Factors affecting translation of realia in classical literary masterpieces: access to the previous translations, the SL natives, and the SL experts

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ONOMÁZEIN 56 (June 2022): 184 - 205
Mahmoud Afrouz
Factors affecting translation of realia in classical literary masterpieces: access to the previous...

185

Abstract

Literary works of each nation have their roots in that nation's culture. Because of the unique-ness of all cultures, various kinds of realia can be found in the literature of almost all nations. Persian literature is not an exception. The study aimed to discover the impact of accessibility to the SL natives, the SL experts, and the previous translations on the quality of rendering realia embedded in the classical Persian literary-text. The corpus included the translation of realia in Sa'di's *The Gulistan* by Rehatsek (1888), Eastwick (1880), Anderson (1861), and Ross (1823). The findings revealed that a mixture of three factors (consulting previous translations, as well as consulting an expert SL native speaker) would provide a great help for translators. Although the results did not confirm that the mere accessibility to the SL natives would tre-mendously boost the quality of rendering realia, further research is required to investigate the issue by focusing on various classical literary texts, including those of other language pairs.

Keywords: culture; cultural terms; translation procedures; Persian literature; Sa'di's *The Gulistan*.

ONOMÁZEIN 56 (June 2022): 184 - 205
Mahmoud Afrouz
Factors affecting translation of realia in classical literary masterpieces: access to the previous...

186

1. Introduction

Throughout the history, interlinguistic communication between people of different nationalities and, consequently, the enrichment of literature and culture have been made possible by translation. What makes communication a challenging task is the fact that almost all languages have their own idiosyncratic structure, and they are deeply rooted in their own specific cultures (Afrouz & Mollanazar, 2016, 2017a, 2017b).

As "textual elements which provide local and historical colour", realia are commonly "confined to literary rather than technical translation" (Shuttleworth & Cowie, 2014: 139). Such textual elements are mainly the cultural terms (CTs) of the source language (SL) which "have no exact equivalents" in the target language (TL) and they majorly "convey national, local or historical colour" (Vlakhov & Florin, 1970: 438).

Since translation is a process through which "a meaning in a specific" SL is "linguistically" and "semantically transformed into another language", the responsibility of the translator is to discover "how to reconstruct the meaning" of the SL "and how to convey it" in the TL (Al-Hamad & Al-Shunnag, 2011: 151). In this process, the diversity between a source language (SL) and a target language (TL) and the variation in their cultures make the practice of translation a real challenge (Ordudari, 2008a, 2008b).

Contrary to the long-standing practice of translating, translation in the form of the scientific major called Translation Studies has a rather short history (Afrouz, 2019a). The present study aimed to concentrate on realia in rendering *The Gulistan. The Gulistan* is a landmark of Persian classic literature written by Sa'di in 1258. In order to analyze the data, Newmark's (1988b) model was utilized.

Categorizing translators into two general groups of "native" and "non-native", Afrouz (2017: 41) specified the former as those who translate "from" their mother language and the latter as those who translate "into" their mother tongue. In the present study, translations of four non-natives (i.e., Ross, 1823; Eastwick, 1880; Anderson, 1861; and Rehatsek, 1888) were investigated. All translations selected as the corpus of the study belong to the 19th Christian century; therefore, the translators had very little choices to get themselves familiar with the source text culture. They could, for instance, travel to the country where the ST was originally written, or to find some SL natives and get assistance from them, or to find some knowledgeable experts of the SL literature and seek help from them. Furthermore, access to the previous translations of the work can potentially be of great help. The study aimed to discover the impact of accessibility to the SL natives, the SL experts, and previous translations, on the quality of rendering realia embedded in *The Gulistan*.

The researcher attempted to find answers for the following questions:

ONOMÁZEIN 56 (June 2022): 184 - 205
Mahmoud Afrouz
Factors affecting translation of realia in classical literary masterpieces: access to the previous...

187

1. What translation procedures are opted for by the translators of Sa'di's *The Gulistan*?

2. Are there any procedures being used by the translators of *The Gulistan* but left unmentioned in Newmark's (1988b) model?

3. What are the most and the least frequently used procedures?

4. To what extent does the accessibility of a non-native translator to the SL natives, the SL experts, and the previous translations affect his procedures of rendering realia?

5. Which procedures preferred by the translators of Sa'di's *The Gulistan* had the lowest (or highest) potentiality for rendering the concepts underlying realia?

6. How does translator's accessibility to the SL natives, the SL experts, and the previous translations affect his dealing with the following criteria?: a) making mistakes, b) leaving the realia untranslated, c) using synonymy, d) opting for transference, and, finally, e) resorting to informative notes.

