibilities the three transformations deriving from what are usually called trivial translation "mistakes" - omission, addition and metatextual rendering - he creates fifteen types of translation relations, as illustrated by this table:

Code Operation	Proto language - Metalanguage	Protoculture - Metaculture	Prototext - Metatext
Substitution	Greater or smaller degree of (approximate) linguistic equivalence	Naturalization modernization topicalization nationalization	Systemic, acceptable text (potentially conservative) adaptation
Repetition	Total: non- translation, copy partial: calque , Literary translation, metaphor, word-by-word, interlinear translation;	exoticization historization (through the mere intervention of time-place distance)	Non- systemic text, not- acceptable (potentially innovative)
Omission	Reductive translation abridged version undertranslation expressive reduction	Universalization dehistorization (through the removal of foreign cultural signs)	the metatext is a more typical specimen of a (target) text – type neutralization of stylistic or generic peculiarities
Addition	paraphrastic translation more explicit text overtranslation expressive amplification	exoticization historization (Through the positive addition of foreign cultural signs)	The metatext is a more typical specimen of a (target) text – type Introduction of stylistic or generic makers
Permutation	Compensation (metatextual)	Compensation (metatextual)	Compensation (metatextual)



Culture-specific Items: one of the elaborated classification of CSIs is the one proposed by Peter Newark. Distinguishing, cultural language' from' personal language' and' universal language', Peter New mark confirms that a fixed and stable background underlies the occurrence of cultural gap or the distance between the source and target languages and that is the direct result of 'cultural focus' [4].

It is clear that whenever a language focuses its attention on a specific cultural aspect, s/he gets in need of new words and experiences in that area. So, cultural focus brings about occurrence of new items into SL that result in the distance and cultural gap and finally in translation problem. It can be inferred that some cultural items may come to be considered and accepted as universal items. However, never universal items get restricted to a specific culture and considered as cultural items.

Ecology:

flora, fauna, winds, plains, hills

Geographical features can be distinguished from other cultural terms in that they are usually value - free, politically and commercially, It is worthy to mention that not all of the geographical features are considered as Culture-Specific items, but just those carrying strong elements of local color.

- *Material culture (artifacts)*:

Food, clothes, houses and towns, transports

- *Social culture*:

Work, leisure

- *Organizations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts*:

Social, administrative, Political, religious, artistic and historical

- *Gestures and habits*

In the present research, CSIs in the selected case books are determined, classified and studied based on New mark's classification of cultural categories.

4. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a comparative, descriptive and statistical method. This research incorporates parallel corpora which contain the source text and its two Persian versions translated by two different translators. Parallel corpora provide a sound basis for contrastive



studies for it helps the researcher clarify how the idea has been moved from language A to language B and the extent to which its message has been maintained. The general title Harry Potter is used to refer to the series as a whole which includes seven fantasy novels written by J.K. Rowling. The corpus for the present study is comprised of the English version of Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince (part I, 15 chapters) which adds up to 324 pages along with two different Persian versions of the same translated by Vida Eslamieh and Mohammad Norollahi which add up to 860 pages.

4.1 Procedures and Data Collection

The purpose of this study is to explore the Culture-Specific items in English novel and the strategies applied for translating them into Persian. The main source for the applied classification of Culture-Specific items is Peter Newmark category. The main source for the strategies applied for translating them is Delabastita's model.

The whole process, including collecting, grouping and, analyzing the data according to the strategies applied is done manually. In addition, as the classification shows, the unit of analysis varied from a word to a sentence.

Examples of Culture-Specific Items in Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince

1. Ecology:

Flora, fauna, winds, plains, hills.

-Occlumency (p.59): flora

-Lilac tree: flora

- Worn tails (p.23): fauna

- Barn- owl (p.38): fauna

2. Material Culture (artifacts):

Food, clothes, houses and towns, transport

-pudding (p.168): food

- Custard (p.54): food

- Whisky (p.8): drink

Goblet of mead (p.317): drink

- Smoking Jacket (p.315): clothes

-Gryffindor Scarf (p.298): clothes

Little Hangleton (p.205): towns



- Great Hangleton (p.200): towns
- Living room (p.22): house

Immense (p.19): artifacts

3. Social Culture:

Work and leisure

Quidditch (p.105): sport

4. Organizations, Customs, Activities, Procedures and Concepts:

Political and administrative, religious, artistic

- Age in a year's time (p.54): social concept
- Inferi (p.62): Religious concept
- Merlin's berd (p.11) Historical concept
- Lord (p.19) political concept

5. Gestures and Habits

no case was found

Based on the above extracted example, the present study will provide its classification of Culture-Specific items as follows:

1. Ecology

- flora
- Fauna
- Plains

2. Material culture

- Flood
- Clothes
- Towns
- Houses

3. Social culture

-Leisure (sports and games)

4. Concepts, customs and organizations

- Social
- Religious
- political
- Artistic

5. Gestures



Examples of the Strategies Applied in Translating culture Specific Items in Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince

1.Substitution:

-shut up (p.290)

اسلاميه: خفه شو -
نور الهی: دهنتو ببند

-Monday evening

اسلاميه: دوشنبه شب

-For Heavens, sake!

