In the Name of God

# Translation and Interpreting Research

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**Aim and Scope**

The aim of this journal is to provide a platform for scholars, researchers, and practitioners to explore and exchange cutting-edge knowledge, insights, and innovations in the dynamic fields of translation and interpreting. The journal fosters a comprehensive understanding of translation and interpreting, covering a broad range of topics, including but not limited to translation theory, translation practice, methodology, intercultural communication, translation technologies, and professional ethics. Contributions are welcomed that delve into the challenges, trends, and advancements in translation and interpreting, facilitating interdisciplinary discussions and promoting excellence in the field. By encouraging rigorous research, critical analysis, and practical implications, the journal serves as a catalyst for advancing scholarly discourse and professional development within the realm of translation and interpreting.

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# The Role of Translation in Framing International Environmental News

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## Abstract

This study investigates the way international environmental news is framed in Iran, specifically evaluating the role of translation in promoting public perceptions of global ecological issues. By analyzing articles from the Iranian Environmental News Agency (IENA), the study employs ecolinguistic framework to reveal underlying frames of reconstructing and adapting environmental narratives for Iranian audiences. The depiction of nature includes prominent frames such as crisis, economics, conservation, and the human dimension, with key metaphors such as viewing nature as a victim, climate change as a war, and nature as a resource. However, the frames and metaphors also highlight an intricate balance between human-centered and nature-centered approaches, fostering a matter of urgency in addressing environmental issues and taking the lead toward convening ways toward sustainable practices. Findings reveal that though crisis stories or war metaphors communicate the desperate state of environmental challenges, they may not effectively inspire constructive, non-destructive action, and create a sense of helplessness or fatalism on the part of the readers. In contrast, conservational and human responsibility frames evoke a sense of agency and optimism. The research underscores the importance of translation in mediating global environmental discourse, advocating for more inclusive and ecocentric narratives that connect international and local contexts. Finally, this paper renders its contribution toward a detailed understanding of environmental communication in Iran, enhances global ecological awareness, and promotes sustainability.

**Keywords:** Ecological awareness, ecolinguistics, eco-translation, environmental news, Iranian media

**Introduction**

If nature—or at the very least, our perception of it—is understood as a cultural product (Cronon, 1996; Escobar, 1999; Haraway, 2013; Ingold, 2000; Latour, 2012; Plumwood, 1993; Smith, 2008), then it follows that our understanding of nature is not universal or objective but is instead deeply shaped by cultural, historical, and social contexts. This variability in perception extends to how nations conceptualize and engage with nature differently. As it feels strikingly familiar, a nation might romanticize its own pristine wilderness areas as symbols of national identity—appreciating them as emblems of natural beauty or cultural heritage—while simultaneously engaging in the exploitation of nature elsewhere. Such a contrast between the romanticization of national nature and the exploitation of foreign nature underscores the uneven and often contradictory ways in which nature is constructed. It also reveals how environmental discourses may serve as legitimizing instruments, hiding the social and ecological expense of resource extraction elsewhere.

To this end, the construction of nature could be discussed both nationally and internationally. At a national level, how a country perceives and regulates its own environment is highly linked to its cultural identity, discourses of history, and political agendas. Internationally, the construction of nature is much more complex, because it is about the intersection of international power relations, economic structures, and cultural exchange. In constructing nature overseas, translation plays a central role.

The distinction between national nature and international nature is even more sharp in the realm of journalism. While much of the news and articles about international nature are conveyed through translation, these practices of translation might explicitly receive the label of "translation," or they might not. Yet, at their core, what these journalistic practices accomplish in their bulletin writing is fundamentally an act of translation. This process involves not only the linguistic conversion of text from one language to another but also the cultural, contextual, and ideological adaptation of information to suit the target audience's expectations, values, and frameworks of understanding.

Seen in this light, the present research was conducted to further examine how nature is framed in international environmental news within the context of Iran. By focusing on the practices of translation and representation in Iranian media, this study sought to uncover how global environmental issues are reconstructed, reinterpreted, and communicated to Iranian audiences. Given that Iran occupies a unique geopolitical and cultural position—bridging the Middle East, Central Asia, and the global environmental discourse—the way international nature stories are translated and framed in its media offers a compelling case study for understanding the interplay between global narratives and local contexts.

To this end, the Iranian Environmental News Agency (IENA), known as "سایت خبری محیط زیست" [Environmental News Website], was selected as the primary source for analysis. IENA was chosen for two key reasons: first, as a non-governmental press outlet, it is less directly influenced by state ideology, allowing for a more independent and nuanced exploration of environmental narratives; and second, its primary focus on environmental issues makes it a rich and relevant source for understanding how nature is framed in Iranian media. By focusing on IENA, this study not only contributes to a deeper understanding of environmental communication in Iran but also highlights the broader role of non-governmental media in shaping public discourse on global issues. It underscores the importance of independent press in fostering critical engagement with environmental challenges and in bridging the gap between global narratives and local realities. Ultimately, this research aims to provide valuable insights into how environmental news is mediated in Iran, offering a foundation for more effective and inclusive environmental communication both within the country and in global contexts.

To conduct the analysis, Stibbe's (2021) ecolinguistic approach was adapted, which employs a broad array of linguistic and cognitive tools to examine how language shapes our understanding of the natural world and influences ecological behavior. This framework is particularly well-suited to the current study, as it allows us to critically analyze the framing of nature in international environmental news and the role of translation in mediating these narratives. By applying Stibbe's approach, we can identify the underlying stories, metaphors, and discourses that construct ecological realities in the media, as well as the ways in which these constructions are transformed through translation.

## Literature Review

### Ecolinguistics

The significant overlap between language and ecology is owed to Haugen's (1972) seminal work in which he first used the term *language ecology*, applying ecological metaphors to the study of language. Haugen's inaugural model likened the interaction between languages to the interaction between species in an ecosystem. It emphasizes how languages coexist, compete, and influence one another within a shared environment. This metaphor opened up new potential for the examination of language not as a discrete system but as an embedded dynamic entity within social and ecological environments.

Building upon the path-breaking work of Haugen, a number of prominent linguists took his ideas and carried them further with the ongoing evolution of the sophisticated interaction between language, ecology, and society. Fill (1998), for instance, emphasized the role of language in organizing talk about the environment, while Mühlhäusler (2000a, 2000b, 2003) investigated how linguistic diversity mirrors biodiversity and how language loss parallels ecological degradation. Halliday (1992) entered this fresh territory by having words on the processes through which language creates and maintains anthropocentric assumptions, which tend to situate humans against or superior to nature.

Halliday's (1992) theory builds on earlier frameworks by introducing two key ways to make them significant. First of all, it emphasizes the importance of studying language with respect to the actual environment. Moving beyond an abstract linguistic analysis, Halliday discusses how language interacts with and reflects the physical and ecological world. To a large extent, this shift entails offering a new understanding of language as a dynamic force that constructs, and is constructed by, the environment and is no longer an isolated system, removed from real-world contexts.

Second, Halliday focuses on investigating specific aspects of grammar that, in his words, "conspire … to construe reality in a certain way; and it is a way that is no longer good for our health as a species" (p. 84). Unecological ideas and ideologies are usually embedded not solely within texts that somewhat literally refer to environmental issues, but within that very structure of language itself. For instance, grammatical patterns may inscribe anthropocentric worldviews by overtly placing humans as the chief actors of the sentences while negating or obliterating the agency of nonhuman entities. Such a linguistic construction, as Halliday argues, supports a worldview of human supremacy over nature.

As Steffensen and Fill (2014) (2014) summarize, Halliday's approach highlights how unecological ideologies are "hidden in plain sight" within the grammar of language (p. 10). Seen in this light, ecolinguistics seeks to uncover these hidden patterns in language and transform the thoughts regarding how language is perceived in correspondence with the environment. Taking such a critical stance, not only gives way to the elucidation of the role language plays in reinforcing unsustainable discourses but also opens the door to the reimagination of linguistic structures in support of ecocentric and sustainable thoughts.

Ecolinguistics has only quite recently established itself and has now begun to feel the weight of scholarly assessment, but the publication of *Ecolinguistics: Language, Ecology, and the Stories We Live By* (2015) by Stibbe stood as a landmark event in its development. Stibbe's contribution not only offers a clear and comprehensive understanding of the connections between language and the environment but also provides a robust analytical framework for examining the ecological implications of discourses. Such a framework revolves around a particular set of linguistic categories, thereby allowing researchers to systematically analyze how language fashions our views and behavior orienting toward the natural world.

Central to Stibbe's approach is the concept of the *stories we live by*. These stories are not traditional narratives in the conventional sense (Stibbe, 2014, p. 117) but rather "mental models that influence behavior and lie at the heart of the ecological challenges we are facing" (Stibbe, 2021, p. 1). These mental models, woven into language, determine our ways into the world and use that understanding to drive actions in that world. By analyzing linguistic patterns, Stibbe's framework aims to uncover these stories, revealing the underlying assumptions and ideologies that drive human behavior and contribute to ecological crises.

To facilitate this analysis, Stibbe (2021) defines nine basic types of stories, any of which can be analyzed in combination with well-defined linguistic or cognitive theories. The following is a list of the nine story types:

1. Ideology: The belief systems, values, culture, traditions, and philosophies that enable individuals and groups to experience the world they live in and provide meaning to their relationships with other beings.

