

Proper Names in Children's Literature Translation: The Case Study of the Arabic Translation of *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*

إشكالية أسماء الاعلام في الترجمة الموجهة للطفل: ترجمة هاري بوتر وكأس النار إلى العربية أنموذجا

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Abstract:

The main aim of the present paper is to investigate the translatability of proper names in children's literature. Furthermore, it identifies major difficulties related to the translation of proper names in literature aimed at children. To meet the set objectives, proper names of the Arabic translation of the English Rowling's *Harry Potter and The Goblet of Fire* were analyzed in terms of translational procedures as well as the validity of the provided translations in expressing functions assigned to the source text names. The procedurs of Davies (2003) of culture-specific items translation were used as a model for the analysis. The analysis reveals extensive dependence on the preservation procedure of the source text names; indicating the translator's tendency towards the foreignization of the target text. The adopted translational choices lead to translational loss in the semantic and connotative meanings assigned to the source text names.

Keywords: Children's Literature, Foreignization, Literary Translation, Translatability, Transliteration.

ملخص:

تهدف هذه الورقة البحثية إلى تقصي مدى قابلية ترجمة أسماء العلم في أدب الطفل. وتحاول الدراسة أيضا أن تسلط الضوء على أبرز الصعوبات التي تربط بترجمة أسماء الاعلام في هذا النوع من الأدب. لتحقيق أهداف البحث المنشودة، تم تحليل أسماء العلم المستخرجة من الترجمة العربية لرواية الكاتبة الإنجليزية رولينغ "هاري بوتر وكأس النار" من حيث إجراءات الترجمة المعتمدة وكذا كفاءتها في نقل المعاني المتضمنة لكل اسم إلى النص الهدف باستعمال إجراءات دافيس (2003) المقترحة لنقل العناصر ذات الخصوصيات الثقافية. وقد أظهر التحليل اعتماد المترجم المفرط على أسلوب نقل أسماء النص الأصل عبر تقنية النقحرة، مما يدل على نزعة المترجم نحو تغريب الترجمة. ونتج عنه خسارة ترجمة للمعاني الدلالية والضمنية للأسماء في النص المصدر.

كلمات مفتاحية: أدب الطفل، التغريب، الترجمة الأدبية، قابلية الترجمة، النقحرة

1. Introduction

The translation of proper names presents a particular searching test of translator ability. Generally, proper names are used to identify certain individual be it; a person, a thing, an action, a place. Moreover, if you are quite close and familiar with the culture, in context, the listener or the reader can infer information about the referent's gender, age and geographical origin. In literature, proper names are not simply used to identify and denote a certain character; but also, to characterize and connote him or her. That is to say, the author's coinage of proper names is considered as a method of characterization. Writers make use of proper nouns in order to, explicitly, describe their protagonists' and antagonists' physical appearance, personalities, and habits. In their endeavour to do so, they appeal to allusions from history, mythology, sacred books and other literary works of the culture in question, or they invent new names. Speaking about children's literature, similarly, proper names may acquire and serve additional functions above identifying characters function; this may include but not limited to: the deictic function, the characterizing function, the connotative function, the symbolic function, the aesthetic function; etc.

Because of this multi-functionality, proper names are argued to be challenging for translators. In fact, translating proper names is not a straightforward process as it is hampered by cultural, figurative, esthetic and linguistic difficulties.

The current research paper aims at investigating the extent to which proper names are translatable in literary translation. Furthermore, the present study attempts to fulfil the following sub-objectives:

- Identify major difficulties related to the translation of proper names in literature aimed for children.
- Explore how translators handle proper names pervasive in children's books under translation, with specific reference to Ahmed Hasan Mohammed's Arabic translation of J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*.
- Examine the extent to which the translator has succeed in their translational choices.

The research also attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1) To what extent proper names in children's literature are translatable into Arabic?
- 2) To what extent Davies (2003) suggested model of translating proper names is applicable?
- 3) What sorts of difficulties are associated with the translation of proper nouns found in children's narratives?

It is hypothesised that:

- 1) Proper names pervasive in children's literature are translatable into Arabic.
- 2) Davies (2003) suggested model of culture-specific items is applicable for translating proper nouns of children's literature.
- 3) In children's literature translation, boosting acceptability and readability of the translation are the main challenges of rendering proper names into Arabic.