One major hypothesis of the current study was that non-native translators' accessibility to the SL natives, in comparison with other factors, would have the greatest impact on excluding lower (and including higher) productive procedures of rendering realia.

2. Literature review

In the present study, a concise analysis of the current state of the art of the theoretical reflection on translation procedures is accompanied by a case-study in classical Persian literature. It exemplifies the theoretical examination of translation procedures within the branch of literary-translation.

2.1. Language, culture, and translation

Culture addresses all human needs (both psychological and physiological) and can generally be thought of as "a roadmap for living" (Salzman, 2018: 13) and the source of national identity. Identity "has its roots in a nation's culture" (Afrouz, 2017: 41) and while culture can be manifested through language, both language and culture are manifested in translated-texts (Afrouz, 2022d). In other words, principally, it is via language that "cultural values and beliefs are transmitted from one member of a society to another and from one generation to the next" (Peccei, 1999: 102). Moreover, it is mainly through various types of translation that different nations can communicate their thoughts and share their knowledge. Therefore, culture significantly affects language and both (culture and language) greatly affect the act of translating. Meanwhile, the pivotal role of translation as a means to mediate "between local and foreign cultures" needs to be fully appreciated (Durán Muñoz, 2012: 335).

Translation, in words of Enríquez-Aranda (2016: 91), "is an act of communication linked to a double socio-cultural context", that of the ST and that of the TT. Language, being "an expres-

ONOMÁZEIN 56 (June 2022): 184 - 205
Mahmoud Afrouz
Factors affecting translation of realia in classical literary masterpieces: access to the previous...

188

sion of culture" (Hariyanto, 2003: 1), is the main subject of almost all discussions on translation; therefore, one of the most challenging problems a translator may encounter is realia. As Harvey (2000: 2) writes, they "refer to concepts, institutions and personnel which are specific to the SL culture". Lexical gaps, or "semantic void", as Gambier et al. (2004: 11) call it, refer to realia which are one product of such gaps. To fill in the gaps, there are some procedures translators can resort to. Such procedures can highly affect the type of equivalents selected for the SL terms (Latifi Shirejini & Afrouz, 2021a, 2021b; Golchinnezhad & Afrouz, 2021a, 2021b; Afrouz, 2019b, 2020, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c, 2021d, 2022a, 2022b, 2022c; Parvaz & Afrouz, 2021).

2.2. Procedures of translating realia

Procedures and techniques of translation "have been widely studied throughout Translation Studies' history" (Vázquez y del Árbol, 2016: 56). While Weston (1991: 19-34) believes that the five procedures of (1) neologism, (2) transcription, (3) naturalization, (4) formal equivalence, and (5) functional equivalence can be employed by translators in dealing with realia, Graedler (2000, as cited in Shaheri & Satariyan, 2017: 54) suggests that translators are expected to create "a new word or to explain the meaning" of the SL term, rather than translating it.

Aixela (1996) categorizes strategies of rendering realia under the two main groups of "conservation" and "substitution". The strategy of conservation embraces: orthographic adaptation, linguistic (non-cultural) translation, intratextual gloss, extratextual gloss, and repetition. The substitution strategy includes: deletion, synonymy, autonomous creation, absolute universalization, naturalization, and limited universalization.

Harvey (2000: 2-6) has suggested the following four major techniques for translating CSIs: "functional equivalence", employing a term in the TL whose "function" resembles that of the SL term; "formal equivalence" or "linguistic equivalence", which refers to a "word-for-word" translation; "transcription" or "borrowing", which transliterates the original term; and "descriptive" or "self-explanatory translation", which employs general terms to transmit the meaning.

Both Weston (1991) and Harvey (2000) have talked about "equivalence". Actually, there are various kinds of "equivalence and most of them do not imply 'perfect' equivalence" (Afrouz & Shahi, 2020: 3). The following are a number of translation procedures that Newmark (1988b: 82-91) has proposed: synonymy, descriptive equivalent, transference, through-translation, cultural equivalent, functional equivalent, naturalization, transpositions, modulation, paraphrase, componential analysis, and notes.

2.3. Previous studies

Sarcevic (1985) focused on the issue of translating realia in laws. According to her, "one of the main problems confronting translators of laws is how to achieve denotative equivalence when translating culture-bound terms designating institutions and legal concepts represent-

ONOMÁZEIN 56 (June 2022): 184 - 205
Mahmoud Afrouz
Factors affecting translation of realia in classical literary masterpieces: access to the previous...