2. Framing: References to the representation of a situation or issue that provides direction for its understanding and a means by which people respond to it.

3. Metaphor: The use of figurative language to conceptualize one domain of experience in terms of another, often shaping our understanding of complex issues.

4. Evaluation: The nature of the judgments made via language and how they help with reinforcements of values and attitudes.

5. Identity: Representation of individuals and groups can determine to some degree how they interact with ecological systems, and thus shape relationships within these interconnected ecological systems.

6. Conviction: Expressions of certainty or doubt create a reception of ideas or arguments and conclusions.

7. Erasure: An omission or marginalizing of entities, perspectives, or relations renders them invisible or poorly represented.

8. Salience: Special attention or weight given to aspects that produce some directing focus or priority in issues and decisions.

9. Narrative: These larger threads of stories provide such intertextual significance that they connect and find value within the framework of these events, often providing ecological problems with larger cultural or historical contexts.

These story forms are not random; they were chosen because extensive linguistic and cognitive theories exist to analyze them. Utilizing these categories, ecolinguists with great ease can dismantle the stories that construct our perception of the environment and evaluate their ecological implications. For instance, a discourse that presents nature as a resource to be exploited voices an

ideology of human supremacy, while one emphasizing interconnectedness and reciprocity promotes an ecocentric worldview.

In this sense, translation becomes one of the major, yet rarely discussed, aspects of ecolinguistics. Translation essentially, as an art of transcending language and culture divides, plays an organic role in constructing sustainable forms of intercultural communication and fostering ecological awareness. The connection of different linguistic and cultural settings by translation introduces various perspectives on nature and ecological thinking, thus enhancing national discourses with insights from the international community. By synthesizing those points of view, translation contributes to the formation of ecologically broad understandings, stretching beyond temporally specific local viewpoints toward an international, holistic vision of sustainability.

Moreover, translation enables the transfer of successful conservation stories and pioneering ecological practices across cultures. Stories of community-led reforestation, sustainable agriculture, or renewable energy initiatives, when translated and shared, can inspire and empower other communities to adopt similar practices. In this way, translation becomes a conduit for the global exchange of ideas and solutions, helping societies transition toward more sustainable lifestyles and fostering a sense of shared responsibility for the planet.

In this way, translation contributes to the broader goals of ecolinguistics by enabling a more inclusive and equitable global dialogue about the environment. It opens a channel between national and international perspectives, giving many voices the chance to be heard and valued in dialogue concerning sustainability.

**Eco-translation**

While the term ecology is now widely used in environmental discussions, its application in translation studies has taken on varied and innovative forms, reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of the field. The very term *eco-translation* was first coined by Clive Scott (2015) to describe the "psycho-physiological involvement of the translator in the text to be translated" (Cronin, 2021, p. 47). This concept emphasizes the translator's deep engagement with the source text, not just as a linguistic mediator but as an active participant whose cognitive and emotional processes shape the act of translation. In a similar metaphorical vein, the concept of *Eco-translatology* emerged in China, pioneered by Hu Gengshen (2020). Drawing on Darwinian terminology such as adaptation, selection, and survival of the fittest to analyze the environment of translated texts, this approach offers an alternative perspective to Polysystem theory (Shread, 2023).

Despite translators' key roles in environmental movements by "making scientific research and reports accessible to non-English communities" (Arjmandi, 2024, p. 129), ecology as the object of study is not addressed properly in translation studies. Yet a distinct form of eco-translation closely aligns with the principles of ecolinguistics, emphasizing the importance of raising ecological awareness. This particular approach to eco-translation can be understood as a narrowly defined version where ecology itself becomes the central object of study (Shread, 2023). To this end, Bradley (2021) understands it "as a translation that recognizes and retains ecological themes from the source text" (p. 1).

On the basis of this understanding, Josefina Coisson and Guillermo Badenes (2015) further elaborate on ecotranslation by proposing three concrete scenarios. The first pertains to revisiting and retranslating works in which the voice of nature has been suppressed or was lost in the translation. The second deals with texts which, by their nature, demonstrate ecological awareness but have not yet been translated and made accessible to larger audiences. The third characterizes the creative manipulation of texts which originally contained no ecological awareness or little of any sort, to produce novel works inspired by ecological ideas. In this way, eco-translation comes into being, not

only as a method for linguistic transfer but also as a mode of developing environmental consciousness and reimagining the relationship of humanity with nature.

Numerous studies have explored the role of ecology as a central focus in translation, emphasizing how ecological themes can be preserved, adapted, or enhanced through the process of translation. For instance, in their recent paper, *The Role of Paratexts in Raising Ecological Awareness: A Case Study of the Persian Translation of Animal Farm,* Arjmandi and Ehteshami (2025b) consider how paratextual elements can reshape the perception of ecological messages in translated works. They have demonstrated that while attempts to directly intervene in the text in order to highlight ecological messages face serious challenges, entailing ethical problems for the translator and potential compromises for the accuracy of translation, the paratexts afford translators a far more flexible and safe path for shepherding readers toward ecological awareness. This approach allows translators to supplement the text with additional context, subtly steering the audience's interpretation without overtly modifying the core narrative.

We are here before hopefully witnessing a more supplemented and innovative understanding of eco-translation, one in which the notion of humans as the sole agents of translation is critically challenged. Eco-translation, in this way, is "an attempt to think through some of the assumptions we make about translation and how they may need to be radically re-thought on a planet that, from a human standpoint, is entering the most critical phase of its existence" (Cronin, 2017, p. 3). By facilitating "an interdisciplinary dialogue between ecology, biology, and economy to name a few" (Farahzad & Ehteshami, 2018, p. 85), eco-translation aims to take into account "all forms of translation thinking and practice" (Cronin, 2017, p. 2), and to establish a planetary democracy that effectively addresses the ecological crisis (Cronin, 2020). Eco-translation in this way, then, reflects an ecological turn in translation studies (Arjmandi & Ehteshami, 2025a), emphasizing the interconnectedness of all life forms and the role of translation in fostering environmental awareness and sustainability.

## Methodology

### Data Collection

This study adopts a qualitative research approach to explore how nature is framed in international environmental news within the context of Iran. The study consists of news articles published over two years, from March 21, 2023, to March 21, 2025. It is made up of a total of 715 news articles published in Persian on the IENA website (www.mohitzist.ir). All articles selected pertain specifically to international environmental news. In order to shrink the total into a manageable and representative sample, a random sampling method was used by the online tool Random.org. A selection of 50 news articles was then chosen from the corpus.

### Data Analysis

The analysis is framed within ecolinguistics and especially within Stibbe's (2021) approach to identify and analyze stories we live by. It entails providing an in-depth linguistic study that identifies patterns of language in texts and between texts. To accomplish this, Stibbe (2021) draws upon Critical Discourse Analysis works, including those by Fairclough (2003), Martin and Rose (2007), van Dijk (2011), and Machin and Mayr (2012). These CDA frameworks supply the very means to uncover linguistic features that have enabled the hidden stories inside texts to be made evident.

The study builds on these CDA frameworks to see how nature is being framed in international environmental news by examining manifestations of language. After identifying the source frame and target domain and mapping which includes identifying how elements from the source frame are mapped onto elements in the target domain by looking for specific trigger words or phrases that

evoke the source frame, the reasoning patterns are determined. It involves pointing out certain *trigger words* that create specific frames, which in turn read into specific interpretations of environmental issues. In this particular context, two story forms mentioned by Stibbe (2021) are at the core of our analysis.

Framing: Framing refers to "a story that uses a frame (a packet of knowledge about an area of life) to structure another area of life" (Stibbe, 2021, p. 17). In this study, framing is used to explore how international environmental issues are presented in news articles.

Metaphors: Metaphors are defined as "a story that uses a frame to structure a distinct and clearly different area of life" (Stibbe, 2021, p. 17). Metaphors are powerful linguistic tools that shape how we conceptualize complex issues, and their analysis reveals how nature and environmental challenges are understood.


**Results**

The analysis of news articles reveals distinct framing patterns and metaphors shaping the discourse on environmental issues. Dominant frames include the *Crisis Frame*, portraying environmental threats as urgent catastrophes; the *Economic Frame*, emphasizing financial impacts and resource management; the *Conservation Frame*, highlighting nature's intrinsic value; and the *Human Responsibility Frame*, linking ecological degradation to anthropogenic causes. Additionally, metaphors such as *Nature as a Victim*, *Climate Change as a War*, and *Nature as a Resource* further structure public understanding, framing environmental challenges through narratives of vulnerability, conflict, and utility. These rhetorical strategies influence perceptions, policy debates, and calls to action.

**Framing**

The analysis reveals the following dominant frames in the news articles:

**Crisis Frame:** Environmental concerns often take the crisis frame, representing urgent catastrophes that need an immediate response. For instance, in an article about wildfires in New York (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023a), there is mention of "دود غلیظ" [thick smoke] and a state of emergency (وضعیت اضطراری) which describes an immediate danger and disruption. In an article about heatwaves in Australia (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023b), as another example, the heatwave event is termed "خطرناک" [dangerous] bringing back memories of the Black Summer fires (تابستان سیاه), a frame indicating its catastrophic potentials. As another example, in an article about Floods in Spain (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023c), the floods are described as deadly (مرگبار) and devastating, with a focus on the loss of life and economic damage.