The structure of this paper is as follows, first, the theoretical and conceptual background of the study is briefly overviewed, and issues concerning the translatability of proper nouns in literature were highlighted. Then, domestication and foreignization strategies were presented as a debatable area in children's literature translation. Next, main difficulties that face translators while rendering the proper nouns were highlighted, and the suggested methods to deal with these difficulties were explored. The practical part concentrates on the analysis of translation methods employed to translate proper names pervasive in 'Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire' into Arabic. Finally, conclusions were drawn. It is noteworthy that the study is limited to the analysis of proper names translation in the literary text, and the reached findings are limited by the applied model for the analysis.

2. The (un)translatability of proper names in literature

The translation of proper nouns is a topical issue among translation studies scholars. This includes but not limited to Klingberg (1986), Davies (2003), Coillie (2006), Nord (2003) and Oittinen (2002).

Many translation scholars claim that proper names are untranslatable and ought not to be translated because they express no meaning except their referential meaning. This view can be supported by Mill (1886) statement "proper names have strictly no meaning; they are mere marks for individual objects".

This view was rejected by many linguists and translation scholars, who believe in the translatability of proper nouns, and argue the cultural specificity of proper nouns. In this stance, proper names should be translated because they are compiled with many semantic loads. The translator is, according to this stance, who decides whether to keep, omit or translate these names. That is to say, proper names are translatable in their nature, and to save these names intact or to translate it is subsequent on the overall strategy of foreignization or domestication adopted by the translator.

Various internal and external factors may influence the translatability of proper nouns. Coillie (2006) explains to extent to which the nature of a noun may contribute to its translatability. He explains that proper names translation is governed by the connotations attached to it, for example, names with exotic connotations, uncommon and ambiguous names are more likely to be replaced or omitted in children's literature translation. For names of famous people, the translators are expected to contemplate the extent to which they are known in the target culture before the direct transfer. Alliterations, puns and other figurative devices in proper names can also influence its translatability. He explains further how proper nouns that include allusions are less probably to be literally translated or transcribed. By way of contrast, they are changed while rendered to the target culture in order to reproduce intended source text connotation; otherwise, functions might not be fulfilled in the target text if such names are not translated.

Coillie (ibid) highlights the role of textual as well as contextual features in proper names translations; maintaining that the way names are used in text determines the

way it can be translated; if it is important in the text developments it should not be omitted or replaced. Similarly, names that entail playing in words with essential role in the text cannot be deleted. Coillie (ibid) refers to repetition and style as textual factors that influence the translatability of proper nouns.

According to Coillie (ibid), the translator's frame of reference can influence the the translator's decisions concerning the retention or translation of proper name, this includes; his/her knowledge of cultures, of author's life and previous translation. In addition to experiences, values, and norms.

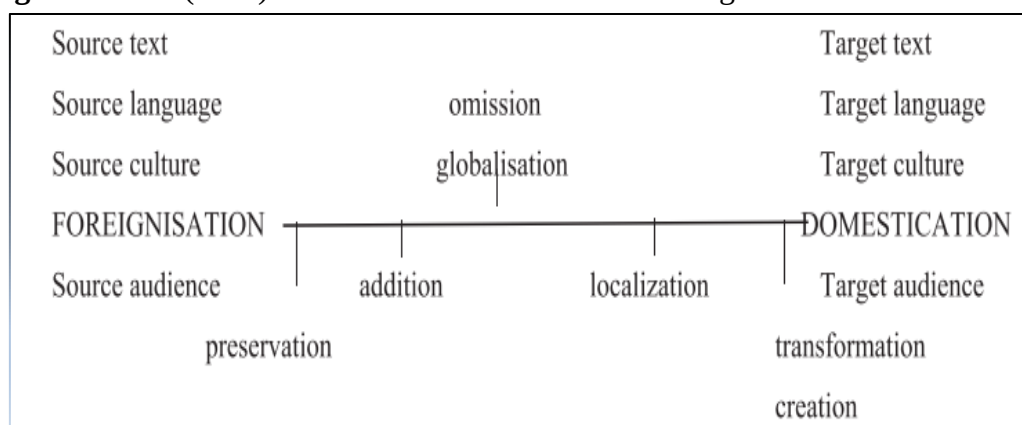
Coillie (ibid) sheds lights on some additional external factors that are agreed to bear effects on proper nouns translation decisions. These include: the writer of the work, readers and their expectations, reviewers, copyrights (often the changing main characters names is hampered with risks of copyright violation), publishers (publisher are much more concerned with issues of readability and acceptability for commercial purposes).