189

ing the social reality of the source-language country" (p. 127). She considered "the methods of lexical expansion" as a "solution for the translation of culture-bound terms" (ibid.: 132).

Shabani Rad's (2004) study, investigating how translators deal with realia and lexical gap in literary translation, restricted itself to the comparison of 20 sentences extracted from three English literary texts and two Persian translations of each of them. Emphasizing that the objective of the study is not to evaluate the quality of each individual translation, she (ibid.: 65) mentioned that the aim of her research was "to investigate the passage of time and its effect on the strangeness of translation during two different periods".

Paluszkiewicz-Misiaczek (2005) conducted a research on the strategies of dealing with realia on the basis of English-Polish renditions of specific institutional and administrative terms. He came to the conclusion that "once a legal institution was given an official name, there would be a good chance that such a name would appear in identical form" all through the majority of STs and "a translator using a standard name would be certain that it had been examined by a group of specialists in the field and that he/she follows a certain well-established pattern" (p. 248).

The thesis of Agti (2005) aimed at "shedding light on the cultural gaps that may pose problems while translating from one language culture into another" (iii). His study suggested that "culture-specific terms misunderstanding causes translation inadequacies" (p. 101).

Ordudari (2006), concentrating mainly on the proper-name allusions as culture-specific terms, stated that the most frequently employed strategy of rendering the PNs (preserving the exact graphological and phonological form of the name) could not be considered as an effective one.

Tobias (2006: 27) also dealt with CSIs in Japanese-English literary translation. Her findings indicated that culture-bound customs are difficult to express "without risking overtranslation", and words with "mimetic features inevitably lose some of their iconicity when rendered into English" (p. 34).

Safari (2008) carried out a research project on the strategies used for rendering realia in modern Persian literary-texts. The study was conducted on English translations of 9 short stories written by Hedayat. Tending to domesticate the cultural elements, as he concluded, most of the translators considered "cultural adaptation" the best strategy which could save them from the labor of explanation.

Samakar (2010) carried out a study on the translation of "extralinguistic" realia in a number of Persian films subtitled into English. The following translation strategies were used by translators: specification, retention, generalization, omission, substitution, and direct translation. The results of his study revealed that "substitution", in general, and "paraphrase" with sense transfer, in particular, was the most common strategy, while "generalization" strategy (or

ONOMÁZEIN 56 (June 2022): 184 - 205
Mahmoud Afrouz
Factors affecting translation of realia in classical literary masterpieces: access to the previous...

190

more specifically "hyponymy") was the least frequently utilized procedure for translating realia "in subtitling" (p. 11).

Considering the issue of "cultural loss in the English translation of Chinese poetry", Yang (2010: 170) believes that "due to the differences between the Chinese culture and the English culture, the translator faces many difficulties in the translation of Chinese poetry". He (ibid.) pointed out that "when translating poems, the translator must be sensitive to the cultural connotation of the original poem and well equipped with the necessary cultural background of the original poem, otherwise they cannot convey the beauty and subtlety" of the ST.

The work of Maasoum and Davtalab (2011) was an analysis of realia in the Persian translation of *Dubliners*. Based on their findings, "among all strategies, the translator, in most cases has used general words and borrowing more than other strategies to cope with the lexical gap" (p. 1777).

Zojer (2011), investigating cultural issues in the context of audio-visual translation (AVT), tried "to highlight the extremely difficult and challenging demands on subtitlers by investigating the technical restraints and restrictions, which make the translation of cultural references within subtitles particularly challenging" (p. 412). Decisions made "by subtitlers or transla-tional briefs by film companies who increasingly tend to leave cultural references intact", as she confirmed, "should be interpreted as practical consequence of these processes and as a consequence, cultural references represent a measuring indicator of the degree of intercul-turality of the cultures involved" (p. 409).

Rasouli (2011) conducted a research on the methods utilized in rendering realia in the context of the Iranian constitution and the civil code. He identified the following strategies Iranian legal translators applied in translating realia: generalization, omission, transference, descrip-tive equivalent, couplets, functional equivalent, calque, translation by paraphrase using a related word, componential analysis, modulation, translation by a more neutral word, and cultural equivalent.

The focus of Kasabuckaitė's (2011) MA thesis was on the translation strategies used to render realia in the Lithuanian and English versions of Peter Mayle's book *A Year in Provence* to find out what strategies were the most common in translating realia. After analyzing 127 realia, the author realized that "localization" was the most frequently utilized strategy (p. 47). Finally, considering "notes" as the most fundamental strategy of translating realia, he concluded that any "translation method that provides additional information and explanations are crucial in order to understand other people from different cultures" (p. 48).