**Economic Frame:** In the Economic Frame, environmental issues have sometimes also been broadcasted for their economic impact: their cost, resourcing, and development. For example, in an article about Deforestation in the Amazon (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023d), Brazil's request for $10 billion in foreign aid (کمک خارجی) to combat deforestation frames the issue as a financial challenge. Yet as another example, an article about Metro in Riyadh highlights the economic investment in the metro system, framing it as a step toward reducing fossil fuel dependency ( وابستگی به سوخت‌های فسیلی) and improving urban infrastructure.

**Conservation Frame:** This frame highlights the innately valuable(n)ess of nature, and it implies that these qualities point to the need for conservation and sustainability. For example, the impact of heatwaves on wildlife (حیات وحش) and ecosystems (اکوسیستم), framing the issue as a threat to

biodiversity (تنوع زیستی). As another example of Drought in Southern Africa (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023e), the article frames the drought as a humanitarian crisis (فاجعه انسانی), emphasizing the loss of crops (محصولات کشاورزی), livestock (دام‌ها), and the livelihoods of millions.

**Human Responsibility Frame:** This frame presents anthropogenic causes of environmental problems and calls for accountability and action. An article about Climate Change and Lightning in the Arctic (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023f), for example, links the increase in lightning strikes (صاعقه) to Earth warming (گرمایش زمین), framing climate change as a human-induced problem. As another example of Heatwaves and Climate Change (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023c), the article connects extreme heat events (رویدادهای گرمایی شدید) to human activities, emphasizing the need for reducing greenhouse gas emissions (انتشار گازهای گلخانه‌ای).

**Metaphors**

Metaphors provide a way to conceptualize environmental issues, thereby framing the reader's understanding. The analysis identifies some key metaphors:

**Nature as a Victim:** Nature is conceived as the victim of human actions being excessively exploited and neglected. Nature as Victim metaphor frames the natural world as a defenseless entity suffering from human exploitation. This conceptual metaphor is structured through explicit cause-and-effect language that positions human activities (فعالیت‌های انسانی) as the aggressor and climate impacts ( سیل و خشکسالی) as the resulting harm inflicted upon nature (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023c). The phrase "به دلیل تغییرات آب و هوایی مرتبط با فعالیت‌های انسانی" [due to human-induced climate change] establishes a direct perpetrator-victim relationship, where anthropogenic forces actively violate a passive natural world. This victimization narrative is intensified through terms like "شدیدتر" [more severe], which suggests escalating abuse against nature's vulnerable systems.

Within this metaphor, nature assumes the role of an innocent victim that bears the consequences of human actions without recourse. The text's emphasis on increasing frequency and intensity of disasters (محتمل‌تر و شدیدتر شده‌اند) mirrors how abuse victims suffer worsening harm over time. This framing carries significant rhetorical power by evoking moral indignation - if nature is being victimized, then humanity assumes the role of the perpetrator with an ethical obligation to cease harmful behaviors. However, the metaphor's limitations become apparent in its portrayal of nature as purely passive, overlooking the complex feedback loops in ecological systems. While effective for environmental advocacy through its emotional appeal, this victim narrative may inadvertently obscure nature's adaptive capacities and the shared vulnerability of both human and natural systems to climate disruption.

**Climate Change as a War:** The metaphor of climate change as a battle is vividly illustrated, framing humanity's response as a wartime effort. Efforts like "مهار حریق" [fire containment] in New York (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023a) and Australia, deploying "بالگرد" [helicopter] like troops (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023a, 2023g), and Saudi Arabia's "متروی ریاض" [Riyadh metro] (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023h) as infrastructure warfare against emissions, depict strategic counterattacks. Meanwhile, African leaders demand "حمایت مالی" [financial support] as allies would in a shared fight (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023i), while "کاهش انتشار کربن" [carbon reduction] becomes a military directive (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023i). However, human actions also inadvertently fuel the enemy—Bolsonaro's "نابودی آمازون" [Amazon destruction] (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023d) and careless "ته سیگار" [cigarette butt] wildfires in Spain mirror self-sabotage

(Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023g), with "گازهای گلخانه‌ای" [greenhouse gases] (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023b, 2023e, 2023j, 2023k) as weapons accelerating "طوفان‌ها" [storms] and "خشکسالی تاریخی" [historic droughts].

The metaphor extends to disaster zones as frontlines, where "سیل اسپانیا" [Spain's floods] (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023c) and "آتش‌سوزی استرالیا" [Australia's wildfires] (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023b) trigger "وضعیت اضطراری" [emergency states], with predictions like "۱۶۷ میلیون خانه تخریب شده" [167 million homes lost] by 2040 underscoring civilian devastation(Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023l). The IPCC's "هشدارها" [warnings] (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023c, 2023k) and Ghana's "کاشت ۵۰ میلیون درخت" [50 million trees planted] (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023i) frame the crisis as a call to arms. Yet, the war analogy risks overshadowing "توسعه پایدار" [sustainable development], reducing complex solutions to combat terms. Still, it effectively conveys the urgency of a "وضعیت آماده‌باش" [state of alert], rallying global action as if survival hangs in the balance.

**Nature as a Resource:** Nature is presented either as a resource to be managed, exploited, or conserved for human good. For example, terms like "کاهش وابستگی … به سوخت‌های فسیلی" [reducing fossil fuel dependence] frame nature as a resource to be managed for human progress, such as Saudi Arabia's metro project aiming to curb urban pollution (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023h). Meanwhile, "احیای جنگل‌ها" [forest restoration] in Ghana (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023i) and "حفاظت از آمازون" [protecting the Amazon] (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023d) highlight conservation efforts, treating ecosystems as assets requiring stewardship. However, phrases like "فعالیت‌های زراعی و معدنکاری" [farming and mining activities] in the Amazon reveal exploitation (Iran Environmental News Agency, 2023d), where nature is stripped for short-term gain.

**Discussion**

As outlined in the introduction, nature is not a uniform construct but rather an outcome of varied influences of culture, history, and society. This deviation continues in the ways in which nations think of and act toward nature. Within the IENA frame, international environmental news represents an overlapping of the anthropocentric and ecocentric approaches. Whereas the crisis frame and economic frame highlight the immediate and economic impacts of environmental issues, the conservation frame and human responsibility frame emphasize the intrinsic value of nature and thus the need for sustainable practices. This double vision suggests that IENA aims to balance the call of pressing environmental problems with that of ecological conservation and human accountability.

Crisis framing quite effectively engaged the readers' imagination and conveyed the gravity of environmental issues. Unfortunately, it also tended to aspire toward helplessness or despair, depicting environmental problems as massive and insurmountable. This scenario generates resonance with the Australian journalist and cultural critic Philip Adams' observation about public meetings on global warming, where audiences seemed to revel in the catastrophic predictions of scientists. Adams notes that "the more the scientists predicted a catastrophe, the more the audiences seemed to like it" (Adams, as cited in Clark, 2015, p. 14). This means that although crisis narratives can incite public concern, they also may lead to some kind of *disaster voyeurism*, i.e. the spectacle of destruction becoming altogether more interesting than practical solutions.

On the contrary, while the ecological frame and the human responsibility frame tell a more optimistic tale, centered on the notion of positive change through conservation and sustainable ways, they

each encourage readers to see environmental issues as solvable problems rather than serious crises, fostering a sense of agency and responsibility.

Metaphors in articles are vital in influencing the readers' minds toward environmental issues. The nature-as-victim metaphor aims to create empathy leading to a state of moral responsibility for the readers: environmental degradation is viewed as a moral issue. By contrast, the climate change-as-war metaphor frames environmental issues as battles to be fought, motivating readers to act. However, such metaphors may lead to a Manichean narrative of simple *good versus evil*, in which complex issues are reduced to moral binaries. Thus, this reductionist view may oversimplify such a diverse bunch of causes of environmental problems and not fully facilitate the formulation of inclusive solutions.

This metaphor of nature as a resource reinforces the fundamentally anthropocentric ideology, as nature is shown to be valuable only by virtue of its utility to humans. Framing should not aspire to something greater, for otherwise, they may continue to perpetuate this exploitation of resources that prioritize economic and developmental goals over the preservation of ecology.

The framework and metaphors of the IENA articles draw on international trends that typically contain the tension between economic development and ecological preservation. Basically mixing crisis, economic, ecological, and human responsibility frames, IENA backs a nuanced approach to environmental issues internationally, appealing at once to a crisis-like urgency and the possibility for remarkably positive change.

The international character of environmental issues is also apparent in the way IENA frames global challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and natural disasters. These issues tend to be connected, highlighting the shared responsibilities of nations to address them. Such metaphors that present nature as a victim and climate change as a war highlight the emotional and moral dimensions of environmental issues, emphasizing the idea that readers should view these problems not as foreign issues, but rather as personal and national responsibilities. For example, heated articles relating to heat waves or floods fit within the world's broader context of environmental degradation. Such a global conversation is very important to coordinate a sense of collective responsibility and therewith international cooperation in tackling environmental challenges.