In his contributions to the topic, Fernandes (2006, p. 49) draws distinction between the translatability of conventional names and the translatability of the semantic loads names; the former is claimed to be as unmotivated for translation, since it convey no semantic load. The latter according to Fernandes, is seen as motivated for translation.

According to Klingberg (1986, pp. 43-53), decisions concerning proper names translation are made according to its class and category. Kleinberg categorizes proper names into five classes; namely, personal names, personal titles, names of domestic animals, names of objects and geographical names. He, accordingly, prescribes a translation method for each category.

Drawing upon Venuti's concepts of domestication and foreignization (1995), Davis (2003, pp. 72-89) suggests a model for cultural marks translation, including proper names, classifies her suggested translation procedures according their degree of domestication and foreignization;. As illustrated in figure; 1. Preservation and addition are source-text oriented methods of transference; while, localization ,transformation and creation are target text oriented techniques.

Fig. 1. Davies (2003) Translation Procedures from Foreignisation to Domestication



Source: (Nyangeri & Wangari, 2019 p.350)

3. Proper Names in Children's Literature Translation From Foreignisation and Domestication Perspectives

Because decisions concerning proper names translation are part and parcel of the general translation strategy chosen by translators, it is necessary to shed some light on domestication and foreignization strategies as a debatable area in children's literature translation.

Klingberg (1986) criticized the use of adaptation as a strategy for translating literature for children, stressing the importance of faithfulness to the source text to enhance children's intercultural capacities “the removal of peculiarities of the foreign culture will not further the reader’s knowledge of and interest in the foreign culture” (1986, p. 10). Shavit, similarly, in her “Poetics of Children’s Literature” (1986), rejects adaptation of translated literature of children considering it as a sign of disrespect to the child.

By way of contrast, many translation scholars maintain that adaptation should be the underpinning strategy of translating children's literature, arguing that; exposing the young reader to foreign cultural markers may lead to the hazard of cultural invasion and cultural identity deformation due to cultural differences children's limited abilities.

From a reader-oriented point of view, Oittinen (2002, p. 78) supports this view declaring, “all translators, if they want to be successful, need to adapt their texts according to the presumptive readers”. In fact, adaptation is used not only to ensure acceptability, but also to enhance readability of translated children's book because of children's limited comprehension abilities.

In fact, children's immaturity and age span seems to play an influential factor in cultural markers (including proper names) rendition while translating for children. Indeed, the youngest the child is, the limited the ability of comprehension is. This justifies why adaptation of foreign elements is considered preferable solution for translating early childhood books.

Puurtinen (1995) refers to this Vulnerability stating “... children with their imperfect reading abilities and limited world knowledge are not expected to tolerate as much strangeness and foreignness as adult readers” (p. 23).

In fact, in addition to considerations of age span translators are expected to consider the literary subgenre within the genre of children's literature. Speaking about fairy tales, for example, whereas proper names with special meanings are recommended to be translated not transliterated as they fulfil certain functions in the tale, similarly in fiction allegorical proper names that came in forms personification and neologism are recommended also to be translated.

4. Davies (2003) Methods of Transference

Davies proposed methods for translating culture-specific items are as follow:

4.1 Preservation

In preservation proper names are transferred directly from the source text to the target if no close equivalent is found in the target language and target culture (Davies, 2003, p. 72). Preservation technique can be applied in the form of coping; when the translator reproduces the proper name in the translated text exactly as it appears in the source text without orthographic adjustment. This procedure is less likely to be used while translating for children for difficulties of pronunciation and spelling linked to early childhood. Transliteration, transcription, phonological adaptation and literal translation are included in the preservation.

4.1.1 Transliteration /Transcription:

The most popular choice for translating proper nouns ,that enhance children's intercultural capacities. This entails the adaptation of proper names to follow the target language orthographic or phonetic conventions, respectively. Though this seems workable with the translation of conventional names that convey no functional meaning, this strategy is not preferable in children literature translation for the fact that having transliterated proper names distract the child and diminish his/her engagement with fiction in addition to the need for ease of pronunciation and familiarity.

4.1.2 Phonological Adaptation

This refers to changing phonological units in the source text proper noun with the closest-sounding letters of a different target alphabet in order to be in line with the target language phonological system. A frequently cited example is the phonological adaptation of English equivalents for Arabic names ابن سينا, ابن رشد as Avicenna and Averroes.