The objective of Terestyényi's (2011) article was "to examine different translation techniques applied in the English brochures of the Hungarian National Tourist Office (HNTO) with a spe-cial focus on culture-specific items" (p. 13). The typical "techniques" in the HNTO's tourism bro-chures, as she pointed out, include "transcription/transference, circumlocation and addition"

ONOMÁZEIN 56 (June 2022): 184 - 205
Mahmoud Afrouz
Factors affecting translation of realia in classical literary masterpieces: access to the previous...

191

(p. 21). While "transcription/transference" was used "more often than any of the methods observed", the technique of generalization, i.e. "the use of an analogue or generalised term", occurred less frequently than the rest.

Concentrating on the realia extracted from the two Harris's novels and their translations into Lithuanian, Petrulionė (2012) conducted a research to analyze strategies being resorted to in rendering realia. The results of her study showed that the procedure of "localization" was opted for most frequently. As for the PNs, she achieved the same results obtained by Ordudari (2006): the majority of the PNs had been transcribed "taking into account phonemic aspect and applying Lithuanian grammar rules" (p. 43). However, as she highlighted, "a few exceptions are made to the names of historical / religious personalities or names which have the adapted established Lithuanian form of the name" (p. 43). As the results of her study illustrated, while addition as a "footnote" is regularly employed to give explanation about the lexical items of "non-English origin", "creation" and "transformations" were not detected in the corpus. Being fully satisfied with the quality of the translators' works, she concluded that "lexical and cultural characteristics have been successfully retained in translation of both novels".

Noruzi (2012) focused on realia in Iranian journalistic texts by selecting three main domestic news agencies and comparing the news items in Persian and English. The comparison, as he highlighted, "revealed that most of the cultural items in Persian texts have Islamic and Arabic roots and some others have their roots in ethnic groups living in Iran" (p. 1685). His work was narrowly restricted to mere "categorization" of realia and had nothing to do with potential strategies to deal with them.

Pralas (2012) conducted a study on French realia in Julian Barnes's *Flaubert's Parrot* and attempted to describe the procedures used for rendering such items and to check whether or not the translated French realia retained their cultural specificity in the TT (p. 11). Aixela's model was employed by him as the framework of the study. He conceded that the significance of the translation task became most visibly reflected "in the fact that in many cases the translator could not do anything else but make himself visible in translation by providing intra-textual or extra-textual gloss". The huge majority of French realia, as he concluded, "preserved their cultural specificity in translation", which signified that the target audience read a novel bearing "the same cultural specificity" as the ST (p. 17).

Brasienė's (2013) thesis concentrated on the translation of realia by Arvydas Sabonis on the basis of the strategies presented by Venuti (domestication and foreignization) and Davies (omission, preservation, globalization, addition, transformation, creation, and localization). In rendering realia, Sabonis used foreignization and domestication in different occasions. The prevailing translation strategies for transference of realia in the novel were preservation, localization, and addition. According to Brasienė, globalization was employed in cases when the precise translation of realia was unnecessary "in order to understand the described sit-

ONOMÁZEIN 56 (June 2022): 184 - 205
Mahmoud Afrouz
Factors affecting translation of realia in classical literary masterpieces: access to the previous...

192

uation, the explicitness of which could overburden the reader or cause misunderstandings" (p. 74). The strategy of transformation, as he affirmed, was mostly used in translation of given names due to the difficulty in rendering the meaning of loaded PNs in translation. And, finally, while "omission" was employed in translation of units of measurement, "creation" was never used by the translator in transferring realia (p. 74).

Narváez and Zambrana (2014) focused on rendering realia in "tourist promotion campaigns". They selected "Kwieciński's methodology (2001) as a basis for the research, using exoticisation, explanation and assimilation as the most appropriate ways in which to formulate guidelines for translation in tourist promotion campaigns" (p. 104). The authors underlined that when STs did not provide enough information about CSIs, translators needed "to balance the amount of information needed in a functional way" (p. 104). Translation procedures showed "a general tendency towards combining each other revealing a balance between the informative and appellative functions of tourist texts" (p. 104).

Hosienpour Asghar Khani and Hadidi (2016) concentrated on cultural issues in the context of interpretation studies. They investigated "the most prevailing simultaneous interpretation strategies applied to culture-bound items by a number of professional simultaneous interpreters" (p. 164). Their findings indicated that good interpretation depends on "interpreter's understandings of the cultural elements" embedded in the SL "and the norms active either in" the SL or the TL.