The framing of international nature in IENA's articles also closely resembles general power dynamics and inequalities between nations. For example, a request for foreign aid to fight deforestation in the Amazon reveals the economic gap between developed and underdeveloped countries. Other illustrations have to do with the impact of climate change on vulnerable regions such as Southern Africa, representing that poorer nations must shoulder the heavier burden. These stories illustrate the nuanced interactions between global power dynamics and economic systems and cultural exchanges as they converge on environmental discourse.

**Conclusion**

This study examined the framings of nature in international news within the context of the Iranian Environmental News Agency (IENA). The analysis of the frames and metaphors in IENA's articles has shown that anthropocentric and ecocentric perspectives are in a complex interrelation with each other. The articles managed to reflect the urgency and severity of environmental issues while articulating the necessity for more sustainable and inclusive narratives wherein ecological preservation would come to the forefront alongside human accountability.

The results indicate that the translation of environmental issues has an important impact on defining public perceptions and attitudes. While narratives of crisis and war metaphors may energize public regard, they also risk creating helpless or even fatalistic feelings. The ecological and human

responsibility framings provide a more optimistic picture in suggesting that conservation and sustainable practices can actually bring change instead.

This research ultimately points out the critical need for the examination of linguistic patterns in environmental translation. Translation could help establish a more ecocentric narrative away from reductionist metaphors, contributing toward more inclusiveness and equity in the global dialogue about sustainability. This might, eventually, narrow the rift between global narratives and local realities by building a greater appreciation of the interconnectedness of all life as well as an urgent common cause to face environmental challenges of the present.

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# Rosa Luxemburg in Translation: A Comparative Study of the Complete Works in the UK, France, and Italy

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## Abstract

This article examines the current state of the translated editions of the 'complete works' of Rosa Luxemburg, one of the most influential figures in European Marxism at the turn of the 20th century, with particular attention to the projects undertaken in the United Kingdom, France, and Italy. In recent decades, various publishers and collectives have undertaken projects to recover and translate her theoretical, political and epistolary works, to rescue her legacy in different languages and political contexts. This phenomenon not only responds to academic interests but is also deeply linked to ideological dynamics and contemporary political militancy, making these editions spaces for negotiation between memory, historiography and political action. The study focuses on three paradigmatic cases in Western Europe: the United Kingdom, France and Italy. In the Anglo-Saxon world, the project was promoted by Verso Books under the coordination of Peter Hudis. In France, the work carried out by the Smolny collective and the Agone publishing house has opted for a contextualised edition that emphasises the historical and political dimension of the texts. In both countries, these efforts face financial and logistical constraints, but they have made significant progress thanks to the commitment of translators, editors and activists. In the Italian case, although there is no systematic project for a complete edition, the pioneering work of figures such as Lelio Basso, who played a crucial role in disseminating his thought during the 1960s and 1970s, is recognised.

**Keywords:** Translation, Rosa Luxemburg, multilingual critical edition, history of publishing, cultural mediation

## 1. Introduction

That translation underpins history, that it is a fundamental part of it, while also reflecting and manifesting a broader sociocultural and political context, is evidenced, among other things, by research in the field of translation such as that carried out in recent years. Works such as those by Rundle (2012, 2021, 2022) on the history of translation in totalitarian regimes or European fascism and communism; research such as that by Hermans (2022) which addresses the importance of studying the history of translation and the links between history and translation. Similarly, translation practice plays a fundamental role in the development and evolution of a country's political thought (Calafat & Valdeón, 2020; Fernández & Evans, 2018, 2020).

This article discusses the work of editing Rosa Luxemburg's 'complete works' in English, by Verso Books, and in French, by Collectif Smolny-Agone, editions in both cases that are still awaiting new titles, based on previous translations or new translations or retranslations. A more succinct study of the Italian compilations of the Polish Marxist is also carried out.

Rosa Luxemburg wrote mainly in Polish and German, but also in Russian and French. The publication of her legacy in her mother tongue is far from complete. In the 1950s, after decades of exile following her assassination in 1919 at the hands of the German Freikorps, the Warsaw-based publishing house Glos i Wiedza published some of her works. In 1963, a bibliography was published in Warsaw, which was expanded in 1971. It included all the Polish, German, Russian and French texts known at the time. After 1971, virtually no more Polish texts were published in Poland. In the wake of the events of 1968, Rosa Luxemburg's work underwent a kind of revival, both in Europe and elsewhere, which was reflected in the publication of her 'complete' works in the then Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the German Democratic Republic (GDR). These editions were almost correlative: while the FRG began its rehabilitation of the Polish Marxist in the late 1960s, the GDR undertook this work in the early 1970s, under the close supervision of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (in German: Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands, abbreviated to SED or PSUA in Spanish), a party integrated into the Soviet sphere.

Among Western European countries, France and the United Kingdom occupy a 'privileged' position as the precursors of this attempt to rehabilitate the complete works of Rosa Luxemburg. These two countries are the first, after Germany, to carry out this process, which is still ongoing. Those responsible have taken as their reference the edition that began in the 1970s in East Germany by Dietz Verlag.

In some cases, the texts have been translated directly from German and Polish, and even from Russian; in others, some texts have been retranslated, such as certain translations from English and French. It is estimated that there are thousands of pages in the Polish archives that have not yet seen the light of day. It should also be noted that there are numerous articles and materials that, although unsigned, were written by Luxemburg. Thanks to the commitment and drive of activists and militants of the 'socialist' cause(s), various publishing houses and collectives have set out to publish the complete works of the revolutionary Marxist theorist. It will be particularly significant to follow how these processes develop in the Anglo-Saxon and French contexts and, to a lesser extent, in Italy.

## 2. Recovery and Rehabilitation of Rosa Luxemburg in English

In recent years around 2,000 additional pages of unpublished writings by Rosa Luxemburg in German have been discovered and published as supplementary volumes in the ongoing editions (P. Hudis, personal communication, August 11, 2020). Today, several thousand additional pages of writings originally in Polish have not yet been published, even in German. In the English-speaking world, the

lack of accessibility to her complete writings remains considerable, despite the enormous effort being made. Although her most important political writings – such as *Reform or Revolution*, *The Mass Strike*, *Political Party and Trade Unions*, and *The Russian Revolution* – were translated and published some time ago, dozens of essays and speeches and hundreds of articles have yet to be translated into English.

In the late 1970s, M.ª José Aubet compiled the main anthologies of Rosa Luxemburg's texts in English. Among them is an anthology of speeches published in 1970 by M. A. Waters (*Rosa Luxemburg Speaks*, New York, Pathfinder Press), speeches presented in chronological order and accompanied by comments from Lenin and Trotsky in the form of an appendix on the political and theoretical personality of the revolutionary. There is a Spanish translation of this edition (Pluma publishing house, Bogotá, 1976, in two volumes entitled *Obras escogidas*). D. Howard's 1971 edition, Rosa Luxemburg. *Political Writings* is arranged thematically and, in addition to an introduction by the editor, contains an unpublished article (*What at the origins of May Day?*, 1984) and other articles of lesser importance. R. Locker's 1972 selection of political writings (Rosa Luxemburg. *Selected Political Writings*, London, Johnathan Cape) includes little-known texts considered to be of lesser importance.

And finally, a collection of writings devoted to the national question, edited by H. B. Davis in 1976 (*The National Question: Selected Writings*, New York/London, Monthly Review Press). This selection contains the revolutionary's three most important contributions on the national question, one of the most controversial issues in all of Rosa Luxemburg's work. At the time, it was the most complete version produced in the West (Aubet, 1977b). Other later anthologies, all published before 2014 – when the project to publish 'all' her works in English began – are (Castle, n.d.): P. Le Blanc (Ed.) (1999). *Rosa Luxemburg; Reflections and Writings*. Humanity Books; T. Kowalik (Ed.) (2004). *The Accumulation of Capital* (A. Schwarzschild, Trans.). Routledge – one of the central works of Luxemburgian thought; P. Hudis and K. Anderson (Eds.) (2004). *The Rosa Luxemburg Reader*. Monthly Review Press; and, finally, Revolutionary History (Ed.) (2009). *Rosa Luxemburg; Selected Political and Literary Writings*. Merlin Press.

## 2.1. The 'Complete' Works in English: An Ongoing Project

The publication of Rosa Luxemburg's 'complete works' in English – including books, essays, articles, speeches, manuscripts and letters, material which, as we have already pointed out, is seeing the light of day for the first time – is a paradigmatic case in the geographical-political context of the West, where the figure and work of the revolutionary are still little known. Verso Books, a publishing house founded in 1970 in New York by the 'staff' of *New Left Review* – a British magazine focusing on Marxist political issues – is carrying out the project in collaboration with the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung and Karl Dietz Verlag Berlin. The publication of these works is being coordinated by Professor Peter Hudis, and, for the first time, most of her available works are expected to be available in English in the coming years. The project is being developed according to the following schedule. The original publication plan consists of 17 volumes, six of which will be devoted to her correspondence. At the time of writing, five volumes have been published. The first appeared in 2014 and the second in 2015. The third and latest volume published (2019) is dedicated to Political Writings (vol. III). In addition to these, there is one more volume of his correspondence.