اسلاميه: پناه بر خدا -
نور الهی: پناه بر خدا

Print (p.1)

اسلاميه: حروف چاپی

July (p.2)

اسلاميه: ماه ژوئيه

Muggles (p.3)

اسلاميه: مشنگها

2.repetition (total):

-Helicopter (p.115)

اسلاميه: هلی کوپتر -
نور الهی: هلی کوپتر

- deluxe sugar guills (p.244)

اسلاميه: قلم پرشکری دولوکس -
نور الهی: قلم پرشکری

Merlin's beard (p.11)

اسلاميه: به حق ریش مرلین -
نور الهی: پناه به ریش مرلین

Magnolia road (p.42)

اسلاميه: خیابان ماگنولیا -
نور الهی: ماگنولیارود

Magnolia crescent (p.43)

اسلاميه: پیچ نیم دایره ای خیابان ماگنولیا -
نور الهی: مگنولیا کرسنت

3.Repetition (partial):

- Death Eaters (p.8)

اسلاميه: مرگ خواران -
نور الهی: مرگ خواران



- Spinners end (p.21)

اسلاميه : اسپينرز ائند-
نور الهی: اسپينرز ائند

You- know- who (p.9)

نور الهی: اونى كه ميدونى

Amber liquid (p.8)

اسلاميه: نوشيدنى كه ربایى رنگ -
نور الهی: مایعی كه ربایى رنگ

St.Mungo (p.10)

اسلاميه: سنت مانگو -
نور الهی: سنت مانگو

4. Addition:

Privet drive (p.42)

اسلاميه : پريوت درايو-
نور الهی: خيابان پريوت درايو

Gold hangings (p.315)

اسلاميه : قرمز لاکى-
نور الهی: قرمز لاکى و طلايى

Weasleys (p.76)

نور الهی: ويزلى ها -

hot soup (p.83)

اسلاميه : سوپ بسيار داغ-
نور الهی: سوپ داغ

5. Omission:

-Boy friend (p.288)

اسلاميه: دوست -
نور الهی: دوست

- Whisky (p.309)

اسلاميه: نوشيدنى -
نور الهی: ويسكى

Barn- owl (p. 38)

اسلاميه: جغد انبارى -
نور الهی: جغد

blue eyes (p.168)

اسلاميه: چشمان آبيش -
نور الهی: چشمانش

6. Permutation:

No case was found.



5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Culture-Specific Items Applied in the Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince

From the total 186 Culture-Specific items extracted: ecology included 6.75%, material culture 45%, social culture 7%, organizations, concepts and customs 41.25% and gestures and habits 0%. As it is evident, the material culture, especially food and artifacts, and concepts and customs, especially social and religious ones, were the most frequently used Culture-Specific items in Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince.

Table 1: Culture-Specific Items in Harry Potter and the Half - Blood Prince

No	CSI Category	Frequency	Percentage	Column1	Frequency	Percentage
1	Ecology	13	6.75%	Flora	5	2.75%
				Fauna	8	4%
2	Material Culture	81	45%	Foods	29	17%
				Clothes	9	5%
				Artifacts	27	13%
				Towns	3	1%
				Houses	9	5%
				Transport	6	4%
3	Social Culture	13	7%	Work	4	2%
				Leisure	9	5%
4	Organizations - Concepts - Customs	79	41.25%	Social	56	27%
				Religious	8	6.75%
				Political	5	3.50%
				Historical	4	2%
				Artistic	4	2%
5	Gestures - Habits		0%			100%
Total		186	100%		186	100%

5.2 Strategies Applied in Translating Culture-Specific Items in Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince by Vida Eslamieh

Vida Eslamieh has applied Repetition-partial includes 41%, substitution 26%, addition 13%, repetition-total 16% and omission 4% all of the strategies recognized for translating Culture-Specific items in this novel.



Table 2: Strategies Applied in Translating Culture-Specific Items in Harry Potter and the Half - Blood Prince by Vida Eslamieh

No	Code operation	Frequency	Percentage
1	Substitution	56	26.00%
2	Repetition	91	41%
		23	16%
3	Addition	27	13.00%
4	Omission	12	4%
5	Permutation	0	0.00%
	Total	186	100%

5.3 Strategies Applied in Translating Culture-Specific items in Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince by Mohammad Norollahi

Mohammad Norollahi presented another translation of the novel of "Harry Potter and the Half- Blood Prince. The results show that he has applied repetition-partial 40%, as the foremost strategy, and addition 21%, substitution 23%, omission 10% and finally repetition-total 6% in translating CSLs.