Pérez (2017) conducted a research on realia. The main aim of his paper was to analyze "the solutions adopted by the translators into Spanish to deal with culture-specific jokes in the first two seasons of the American TV series *Modern Family*" (p. 49). He concluded that "different aspects related to the translator's metarepresentation of the target audience's cognitive environment, among other factors, will determine his/her choice of solution-type" (ibid.).

Furthermore, Shaheri and Satariyan's (2017) joint article concentrated on the issue of translating cultural terms. Their corpus included the English novel *For One More Day* by Mitch Albom and its Persian translation by Manizheh Jalali. The findings of their study indicated that the translator had employed both of Aixela's substitution and conservation strategies for translating the cultural terms embedded in the novel.

Afrouz (2017) also took cultural issues into consideration by focusing on two English translations of Sadeq Hedayat's modern Persian novella *The Blind Owl,* one by the native English D. P. Costello (1957) and the other by the native Persian Iraj Bashiri (2013). His finding indicated that the native translator's acquaintance with the source culture has resulted in a more accurate rendition of realia; moreover, as he confirmed, "native translators are more capable than non-natives as far as the preservation of cultural values is concerned" (p. 41).

Setyawan (2019: 30) discussed the cultural items "in Henry Ford's *The International Jew: The World's Foremost Problem* and its translation in Indonesian" by applying Davies's (2003)

ONOMÁZEIN 56 (June 2022): 184 - 205
Mahmoud Afrouz
Factors affecting translation of realia in classical literary masterpieces: access to the previous...

193

model. His finding indicated that "the translator used preservation (66,25%), addition (7,5%), omission (6,25%), globalization (3,75%), localization (8,75%), transformation (5%), and creation (2,5%)".

Ku (2019) conducted a study focusing on the vital issue of cultural elements in translation. The corpus of her study included *Journey to the West*, which is "one of the Four Great Classical Novels of Chinese Literature", and its three Spanish translations appeared in 1992, 2010, and 2011. His study aimed at comparing "the contents length, chapter arrangement of the original work and its translations as well as the translation strategies for cultural elements" (p. 51).

As can be observed, none of the above briefly reviewed studies considered the issue of investigating the impact of translator's accessibility to 'the SL native-speakers', 'the SL experts' and/or 'previous translations' on his/her dealing with the realia in classic literature. The current study was conducted to fill this research gap.

3. Method

The present study is a corpus-based one with a descriptive approach to the analysis of realia in translation.

3.1. Corpus

The Gulistan of Sa'di (1184-1292) is one of the most popular masterpieces of classical Persian literature. It has been selected as the corpus of the study because of three major motives:

1. *The Gulistan* possesses a high position in the world's literature.
2. Four English translations of *The Gulistan* were readily accessible.
3. *The Gulistan* is replete with realia.

The Gulistan is translated into English more often than any other language in the world. It was first translated into French by Du Ryer in 1634. The researcher embarks on the four English translations of the work by Rehatsek (1888), Eastwick (1880), Anderson (1861), and Ross (1823).

Among the translators, Ross (1823) is the first one attempting to render the masterpiece. "On my way to Europe, having occasion to pass the months of December and January 1796-7 in Calcutta", as he writes, "I put my translation of *the Gulistan* into the hands of my friend Mr. Gladwin, wishing to have his opinion of it; when he told me he had also projected a translation of it" (Ross, 1823: 26). Based on what he pointed out, he had no access to any other translation (even to that of Gladwin). Moreover, since he was only about two months in India (and never in Persia), he had very limited (or even, no) access to Persian native speakers and/or experts—if it had been so, he would have mentioned it somewhere in his very detailed preface.

ONOMÁZEIN 56 (June 2022): 184 - 205
Mahmoud Afrouz
Factors affecting translation of realia in classical literary masterpieces: access to the previous...

194

Eastwick (1880: v-vi) himself asserted that his translation was "read through and compared with the original by an Indian gentleman who is a profound Persian scholar, and possesses at the same time a complete mastery of English, and who has expressed himself satisfied with this version". Therefore, we can confidently confirm his access to an expert in the SL literature.