Thousands of pages have been translated from German on topics such as anthropology, imperialism, non-Western societies, labour and democracy – some of them discovered in recent years – and thousands more pages of material from Polish, much of which refers to the Russian Revolution of 1905–1906. In addition to this, material previously translated into English is being retranslated. Even so, according to the editors, more than 75% of his work remains untranslated into English.

The plan is presented in three sections (Table 1).

Table 1. Sections

| | |
|---|---|
| I. Economic writings | First three volumes |
| II. Political writings | Nine volumes |
| III. Letters | Five volumes |

To date, as reflected on the Verso Books website (n.d.), four volumes have been published, not counting the volume dedicated to correspondence.

*The Complete Works of Rosa Luxemburg*, Volume I
*Economic writings 1*. Rosa Luxemburg.
Edited by Peter Hudis.
Translated by David Fernbach, Joseph Fracchia and George Shriver.

Volume I of the complete works project brings together economic writings not previously available in English, at least in their entirety, such as *Introduction to Political Economy*, which explores, among other things, the impact of capitalist commodity production and the industrialisation of non-capitalist social strata in the developing world. It also includes a series of manuscripts on pre-capitalist societies and economic history as part of her work at the Social Democratic Party School in Germany. It also contains some of Rosa Luxemburg's most important speeches on the globalisation of capital, wage labour, imperialism, etc., and a new translation of her doctoral thesis.

*The Complete Works of Rosa Luxemburg*, Volume II
*Economic writings 2*. Rosa Luxemburg.
Editors: Peter Hudis and Paul Leblanc.
Translators: Nicholas Gray, George Shriver and David.

Volume II, published in 2015, includes new translations of two of her most important texts: *The Accumulation of Capital* and *The Anticritic*. It is one of the most important works on capitalism's drive for self-expansion and its connection to imperialism. It is presented for the first time as the author conceived it. It also includes an essay on volumes 2 and 3 of Marx's Capital.

*The Complete Works of Rosa Luxemburg*, Volume III
*Political Writings 1*. *On Revolution: 1897–1905.* Rosa Luxemburg.
Edited by Peter Hudis and William A. Pelz.
Translators: Henry Holland, Alicja Mann, and George Shriver.

The first of the three volumes, *On Revolution*, is devoted to the subject to which Rosa Luxemburg devoted her life: revolution. It contains writings from 1897 to the end of 1905 and was published in January 2019 as volume III of the complete works. This volume includes, almost in its entirety, articles and reports on the revolutionary process of 1905. Most of these writings appear for the first time in English, translated from German and Polish. These texts offer a new perspective on issues such as the relationship between spontaneity and organizing, the role of national minorities in social revolution, and the inseparable link between the struggle for socialism and revolutionary democracy. They provide a strong impetus for the development of much of her later political theory, such as those devoted to mass strikes and internationalism, among other issues.

*The Complete Works of Rosa Luxemburg, Volume IV*
*Political Writings 2, On Revolution: 1906–1909.*

Edited by: Peter Hudis and Sandra Rein.
Translators: Jacob Blumenfeld, Nicholas Gray, Henry Holland, Zachary King, Manuela Kölke and Joseph Muller.

More than 80% of the 600 pages of this fourth volume are content appearing in English for the first time. The translations are from German, Russian and Polish originals. It contains texts on the revolution covering the period between 1906 and 1909, in particular on the revolutionary process of 1905–1906, its analysis and consequences. This volume also includes numerous writings and essays not previously available in English, such as *Lessons of the Three Dumas*, written in 1908, and *Notes on the English Revolution*, on the 1640s, as well as texts on the role of mass strikes in the revolutionary process.

*The Complete Works of Rosa Luxemburg, Volume V*
*Political Writings 2, On Revolution: 1910–1919.*
Edited by: Helen C. Scott and Paul Le Blanc.

This volume is in preparation and is scheduled for publication in April 2024. Much of the material collected appears in English for the first time. It contains all of Rosa Luxemburg's writings on the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the revolutions of 1918–1919 in Germany. It also includes all kinds of material – articles, essays, manuscripts – on the European socialist movement before the First World War.

*The Letters of Rosa Luxemburg.*
Edited by Georg Adler, Peter Hudis and Annelies Laschitza.
Translated by George Shriver.

The volume devoted to Rosa Luxemburg's letters corresponds to the translation of Herzlichst Ihrer Rosa, published in 1978 by Annelies Laschitza and George Adler, and represents the longest collection of her letters ever published. The volume includes 190 letters written to prominent figures in the labour movement, as well as friends, lovers and colleagues, such as Leo Jogiches, Karl Kautsky, Clara Zetkin and Karl Liebknecht. The letters are also being published in English for the first time.

## 2.2. George Shriver: Rosa Luxemburg's Militant Translator

Special mention should be made of one of Rosa Luxemburg's main translators into English, who passed away in 2020. His name was George Shriver, an activist committed to socialism. His first task was to undertake the translation of *The Letters of Rosa Luxemburg* (2011), whose reference title would be *Herzlichst, Ihre Rosa*. George Shriver translated from Russian, Polish and German, languages in which, in the words of Peter Hudis, he 'moved with uncommon ease' (Hudis, 2020). And so, little by little, he took on the translation of her 'complete works', becoming the main translator of Rosa Luxemburg's works into English. First, he translated previously unpublished manuscripts on pre-capitalist societies, anthropology and economic history, which appeared in the first volume of the complete works. Next, he translated an essay on Marx's Capital, which appeared in volume 2. He continued to translate a multitude of articles and manuscripts on the Russian Revolution of 1905, which were included in volume 3 of the English edition, devoted entirely to the revolution and published in 2019. After his death, Peter Hudis left us these words – taken from a passage in Rosa Luxemburg's correspondence – of gratitude and recognition from his friend George Shriver:

Then see that you remain a human being. To be a human being is the main thing, above all else. And that means: to be firm and clear and cheerful, yes, cheerful in spite of everything and anything, because howling is the business of the weak. To be a human being means to joyfully toss your entire life 'on the giant scales of fate' if it must be so, and at the same time to rejoice in the brightness of every day and the beauty of every cloud. (Hudis, 2020)

**3. Rosa Luxemburg in French: The Pioneers**

The first translations of the revolutionary Marxist were published in the 1930s; in 1930, Lucien Lauran, André Prudhommeaux and Marcel Ollivier published *L'Accumulation du Capital d'après Rosa Luxemburg*. A few years later, between 1934 and 1947, René Lefeuvre and Cahiers Spartacus published works ranging from *La Révolution Russe* (1937) to *Réforme ou Révolution* and *Grève de Masse, Parti et Syndicats* (1947), not to mention *La Crise de la Social-Démocratie*, which appeared later, in 1993. However, if there is one reference point when it comes to the publication of the first anthologies of Rosa Luxemburg, among other exponents of the political left tradition, it is François Maspero, an eminent publisher, writer, journalist and translator, a key figure in European left-wing political culture in the 1970s and one of the greatest experts on the revolutionary's work.

In 1969, in the immediate aftermath of May 1968 – which would lead to a resurgence and almost a rediscovery of the figure and work of the revolutionary – Maspero published two volumes of correspondence, the complete version of *L'Accumulation du Capital* and two collections of political texts, *Oeuvres I-IV, Petite Collection Maspero*, with the collaboration of translators Irène Petit and Claudie Weill; and *Textes* (Ed. G. Badia), Ed. *Sociales*, also in 1969. These early anthologies were joined by two volumes of letters to Léo Jogiches, published by Denoël in 1971. The early 1970s also saw the publication of *Le Socialisme en France (1898–1912)* (Ed. D. Guérin), Belfond, 1971, which brings together unpublished articles not included in the complete works that refer to the situation in France; and Lettres et tracts de Spartakus (Ed. Tète des Feuilles), 1972.

**3.1. The 'Complete' Works of Rosa Luxemburg in French: A Proposal from the Agone Smolny Publishing Collective**

The Agone-Smolny publishing collective explains how the restoration of a contemporary edition of Rosa Luxemburg's work should be approached.

> La production de Luxemburg est donne tour sauf académique. Portée par le mouvement de classe, elle en subit les flux et les reflux. Deux articles recensés en 1897 mais soixante l'année suivance, dix-sept en 1901 mais quatre-vingt-un en 1905! L'effort de contextualisation et de spécification historique des interventions de Rosa Luxemburg est donc primordial et doit soutenir l'ensemble de l'appareil critique accompagnant ses textes (…) Restituer son œuvre de façon dite 'scientifique' porterait le risque d'introduire une distanciation entre l'auteur et la finalité qu'il souhaitait donner à son œuvre … (Collectif Smolny-Agone, 2021).

According to the editors, this is the most 'complete' edition possible, in line with the progress of the document search work, carried out in consultation with the counterpart teams preparing the English and German versions, Verso Books and Karl Dietz Verlag Berlin, respectively. This edition is not complete in the sense that many of the writings and newspaper articles are not yet available. Many of his unpublished titles, mostly unsigned articles, but whose authorship has been ascertained, come mainly from newspapers such as the *Leipziger Volkszeitung* or the *Sozialdemokratische Korrespondenz* (Collectif Smolny-Agone, 2021).