Table 3: Strategies Applied in Translating Culture-Specific Items in Harry Potter and the Half - Blood Prince by Mohammad Norollahi.

No	Code operation	Frequency	Columnl	Frequency	Percentage
1	Substitution	44			23.00%
2	Repetition	70	Partial	70	40%
			Total	18	6%
3	Addition	50			21.00%
4	Omission	22			10%
5	Permutation	0			0.00%
	Total	186			100%

5.4 Discussion



Based on the data collected: The material culture, especially food and artifacts were the most frequently used Culture-Specific items. Also after the material culture concepts and customs, especially social and religious ones, were the most frequently used Culture-Specific items. All the strategies presented in the model of Dirk Delabastita, unless the strategy of permutation, were actually applied in the two translations for a novel. There is any permutation in the two translations [5].

The strategy of Repetition, partial type in particular, have been taken as the outstanding and most frequently used strategy in two translations. Repetition strategy is very important for two translations [6].

The percentages of application of the other strategies prominent the fact that substitution would be recognized as the alternative strategy while dealing with Culture-Specific items in two translations.

The comparison of the strategies applied by Vida Eslamieh as the recognized translator and best selling translations of Harry Potters series novel brought the more emphasis, appreciation and agreeability to the public liking laid on the strategy of repetition i.e., literary translation while dealing with Culture-Specific items in translating from SL to TL and from source culture to target culture, into surface [8].

It seems that one at the main indicators of a work of translation in the field of literary translation for children (novels) being a hot-seller is use if appropriate strategies as for as the English-Persian direction of the same is concerned [9].

The present research, nations the statistics produced as well as the market feedback collected on both version of translators recommends the translators in the field of literary works (for children, of context) to apply those strategies whose have been applied by the best-seller studied in this research. In their works if they if they wish to attract the attention of the readers.

5.5 limitation

The main limitation is that only a novel is studied and there just compare the two translators translation. If there was more novel (e.g. 4 novel) and more translators (e.g. 8 translator) was it better then we could have better conclusion and the translators that use more Delabastita translation strategies are more popular and their books will be sell more.



6. TOWARDS CONCLUSION

It was revealed that material culture, food and artifacts in particular, and concepts and customs, mainly social and religious, play the role of the prominent and most frequently used Culture-Specific items and pave the way for more and better comprehension of the TL culture .also their frequency were very similar in two translations ecology included 6.75%, material culture 45%, social culture 7%, organizations, concepts and customs 41.25% and gestures and habits 0%. As it is evident the material culture, especially food and artifacts, and concepts and customs, especially social and religious ones, were the most frequently used Culture-Specific items in Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince. The result show that the strategy of repetition, partial type in particular, has been used more frequently than the other strategies discussed in this research. Furthermore, the strategy of substitution has been used as the second alternative in the two discussed translations. But there were significant different frequencies between to use of the strategy. Mohammad Norollahi used strategy of addition more than Vida Eslamieh while Eslamieh used strategy of substitution more than Norollahi.

It is worth noting in this study was similar studies for other novels of other translators is examined. The result of this research is in line with the translators who have used strategies of Delabastita and their translations are popular. When the translation is good for the children, so they are more motivated and become familiar with the culture of the target country and a good background to learn the language of the country.

REFERENCES

1. Bassnett, S. 2002 (1980). *Translation Studies*. London: Routledge.
2. Bertills, Y. 2003a. *Beyond Identification. Proper names in children's literature*. Åbo: Åbo Akademi University Press.
3. Falconer, R. 2004. *Crossover literature*. In Hunt, P (ed.), *International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*. London: Routledge, 556–575.
4. Garcés, C. V. 2003. *Translating the imaginary world in the Harry Potter series or how Muggles, Quaffles, Snitches, and Nickles travel to other cultures*. In *Quaderns: revista de traducció*, N. 9 (2003), p. 121–134 [online]. (20 Mar 2009) <http://www.raco.cat/index.php/QuadernsTraduccio/article/view/25352/25187>.
5. Hunt, P. (ed.) 2004. *International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*. London: Routledge.
6. Jobe, R. 2004. *Translating for children – practice*. In Hunt, P (ed.), *International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*. London: Routledge, 912–926.





7. Nord, C. 2003. Proper Names in Translations for Children: Alice in Wonderland as a Case in Point. In *Meta: journal des traducteurs/Meta: Translators' Journal*, vol. 48, n° 1-2, 2003, p. 182–196 [online]. (16 Apr 2009) <http://id.erudit.org/iderudit/006966ar>.
8. Pascua-Febles, I. 2006. Translating Cultural References: The Language of Young People in Literary Texts. In Van Coillie, J. and W.P. Verschueren (eds.), *Children's Literature in Translation. Challenges and Strategies*. Manchester: St. Jerome, 111– 121.
9. Sullivan III, C. W. 2004. High fantasy. In Hunt, P (ed.), *International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*. London: Routledge, 436–446.