Rehatsek (2010: vii) claimed that his main focus was chiefly on the issue of "fidelity" and intentionally "avoided consulting any of" the previous translations of *The Gulistan*. As David Rosenbaum, the editor of the latest (i.e., 2010) edition of Rehatsek's translation, confirmed, "while other prior translations of *the Gulistan* into English existed, Rehatsek undertook this translation aiming, as he said, for fidelity rather than elegance" (ibid.: xi). According to Rosenbaum, "between 1842 and 1847", Rehatsek, being fluent in 12 languages, "visited France, lived four years in the United States, and sailed at last to India, arriving in Bombay (now, Mumbai) where he spent the rest of his life" (ibid.). As Rosenbaum explained further, Rehatsek "did not drink, and avoided meat. Though wealthy, he ... had no servants, ... and wore simple, even threadbare, clothing. His house was very small, constructed of reeds in the native style", and his "furnishings were sparse, hardly sufficient for his own use. Immune to the lures of material possession and austere in his habits, Rehatsek perhaps cherished only his library, filled with books in Latin, ... Arabic, and Persian" (ibid.). It seems that Rehatsek has been a true follower of Sa'di's teachings in *The Gulistan*. Furthermore, as can be inferred from what Rosenbaum pointed out, Rehatsek had access to the SL experts (due to reading their books and living in India) and previous translations and even other religious-literary works (due to his full familiarity with Arabic). His comments on previous translations are also very interesting: "the translations of *the Gulistan* which have hitherto appeared are such expurgated ones, and therefore likewise in that respect deficient in fidelity" (ibid.: vii).

Anderson (1861: viii) pointed out that he "had no assistance from anyone but Natives, (who did not understand a word of English)", nor had he "compared, or read, any translation" of *The Gulistan*; therefore, he was apparently the only translator who had close relationships with the Persian native speakers, although he did not use the previous translation presented by Ross (1823).

3.2. Procedure

The following steps were taken to carry out the study:

1. Persian realia in *The Gulistan* and their English equivalents were identified.

2. The untranslated and mistranslated realia were specified.

3. Procedures used in translating realia were identified.

4. High and low frequently used procedures were specified.

5. The consistency of each translator in applying a certain procedure was determined.

6. The potential effects of the translators' accessibility to the SL native speakers, the SL experts, or the previous translations on their selected translation procedures were investigated.

4. Results and discussion

The article aimed to give a descriptive and theoretical insight into the issue of realia in translation from the perspective of cultural-linguistic theories.

4.1. CTs in *The Gulistan*

In table 1, a selected number of Persian realia extracted from *The Gulistan* and their English equivalents are presented. The symbol (*) indicates that the translator provided an informative footnote.

TABLE 1
A sample of Persian realia and their equivalents

TRANSLATORS TERMS	REHATSEK (1888)	ROSS (1839)	EASTWICK (1880)	ANDERSON (1861)
هما /homa/	homa*	Homayi or phoenix	phoenix	Homa
پارسا /parsa/	devotee	holy man	religious man	religious man
کاوین /kavin/	dowry	----	portion	dowry
فقیه /fægih/	faqih	Philosophic man	a learned person	a learned one
حلوا /hælva/	sweets	sweetmeat	sweetmeats	sweetmeats
سِماع /sema'/	----	company	'mid dance and song	a singing party
پیر /pir/	old man	old man	old man	old man
خرسَک /xersæk/	leapfrog	to play at marbels	leap-frog	leap-frog
قَلَندر /gælændær/	galandars	Kalandars	Kalandars*	Calandars

The procedures employed by the four translators in rendering the selected realia, referred to in table 1, are presented in table 2. Note that procedures are abbreviated in the following way: synonymy (Syn), descriptive equivalent (Desc), transference (Transf), cultural equivalent (Cult), functional equivalent (Func), naturalization (Nat), shifts or transpositions (transp), modulation (Mod), componential analysis (Comp), notes (N).

TABLE 2

A sample of translation procedures

TERMS	TRANSLATOR	REHATSEK (1888)	ROSS (1839)	EASTWICK (1880)	ANDERSON (1861)
هما /homa/		Transf, N	Nat, Cult	Cult	Transf
پارسا /parsa/		Syn	Func	Func	Func
کاوین /kavin/		Cult	----	Func	Cult
فقیه /fægih/		Nat	Mod	Desc	Desc
حلوا /hælva/		Func, transp	Func	Func, transp	Func, transp
سِماع /sema'/		----	Syn	Desc	Func
پیر /pir/		Syn	Syn	Syn	Syn
خِرسَک /xersæk/		Cult	Desc	Cult	Cult
قَلَندر /gælændær/		Transf, transp	Transf, transp	Transf, transp, N	Transf, transp

In table 3, the frequency of the procedures used by the four translators in rendering realia is presented. It should be reminded that since Anderson had not translated the introductory part (IP) of *The Gulistan*, two sets of data are presented; however, for accurate data analysis, only those with [no IP] are taken into account.