4.1.3 Literal Translation

Davies (2003, p. 75) stated, “if a name contains clearly recognizable descriptive elements, translators often opt to preserve the descriptive meaning of a name rather than its form, and use a literal translation”.

4.2 Explanation

Called also addition , This entails the preservation of the source text name supported with extra information. it occurs “when the translator decides to keep the original item but supplements the text with whatever information is judged necessary”. Davies (2003, p. 77). Davies (ibid) distinguishes two types of addition; paratextually addition in footnotes, translators’ notes or glossary and intertextually addition.

4.3 Omission

Davies (2003, p. 79) argues that , “the inclusion of a problematic culture-specific item might create a confusing or inconsistent effect”. Therefore, she advises to omit a problematic culture-specific item altogether, so that no trace of it is found in the translation.

4.4 Globalisation

Globalisation, also called "Translation by a more general word" is defined as the replacement of a culture-specific references with the ones which are more neutral or general.

4.5 Localisation

Naturalization for Aiexla (1996), used when translators presuppose that the original name would be too strange for the target readers “translators instead of aiming for ‘cultural-free’ descriptions, [...] may try to anchor a reference firmly in the culture of the target audience” (Davies, 2003, pp.83-84).

4.6 Transformation

This involves “an alternation or distortion of the original” (Davies, 2003, p. 86). Davies (ibid) cited The title of J. K. Rowling’s “Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone” were transformed into “Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone” in the American translation of the novel as an example of the application of this strategy.

4.7 Creation

Creation appears when “translators have actually created cultural specific items not present in the original text” (Davies, 2003, p. 88).

5. Methodology

To meet the set objectives and answer the research questions, the corpus based approach were adopted and a comparative descriptive analysis were carried out. Literary proper nouns in the Arabic translation of Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* translated by Ahmed Hasan Muhammed were analyzed in terms of translational procedures as well as the validity of the provided translations in expressing meanings and functions of these names. The choice of corpus is motivated by the fact that the excessive use of meaningful names whether invented or conventional as important feature in Rowling's writings and novels. The translation of personal names, titles, names of objects as well as typonymies were subjects to investigation. Davies (2003) suggested procedures for the translation of culture-specific items argued to be applicable in proper names translation were employed as a tool for analysis and evaluation.

6. Data Analysis

Table 1. Analysis of sample 1

Source name	Target name	Translation procedure
Death Eaters	آكلي الموتى	Litral Translation

'Death Eaters' is a title coined by Rowling to refer to a group of wizards and witches, led by the dark wizard Lord Voldemort in the Harry Potter series of novels. To translate this compound noun 'Death Eaters' the translator opts for Preservation of the connotative meaning through literal translation. Although seeming working in accordance with Davies suggestion (2003, p. 75) "if a name contains clearly recognizable descriptive elements, translators often opt to preserve the descriptive meaning of a name rather than its form, and use a literal translation". The translator failed to transfer the accurate meaning for the title; as he translate Death as موتى instead of موت resulting in falsified idea concerning the aim of this group which works to kill death not eat the deaths.

Table 2. Analysis of sample 2

Source name	Target name	Translation procedure
Sirius	سيريزوس	Transliteration

Sirius, derived from the Greek word *Seirios* which means glowing, is the brightest star in the night sky. Sirius is known also as "Dog Star" with the Arabic equivalent نجم الشعرى. In the Harry Potter series, Sirius Black is dangerous fictitious character, who escapes from the wizard prison Azkaban and who have magical ability to transform himself into a large, black dog. Therefore, it is obvious that Rowling, opting for this designation, portrays many attributes and skills of this personality. The chosen surname also emphasizes this connotation. In the Arabic translation, additional meanings intended by the original author are lost because of the transliteration procedure being applied by the translator to translate both the first and the surname.

Table 3. Analysis of sample 3

Source name	Target name	Translation procedure
Muggles	العامي	Explanation

Muggles is a title invented by Rowling to refer to ordinary people with non-magical power and who did not born in a magical family in the Harry Potter world. In 2002, this word joined the oxford dictionary as an adjective for "a person who lacks a

particular skill or skills, or who is regarded as inferior in some way". To deal with this title in translation, the translator, successfully, restores to globalization procedure through the Replacement by a general noun العامة that conveys the general meaning intended by the source text 's title. The provided translation, although not creative, seems to be adequate to transfer the intended meaning and create the same equivalent effect for the target text reader.