The approach adopted in this edition could be described as thematic and chronological. The thematic groupings are intended to give coherence to the collection of works presented, while reflecting the context of the period and the labour movement as a whole. The chronological aspect, in turn, allows us to grasp the evolution of Rosa Luxemburg's thinking and the conditions in which it developed. The latest volumes are devoted to correspondence, also following a chronological criterion (Collectif Smolny-Agone, 2021). According to the editorial proposal, the publication project has the following itinerary. The first volume, published in 2009, contains the posthumous *Introduction à l'économie politique* and is accompanied by a reflection on the importance of Luxemburg's work. It is the first in

a series that will include at least ten volumes of texts and three large volumes of correspondence. What has been published so far, as reflected on the website (Collectif Smolny-Agone, 2021), is presented as follows:

*Introduction à l'économie politique*
*Premier volume des Œuvres complètes*
Translation by Jacqueline Blois
Introduction: 'Rosa Luxemburg, integrity of a work'
Epilogue by Lous Janover

In 1906, the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) opened a Central School in Berlin for the training of its cadres. From 1907 onwards, Rosa Luxemburg began teaching lessons in economic history, political economy and the history of socialism, a task she continued until 1913. *The Introduction to Political Economy* was published posthumously in 1925, when her party colleague and executor decided to publish it in book form.

*A l'École du socialisme*
*Œuvres complètes* - Tome II. Rosa Luxemburg
Translated from German by Lucie Roignant
Foreword by the Smolny Collective
Afterword by Michael Krätke

All the texts in this second volume, translated from German, were previously unpublished in French. On the one hand, it includes documents that complement *The Introduction to Political Economy*, the result of her lectures at the Central School of the Social Democratic Party of Germany. On the other hand, it includes speeches and articles on theoretical training in the labour movement and reviews of Karl Marx's posthumous works.

*Le Socialisme en France (1898–1912)*
*Œuvres complètes* - Tome III. Rosa Luxemburg
Edited and with a foreword by Jean-Numa Ducange
Translated from German by Daniel Guérin and Lucie Roignant
Translated from Polish by Aleksander Jousselin

This volume brings together Rosa Luxemburg's writings on French politics during this period. The central debate within the European left at the end of the 19th century revolved around the possibility of collaborating with bourgeois governments or breaking directly with the capitalist system. The debates between Rosa Luxemburg, Kautsky and Bernstein on 'reform or revolution' that were taking place in Germany and the positions held by Jaurès and Millerand – with whom the revolutionary Marxist would argue bitterly over his rapprochement with bourgeois governments, becoming the first socialist to form part of a bourgeois government – are a clear example of Luxemburg's contributions to the political events surrounding France at that time. The great political trial that was the Dreyfus affair in the 19th century, the question of revolutionary syndicalism. These are some of the other issues dealt with in this volume.

*The brochure Junius, la guerre et l'Internationale (1907–1916)*
*Œuvres complètes* - Tome IV. Rosa Luxemburg
Edited by Julien Chuzeville, Marie Laigle and Éric Sevault
Translated from German by Marie Hermann
Introduction by Julien Chuzeville and Éric Sevault

The writings included in Volume IV constitute a harsh indictment of the Social Democracy's capitulation to war within the framework of the Second International and an exhortation to the international proletariat to take sides in the war of 1914. *The Crisis of Social Democracy,* written from

prison in 1915 and also known as the *Junius Pamphlet*, is one of the most important political writings of the Polish revolutionary. This text exposes, like no other, the roots and causes of the Great War and denounces the motives and justifications given by the SPD for intervening in it.

> *L'Accumulation du capital*
> *Contribution à l'explication économique de l'impérialisme*
> *Œuvres complètes* - Tome V. Rosa Luxemburg
> Edited by Xavier Crépin and Éric Sevault
> Translated from German by Irène Petit and Marcel Ollivier and revised by Marie Boudoussier
> Preface by Guillaume Fondu and Ulysse Lozhkin
> Epilogue by Mylène Gaulard and Loren Goldner

Published in 1913, this is a seminal work in the field of Marxist economics and one of the first studies and analyses of imperialism on the impossibility of realising surplus value for accumulation within capitalism. It is a work that exposes the central problems facing the reproduction of capitalism within its own territories. Beyond its theoretical interest and importance, the book was a 'tool' for the struggle against imperialism in the context of the First World War.

In addition to those mentioned above, the following titles are in preparation:
> *Œuvres complètes - Tome IV, Rosa Luxemburg*
> *Imperialisme, colonialisme et militarisme*.
> Edited by Ulisse Lojkine, Dominique Villaeys-Poirré and Alice Vincent
> Expected release date: 2026
> *Correspondance complète - Volume I: 1891–1905*
> Edited by Julien Chuzeville, Marie Laigle and Éric Sevault
> Expected release date: 2026

**4. Rosa Luxemburg and her Works Compiled in Italian**

It should be noted that there is no project to translate Rosa Luxemburg's complete works into Italian comparable to those being carried out in the English-speaking and French-speaking worlds. Lelio Basso, lawyer, socialist activist and founder of the Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity (Partito Socialista Italiano di Unità Proletaria, PSIUP) in 1964, is one of the main figures responsible for introducing Rosa Luxemburg's work into Italian, both as an editor and as a translator, as well as being one of the greatest experts on the Marxist revolutionary. We could say that Lelio Basso is to the Italian sphere what Maspero was to the French. According to research carried out by M.ª José Aubet (1977b), the most important anthologies in Italian dedicated to the Polish revolutionary include: *Scritti politici* (edited by L. Basso, 1967 and 1974) Rome, Riuniti, contains an introduction, written by Lelio Basso himself, considered one of the best contributions to the knowledge and work of Rosa Luxemburg; *Scritti sull'arte e sulla letteratura*, Verona, Bertani, 1976, contains relatively little-known writings despite being a subject dealt with extensively by Rosa Luxemburg; *Per conoscere Rosa Luxemburg* (edited by L. Basso), Rome, Mondadori, 1977, is a compilation of Rosa Luxemburg's texts on various topics which, 'for the first time, offers an excellent theoretical contextualisation of Luxemburg's work based on the criticism and commentary that her writings aroused in her time' (Aubet, 1977a, p. 263).

Similarly, we cannot fail to mention the first Italian anthology of selected writings by the revolutionary Marxist: *Scritti scelti*, with a long introductory essay by Luciano Amodio (Einaudi, Turin, 1963). This text was reissued in 1976 in a revised and expanded version by Einaudi, a leading Italian publishing house founded in 1933 by Giulio Einaudi, together with Leone Ginzburg, Massimo Mila, Norberto Bobbio and Cesare Pavese, a group that was later joined by Natalia Ginzburg and Giaime

Pintor. The publishing house was founded with a strong political and cultural imprint, specialising in non-fiction and essays, which were two of its most important collections: the *Biblioteca di Cultura Storica and Saggi*. It was a publishing house with a strong left-wing slant that published authors such as Marx, Gramsci, Lukács, Rosa Luxemburg herself, and the series known as Libri Bianchi, created in response to the events and crisis in Hungary in 1956 and the revelation of the crimes of Stalinism. It also renewed Italian fiction, introducing new authors and publishing today's classics, such as Calvino, Passolini, Thomas Mann, Lacan, Leonardo Scascia and Elsa Morante (Einaudi, 1994).

Between the 1960s and 1970s, many other texts by the revolutionary Marxist were published. These included key works of Luxemburgian thought, political and economic writings, as well as some editions of her vast correspondence, such as Lelio Basso's edition of *Lettere a Leo Jogiches*, published in 1978 in Milan by Feltrinelli. Between 2012 and 2013, an anthology of a significant part of her political writings was published, as well as a selection of her correspondence that is worth mentioning. The publishing house Eir is responsible for this anthology. It is an edition translated from German by Lelio Basso himself. In the introduction to these *Scritti politici*, Lelio Basso (2012) defines Rosa Luxemburg's theoretical work as 'a resounding fight against any attempt to harden Marxism into soulless schemes'. In the introduction to these volumes, he explains the reasons why he has produced this edition:

> La ragione che mi ha spinto a presentare al pubblico italiano questa antologia dei principali scritti politici di Rosa Luxemburg non è stata quella di dare un contributo alla conoscenza storica del movimento operaio internazionale, nel quale Rosa Luxemburg ha occupato per vent'anni un posto preminente, ma di offrire uno strumento attuale, ancora oggi perfettamente valido, per l'elaborazione e l'approfondimento di una strategia di lotta per il movimento operaio. È valido ancora oggi, anzi lo diventa sempre di più man mano che i militanti più seri e impegnati, spezzate le catene del dogmatismo e abbandonate le illusioni perennemente risorgenti dell'opportunismo, tornano alla fonte viva del pensiero marxista, riscoprendone l'inesauribile ricchezza (Basso, 2012, p. 11).