It can generally be observed that the three most frequently employed translation procedures are "functional equivalence", "synonymy", and "transference", while the three least favorable ones include "paraphrase", "componential analysis", and "through-translation".

Anderson, as the translator who had access to the SL natives, used "naturalization" the least; however, "note" was also used the least by him. While the lower frequency of "naturalization" in his work can somehow be justifiable (because of his consultations with the SL natives), his disinclination towards "notes" seems quite unexplainable.

Eastwick, as the translator who had access to an expert of the SL, showed lower tendency towards "naturalization" than functional and descriptive equivalents. Moreover, he, in comparison with the rest of the translators, resorted less to the procedure of "transference". He has also the second place in providing informative "notes" for the TT readership. All these seem quite expected from someone who had consulted with an expert in Persian literature. However, the fact that he utilized "synonymy" more than any other translator, together with the fact that this very procedure is his second highly employed procedure, are really inexplicable.

Ross, as the first one in the group who rendered *The Gulistan*, did not provide his readers with any notes. But this by no means implies that he was inconsiderate of the TT audience since he had the first rank in opting for "descriptive" equivalence.

ONOMÁZEIN 56 (June 2022): 184 - 205
Mahmoud Afrouz
Factors affecting translation of realia in classical literary masterpieces: access to the previous...

197

TABLE 3

Frequency of the procedures employed by the four translators

TRANSLATORS / PROCEDURE	REHATSEK (INCLUDING IP)	REHATSEK (NO IP)	ROSS (INCLUDING IP)	ROSS (NO IP)	EASTWICK (INCLUDING IP)	EASTWICK (NO IP)	ANDERSON
Functional equivalent	82	66	77	62	75	60	72
Synonymy	49	30	39	29	49	40	34
Naturalization	15	11	15	11	13	7	2
Through-translation	13	10	2	2	7	5	5
Componential analysis	8	6	13	8	8	3	4
Descriptive equivalent	20	18	36	35	22	21	27
Cultural equivalent	24	20	24	19	23	19	15
Modulation	5	4	31	19	29	21	13
Notes	28	23	0	0	21	16	3
Transference	41	35	26	25	22	18	24
Paraphrase	3	2	5	5	5	5	5
Transposition	15	11	12	10	16	12	11

Rehatsek, as the translator who had access to the experts and previous translations of the work, was a linguist fluent in many languages including Arabic and Persian. Moreover, he had lived a considerable portion of his life in a society where Persian language experts and native speakers were accessible. All these may have potentially resulted in his great knowledge of Persian culture—that is most probably why he ranks first when it comes to the use of informative "notes". His low amount of "synonymy" use also confirmed his command of the SL culture. Although, at first glance, the high frequency of "transference" may seem unjustifiable in his work, when we go through the data and realize that about 50% of the transferred items were provided with informative notes, we get convinced that the abovementioned factors (i.e., accessibility to SL experts, SL natives, and previous translations) have possibly worked for him.

Therefore, in general, translator's access to the SL natives, the SL experts, and/or previous translations does not seem to play a pivotal role in leading them to constantly select specific procedures. In other words, in dealing with various realia, they have used various procedures.

ONOMÁZEIN 56 (June 2022): 184 - 205
Mahmoud Afrouz
Factors affecting translation of realia in classical literary masterpieces: access to the previous...

198

4.2. Comparison of the translators' performance

In order to compare the four translators' works, the researcher took the following criteria into consideration:

1) *Fewer mistranslated* realia: Naturally, one criterion of a high-quality translation is that it should have the least number of mistranslated realia.

2) *Fewer untranslated* realia: Another criterion of taking account of a translation as a good one is the occurrence of the least number of untranslated realia in the TT. Realia are so important that 'deletion' can rarely be taken into account as a proper strategy for dealing with them. Moreover, a translator being familiar with the source-culture and possessing a good command of cultural knowledge is less likely to turn a blind eye on trying to find equivalents for realia.

3) *Fewer use of synonymy:* A synonymy "is only appropriate where literal translation is not possible and because *the word is not important* enough for componential analysis. Here economy precedes *accuracy*" (Newmark, 1988a: 84, emphasis is mine). It is noteworthy that every single one of the realia in *The Gulistan* was *important*, and, in such cases, it seems improper to sacrifice *accuracy* in favor of economy.

4) *Fewer use of transference:* Newmark (1988a: 82) did not consider transference as a faultless translation procedure and pointed out that a translator should "complement it with a second translation". Accordingly, one criterion of taking account of a translation as a good one can be the "fewer use of transference".