Table 4. Analysis of sample 4& 5

Source name	Target name	Translation procedure
Beauxbatons	بوباتون	Transliteration
Durmstrang	دار مسترانج	Transliteration

Beauxbatons and Durmstrang are titles of two foreign, French and German, wizarding schools mentioned in the Harry Potter series. The author uses these name to add exotic flavor to the novel. In translation, to deal with this two foreign names the translator resorts to the preservation through transliteration procedure resulting in a translational loss of the exotic flavor intended by the original writer.

Table 5. Analysis of sample 6

Source name	Target name	Translation procedure
Privet Drive	شارع برايفت درايف	Transliteration+ Globalisation

In the novel, Privet Drive was given as a name of a suburban street in the city of Little Whinging. The proper name Privet Drive is preserved in the target text through the technique of preservation, but شارع that is supplementary information were added to reduce the ambiguity for the noun child and for more clarification.

Table 6. Analysis of sample 7

Source name	Target name	Translation procedure
Azkaban	أزكبان	Transliteration

Azkaban is a fictional name coined by the author to name a prison where wizards who violate the laws of the British wizarding world are sent. Again the 'preservation through transliteration procedure' is used to present this name to the target reader.

Table 7. Analysis of sample 8

Source name	Target name	Translation procedure
Voldemort	فولدمورت	Transliteration

Voldemort is personal name created by the author. This proper name is made up of three French words vol, de and mort. Vol with the meaning of 'theft' or 'flight' and mort with the meaning of 'death' results in the name Voldemort which means 'theft of death' or 'flight from death'. This connotative loaded name supports the characteristics and the attributes of the character in the novel. The translator has opted for preservation through transliteration procedure leading to a loss both in the connotative meaning and in the exotic impression.

Table 8. Analysis of sample 9

Source name	Target name	Translation procedure
Ron's favourite Quidditch team, the Chudley Cannons.	فريق (رون) المفضل في الكويدتش	Omission

'The Chudley Cannons' is the title of a quidditch team mentioned in the novel. In the Arabic translation, the translator prefers to omit the naming. Deletion here can be justified by the general strategy of abridgement and shortening purposes.

7. Results

The Analysis of the selected treatments of proper names in the Arabic translation of "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire" has revealed that:

- Translator's tendency towards the foreignization of the translation.
- It was obvious that preservation is the predominant translational solution to deal with proper names in translation. Although reflecting the translator's tendency towards the faithfulness to the source text, this translation solution reduces its readability.
- The findings are in accordance with Coillie claim that not translating the proper name "may impair the target text reader's understanding of the character, give a wrong impression of the fictive person or change the intended effect of the name" (Coillie 2006, p.125).
- Transliterating the foreign names, French name 'Beauxbatons' and the German name 'Durmstrang', leads to a loss of the exotic flavour intended by the original writer.
- Many creative names lost their connotative meaning (the case of 'Voldemort') in the translation due to adaptation of transliteration procedure.
- Some analysed patterns have shown that the translator appeal to more than one translational solution. The case of the pattern of شارع برايفت درايف which overlaps between preservation through transliteration and addition.
- In, شارع برايفت درايف in order for the target not to be alienated, the "addition" procedure was adopted in limited instances. Additions take the form of in-text

explanations because of the norms of writing for children. This translation procedure is encouraged while translating for children with the aim of enlarging their intercultural capacities.

- In terms of frequency, Translation by omission is the second most frequently applied procedure to deal with proper names in the analysed corpus. The tendency that can be justified shortening and abridgement purposes, which highlights the role of additional external factors (terms set out by translation initiators or publishers) that bear effects on proper nouns translation decisions

8. Conclusion

The major aim of the present study is to explore the extent to which translators have succeeded in translating proper nouns pervasive in children's literature. After investigating the theoretical and conceptual background of the study, it was found that the rendition of proper nouns from the source to the target text is hampered by various textual and contextual factors. Having data analyzed, it is evident that the translator depends heavily on preservation procedure to render the source text's proper nouns into the target text resulting most of the time in translation loss at the level of the connotative meanings and exotic functions. Therefore, it is important of creativity to be encouraged in translating for children in order to generate target text's equivalent proper nouns that create the same effect intended in the source text. The study concludes by recommending further studies to be conducted to enrich this area of research.

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