The selection of works included in these two volumes reflects the centrality of the topics and their historical relevance (Table 2). These are some of the most important titles:

Table 2. The Most Important Titles

| | |
|---|---|
| *Riforma sociale o rivoluzione?* | *Social Reform or Revolution?* |
| *Problemi di organizzazione della socialdemocrazia russa* | *Problems of Organizing Russian Social Democracy* |
| *Prefazione a 'La questione polacca e il movimento socialista'* | *Preface to 'The Polish Question and the Socialist Movement'* |
| *Sciopero generale, partito e sindacati* | *General Strike, Party and Trade Union* |
| *Discorso al congresso del POSDR* | *Speech to the RSDLP Congress* |
| *La crisi della socialdemocrazia* | *The Crisis of Social Democracy* |
| *La rivoluzione russa* | *The Russian Revolution* |

The correspondence collected by Lelio Basso covers the period from 1893 to 1919. And, as Bassio himself notes in his introduction to this volume:

È chiaro che per comprendere questo aspetto interiore di Rosa, e soprattutto per apprezzarne l'impatto sul suo pensiero politico, sono indispensabili le lettere dal carcere, dove la Luxemburg trascorse gli ultimi anni della sua vita, anni di rievocazione forzata, di ricordi che affiorano, di un bilancio della sua vita costantemente riconsiderato (Basso, 2012, p. 23).


## 5. Conclusions and perspectives

A comparative analysis of the editions of Rosa Luxemburg's 'complete works' in the English-speaking world, French-speaking world and, to a lesser extent, Italian-speaking world shows that the recovery and dissemination of her legacy responds both to historiographical interest and to a need to intervene in contemporary political debates. In this sense, the publishing projects studied – Verso Books in the United Kingdom, Agone-Smolny in France and the pioneering contributions of Lelio Basso in Italy – show how translation and critical editing become mechanisms of cultural and political mediation, bringing together historical memory, ideological commitment and editorial praxis.

This comparison also reveals the asymmetries between national contexts: while systematic long-term projects are developed in English and French, in Italy the initiative of individual intellectual figures has predominated, giving shape to partial but significant corpora. This disparity highlights the centrality of institutional and non-institutional resources and militant collectives in the consolidation of comprehensive editions.

Beyond their philological dimension, these 'publishing ventures' open up spaces for the transnational circulation of Marxist ideas, revitalising, among other things, debates on democracy, revolution, imperialism and the labour movement.

Several promising lines of research are emerging for further investigation:

1. Documentary expansion: There are still thousands of unpublished pages in Polish and other languages, access to and translation of which are essential for a more complete view of Luxemburg's thought.

2. Digital and open access editions: The use of online platforms and open editions could democratise access to these texts, promoting both academic research and their appropriation by social movements.

3. Interdisciplinary approaches: Dialogue between the history of translation, political theory, cultural studies and critical editing can enrich the analysis of Luxemburg's impact in different historical and geographical contexts.

4. Transnational comparisons: Extending the study to other languages would make it possible to map the global reception of Luxemburg and better understand her place in the intellectual history of the 20th century.

5. Critical rereading in a contemporary key: Editions should not be limited to preserving her legacy but can serve as a basis for rethinking current debates around globalisation, social justice and emancipatory struggles.

In conclusion, the editorial and translation work surrounding Rosa Luxemburg constitutes a privileged space for the encounter between intellectual history and political activism. Its future prospects depend on the ability to continue articulating academic research with the political and social challenges of our time.

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# Singing Across Borders: A Genre-based Approach to Song Dubbing in Persian Animated Musicals

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**Abstract**

Songs in animated musicals are far from homogenous; they belong to distinct genres, each fulfilling different communicative purposes, emotional tones, and narrative functions. This diversity requires genre-sensitive translation strategies, yet much existing scholarship continues to treat song dubbing as a uniform practice, overlooking how genre shapes translational choices. To address this gap, the present study adopts a functionalist, genre-based perspective, drawing on Reiss's (1971/2000) text typology, to investigate the role of genre in shaping dubbing strategies in the Persian versions of animated musicals. The corpus consists of six English-language animated musicals and their Persian dubbed counterparts. Songs are categorized into three genres, including background songs, plot-related songs, and entertaining songs, and examined in relation to translation strategies adapted from Gottlieb (1992) and reformulated by Ghomi (2009). The analysis reveals a strong correlation between song genre and translation method, showing that genre-specific function in animated musicals plays a critical role in sustaining narrative cohesion and enhancing audience engagement. By demonstrating how song genre systematically informs translation choices, this study contributes to the expanding field of audiovisual translation and to the specialized area of song dubbing.

**Keywords:** Song dubbing, genre-based approach, animated musicals, text typology, dubbing strategy

**Introduction**

Song translation presents a complex set of challenges that extend well beyond the linguistic rendering of verbal content. It requires negotiating multiple semiotic dimensions, such as lyrics, musical structure, and performance potential (Franzon, 2008). In contexts such as subtitled musical films or surtitled stage productions, where translations may exist primarily in written form, singability is not always essential (Franzon, 2008). In contrast, in the context of song dubbing, this dynamic fundamentally changes and singability becomes the primary and indispensable criterion guiding the translation process (Reus, 2020).

In musical films, particularly in animated musicals, this challenge is amplified, as songs function not as ornamental features but as central narrative devices. They advance the plot, construct character identity, convey emotional intensity, and provide entertainment (Bosseaux, 2015; Dyer, 2012; Reus, 2018, 2020). These diverse functions give rise to distinct song genres, each with its own communicative role and corresponding translational demands. Thus, beyond singability, the translator must navigate how narrative purpose interacts with musical and performative constraints, making genre an essential factor in strategic decision-making.

Although research in song translation has expanded in recent decades, the dubbing of songs—particularly in animated musicals—remains relatively underexplored (Reus, 2020). Seminal contributions by Low (2003, 2005, 2013, 2016) and Franzon (2008, 2015, 2022; Franzon et al., 2021) have provided robust theoretical frameworks, distinguishing between strategies such as translation, adaptation, and replacement, and articulating criteria like singability, sense, rhythm, and skopos. The 2008 special issue of *The Translator*, edited by Susam-Sarajeva, further marked a turning point, establishing translation and music as a flourishing area of inquiry within Translation Studies (Susam-Sarajeva, 2008). Yet, despite these advances, most frameworks have been applied to contexts where narrative and performative constraints are less pressing.

More recent scholarship has emphasized the centrality of music in film narrative and affective design. Studies by Dyer (2012), Bosseaux (2015), Reus (2018), and Khoshsaligheh, Sarvghadi, and Mohammad-Alizadeh (2022) demonstrate how songs shape audience engagement and convey thematic meaning. However, these contributions often fall short of linking translation shifts to the narrative roles played by different genres of songs. This gap is particularly significant in the case of dubbed animated musicals, where translation strategies must simultaneously preserve singability and support narrative function.

The present study addresses this gap by examining how functional distinctions among song genres influence translation strategies in the Persian dubbed versions of English-language animated musicals. While singability remains a non-negotiable requirement across all song types, its interaction with narrative role varies, shaping the translator's strategic decisions. Drawing on Reiss's (1971/2000) functionalist translation theory, this study analyzes a corpus of six English animated musicals officially dubbed into Persian by Glory Entertainment Studio. It explores the alignment between song genre, narrative function, and translation strategy, guided by the following research question: How does the genre of a song influence the dubbing strategy in animated musicals when viewed through a functionalist lens?

**Song Dubbing**

Before analyzing strategies in song dubbing, it is crucial to establish what is meant by "song" and how this notion is conceptualized within translation studies. Low (2013, p. 229) defines a song as "a verbal–musical hybrid", underscoring its dual identity as both a linguistic and a musical construct. As

Low (2005, p. 187) explains, songs are "a combination of words and music" that partake in "two particularly elaborate systems of purely auditory and temporal signs", echoing Kress and van Leeuwen's (2001) insights on multimodality. Similarly, Gorlée (2005) positions songs as a form of poetic discourse, embedded within the hybrid art of the musicopoetic.

From a translational standpoint, song translation entails more than linguistic transfer. It involves reconstituting "a pre-existing work of performance art … with a new set of words" (Low, 2005, p. 188). Low (2013, p. 231) further refines this definition by stressing the necessity of "extensive transfer of material from the ST, with a reasonably high degree of semantic fidelity." Crucially, as Low (2005) emphasizes, song translation differs significantly from conventional interlingual translation practices, such as poetry translation. This divergence arises not only from the intricate interplay of verbal and musical constraints but also from the inherently performative dimension of songs, which demands attention to delivery, rhythm, and audience reception.

Historically, however, song translation has occupied a marginal and often overlooked position within translation studies. Its classification as an atypical form of translation is largely attributable to the unique challenges it presents, which require an ongoing negotiation between verbal meaning, musical structure, and performative enactment (Franzon, 2008; Low, 2013). Nevertheless, in recent decades, the discipline has witnessed a growing scholarly interest in song translation, particularly in the domain of audiovisual translation (AVT), where songs frequently serve key functions, such as advancing the plot, shaping atmosphere, and enhancing emotional engagement.