5) *More employment of informative notes:* The use of informative notes can assist the target-text readers to make better judgments of the ST contents. Since original realia usually do not have a one-to-one correspondent in the TT, providing informative notes, most of the time, is a "certain" solution for providing the TT readership with an accurate rendition.

All of the above criteria have either a direct or an indirect relationship with the translator's familiarity with the SL culture. The more a translator is familiar with the SL culture, (i) the fewer number of *mistakes* he is likely to make in rendering realia, (ii) the fewer number of *untranslated items* is expected to be found in the TT, (iii) the less s/he is likely to employ *synonymy* or (iv) *transference*, (v) the more s/he would show tendency toward the employment of *informative notes* (since s/he is expected to possess the required background cultural-knowledge).

On the basis of what was mentioned above, in table 4 mistranslated items (MI) and untranslated items (UI) are taken into account as 'the negative items'; synonymy (S) and transference (T) as 'the moderately productive procedures'; and notes (N) as 'highly productive procedures'. There are other items abbreviated in the following way: frequency (Fr); total frequency (TF); total percentage (TP); and average percentage (AP).

ONOMÁZEIN 56 (June 2022): 184 - 205
Mahmoud Afrouz
Factors affecting translation of realia in classical literary masterpieces: access to the previous...

199

Whereas

> TF 1 = TF of negative choices (MI+UI)

> TF 2 = TF of negative procedures (S+T) - TF of positive procedures (N)

> AP = (TP1+TP2) / 2

TABLE 4

Comparison of the four translator's performance

TRANSLATORS \ ITEMS	MI	UI	TF$_1$	TP$_1$	S	T	N	TF$_2$	TP$_2$	AP
Rehatsek	22	4	26	17%	30	35	23	42	22%	**20%**
Ross	25	15	40	26%	29	25	0	54	28%	**27%**
Eastwick	28	17	45	29%	40	18	16	42	22%	**26%**
Anderson	32	10	42	28%	34	24	3	55	28%	**28%**

As is revealed in table 4, while Rehatsek totally failed to provide 26 realia with (accurate) equivalents, others' exceeded him in this concern by about 10%. As for the sum of highly and moderately productive procedures, Rehatsek and Eastwick had better performance than Anderson and Ross (by 6%). On the whole, Rehatsek's performance exceeded the rest by about 6 to 8%. His having access to previous translations and the SL experts and, consequently, possessing great background cultural-knowledge of the SL seem to have resulted in the production of a TT wherein realia were translated accurately.

5. Conclusion

In the 19th century, when all of *The Gulistan*'s translators considered in the current study produced their works, there was no radio, television, the internet, social network, or any simple media for facilitating communication among people of all over the world. Therefore, the choices for translators to get themselves familiar with the source-text culture were very limited. They could travel to the country where the ST was originally written, to find some SL natives and get assistance from them (like what Anderson did), or to find some knowledgeable experts of the SL literature and seek help from them (as is done by Rehatsek).

As the findings revealed, the mixed factor of the accessibility to 'the previous translations' and 'the SL experts' was more influential than the mere accessibility to the SL natives. Nowadays, accessibility to the previous translations and the SL experts can be attained via reading their books, majorly available in the internet. One main implication for the prospective translators of classical Persian literature would be that they do not necessarily need to consult with

native speakers in order to deal properly with the realia embedded in such texts—studying the related books written by the SL experts, as well as reviewing and meticulously comparing previous translations, will be of great help.

Rarely any translator can be found or expected to be more familiar with the source-culture than an expert native one. Therefore, it seems that a mixture of the three factors (consulting previous translations, as well as consulting an expert SL native) would be an optimal condition.

However, a big limitation of the present study was inaccessibility to a native translator's work—no Persian translator, up until now, has tried to render *The Gulistan*. Therefore, a suggestion for further research would be for researchers to carry out their study on a corpus which is translated by both the SL native speakers and the TL native speakers.

Although the findings of this study did not support the hypothesis that mere accessibility of translators to the SL native speakers would help improve the quality of rendering ST realia, further research is required to investigate the issue via focusing on other classical/modern literary-texts.

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ONOMÁZEIN 56 (June 2022): 184 - 205
Mahmoud Afrouz
Factors affecting translation of realia in classical literary masterpieces: access to the previous...

202

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ONOMÁZEIN 56 (June 2022): 184 - 205
Mahmoud Afrouz
Factors affecting translation of realia in classical literary masterpieces: access to the previous...

204

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