Within this field, song dubbing represents a specialized form of song translation in which the visual dimension acquires paramount importance. Chaume (2004) highlights the intricate relationship in dubbing between the non-verbal codes of film, such as music and sound effects, photographic and iconographic cues, and on-screen movement, and the verbal code of dialogue or lyrics. Pérez-González (2014) extends this view by underscoring the need to account for visual syntax, media-specific constraints, and the multimodal distribution of meaning across semiotic resources. These multimodal considerations become particularly salient in the context of song dubbing, where the convergence of verbal, musical, and visual elements profoundly shapes the translator's choices (Reus, 2020). The interplay of these components generates a dense network of constraints, rendering the selection of dubbing strategies a highly contextual and dynamic process.

**Song Dubbing Strategies**

Translating songs for dubbing is a uniquely complex task, as it operates at the intersection of language, music, and performance. Unlike most forms of translation, song dubbing is constrained by pre-existing melodies, rhythms, and timings, which impose strict structural boundaries on the translator's choices. As Low (2005, p. 189) aptly observes, "because of the constraints imposed by the pre-existing music, such song-translators resort to numerous methods in an attempt to overcome the difficulties they encounter." Thus, song translation must go beyond mere semantic transfer, negotiating verbal, musical, and performative dimensions to produce target versions that remain singable, aesthetically pleasing, and narratively coherent. This multimodal nature of song translation has been extensively discussed by Susam-Sarajeva (2008) in the special issue of *The Translator* on Translation and Music, which emphasizes that successful song dubbing requires sensitivity not only to meaning but also to music, rhythm, rhyme, and performance, all of which shape the overall effect and emotional resonance.

Franzon's (2008) influential work systematized the principal strategies available to translators, identifying five approaches: leaving the song untranslated, translating the lyrics, writing new lyrics to the original music, adapting translations to fit the music, or creating entirely new lyrics. Franzon

(2008) stresses that the choice of strategy depends largely on the song's narrative function and its musical characteristics, aligning closely with functionalist approaches such as Skopos Theory and text typology (Reiss, 1981/2004; Reiss et al., 2014), which view translation as a purpose-driven act.

Ghomi (2009) adapts Gottlieb's (1992) subtitling strategies to the context of dubbing, providing a taxonomy that is equally applicable to song dubbing. These strategies encompass a range of techniques for negotiating the translation of signifying codes introduced by Chaume (2004) in audiovisual texts. Adapted translation choices include the following dubbing strategies (Ghomi, 2009, pp. 54–60). Expansion involves introducing additional content or effect beyond the source. Paraphrase conveys the source message with altered expression, rewording the original to achieve naturalness in the target language. Transfer represents full expression, maintaining the semantic content of the source text with minimal alteration. Dislocation replaces the message with a differing expression. Decimation reduces the content or effect, condensing the original where space or timing is restricted. Repetition reiterates elements already present. Finally, deletion omits content altogether, a strategy usually employed when elements cannot be reconciled with target constraints.

Low (2013) provides a nuanced framework for categorizing song translation outcomes, distinguishing among translations, adaptations, and replacement texts. A translation is conceptualized as a relatively faithful rendering of the original, involving only minor linguistic or stylistic modifications. An adaptation, in contrast, entails more substantial cultural or narrative modifications while preserving meaningful links to the source text. Replacement texts involve the creation of entirely new lyrics for pre-existing melodies, without retaining the original semantic content (Low, 2013, pp. 230–237). Complementing this perspective, Franzon (2022, p. 25) frames source–target relationships in terms of approximations and appropriations, observing that "a song translation can deliver an approximation of some qualities of a source song, but it will also often change certain aspects in an appropriation for a new context". Together, these frameworks highlight the delicate balance between fidelity, creativity, and contextual adaptation in song translation. This theoretical stance supports the empirical research done by Di Giovanni (2008) on the challenge between source-oriented and target-oriented translation strategies. In her study of American musicals dubbed into Italian, she identified domestication, a pronounced orientation toward target-culture expectations, as the prevailing translation strategy.

Ultimately, as Reiss (1981/2004) underscores, the choice of translation strategy is profoundly shaped by the genre of the source text. Jiménez (2017) further notes that while song translation may draw on general translation principles, it also demands techniques uniquely attuned to the musical mode. Genre influences communicative purpose, audience expectations, and stylistic conventions, making it a decisive factor in guiding the translator's approach. In the realm of song dubbing, genre not only frames textual and musical norms but also determines the strategies most effective in achieving a harmonious integration of music, meaning, and performance. This highlights the centrality of genre as a decisive factor in shaping the translator's approach and determining the selection of appropriate translation strategies.

## Genre and Song Dubbing

As Reus observes "within the scope of a musical film, songs have come to fulfil specific purposes" and perform distinct narrative and aesthetic functions that directly shape the translator's strategic decisions (2020, p. 24). Franzon (2008, p. 374) suggests that "songs are translated in various ways for various purposes", underscoring the need for translators to align their choices with the intended function of the target version. Ghomi (2009, p. 53), in her study of dubbing signifying codes, including music and sound effects code, echoes this stance in "songs are of different types and each type of

song requires different translation strategy". This observation foregrounds the crucial role of genre in determining translational choices.

Low (2005, p. 210) observes that "when translating a song, keep your eyes fixed on the skopos—the function or purpose that your TT must fulfil". He conceptualizes the creation of singable translations as the skopos of the target text (TT), which is the primary purpose driving the translation. His Pentathlon Principle identifies five interdependent criteria essential for successful song translation: sense, naturalness, rhythm, rhyme, and singability. This framework was later expanded into the Hexathlon model, with skopos added as a sixth element to highlight the importance of aligning translation strategies with the intended function of the TT.

Low (2013) further distinguishes song genres according to whether verbal or musical content dominates. Logocentric songs—word-focused pieces such as narrative ballads—place a premium on semantic fidelity, requiring translators to prioritize meaning transfer while facing the greatest linguistic challenges. By contrast, musico-centric songs—where the musical message is of great importance—often lend themselves to elegant adaptations that prioritize sound and rhythm over semantic precision (Low, 2013, p. 237).

More recently, Reus (2020) has advanced the Triangle of Aspects, a multimodal analytical model designed to examine dubbed songs in animated musicals. This framework divides songs into ten analytical aspects across verbal, musical, and visual dimensions, enabling systematic evaluation of how dubbing choices shape meaning, narrative progression, and audience reception. Reus highlights that different songs privilege different dimensions—some prioritize verbal elements, others musical features, and still others the visual performance.

Taken together, these theoretical perspectives illustrate the complex interplay between song genre and translation strategy. They demonstrate that the narrative and aesthetic function of each song type is central to determining how it is rendered in the target language. Building on these insights, this study integrates Reiss's (1971/2000) text typology, and multimodal song translation frameworks to investigate the relationship between song genre and dubbing strategies in animated musicals. The next section outlines the methodology used to explore how distinct song types influence the selection of translation strategies.

## Methodology

This study adopts a functionalist and descriptive quantitative research design to examine the relationship between song genre and dubbing strategies in animated musicals. The framework is grounded in Reiss's (1971/2000) text typology and Gottlieb's (1992) subtitling strategies as adapted by Ghomi (2009) for dubbing, which together provide a functional basis for evaluating the influence of genre on translation strategies. The corpus for this study was selected through purposive sampling to ensure the inclusion of diverse song genres, thereby enabling a comprehensive exploration of the relationship between genre and dubbing strategy. As Table 1 illustrates, the corpus consists of six English animated musicals and their Persian-dubbed counterparts produced by Glory Entertainment Studio, the leading institute for animation dubbing in Iran.

Table 1 Descriptive Information of the Corpus

| No. | English Title | Release Date | Director(s) | Runing Time | Backtranslation of Persian Title |
|-----|---------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | *Corpse Bride* | 2005 | Burton & Johnson | 77 min | *Dead Bride* |
| 2 | *Cars* | 2006 | Lesseter | 117 min | *Cars* |
| 3 | *Wall-E* | 2008 | Stanton | 98 min | *Wall-E* |

| 4 | *Horton Hears a Who!* | 2008 | Hayward & Martino | 86 min | *Horton* |
| 5 | *The Lorax* | 2012 | Renaud | 86 min | *The Lorax* |
| 6 | *Moana* | 2016 | Musker & Clements | 107 min | *Moana* |

A key methodological innovation of this study lies in adapting Reiss's (1971/2000) text typology to classify song genres in animated musicals. As Reiss et al. (2014) emphasize, identifying the type of the source text is crucial when the translation aims to function as a communicative equivalent of the original. In such cases, which Reiss and Vermeer (1996) describe as communicative or imitating translations, preserving the original's primary function becomes paramount. Drawing on Bühler's functional model of language, Reiss (1977/1989) distinguishes three fundamental text types—informative, expressive, and operative—which, despite often occurring in hybrid forms, provide a valuable framework for identifying a text's predominant function. These text types are summarized as follows (Reiss, 1977/1989, pp. 108–109).

1. Informative texts (content-focused): Their primary purpose is to convey factual or conceptual information, with accuracy, clarity, and semantic fidelity being prioritized.

2. Expressive texts (form-focused): These foreground the aesthetic and creative use of language, requiring translators to recreate the artistic and emotive effect of the source text.

3. Operative texts (appeal-focused): These are designed to persuade or prompt action, where both content and form contribute to influencing the audience.

In the context of animated musicals, these three text types can be systematically mapped onto three major song genres, thereby aligning communicative function with translation strategies. While singability is the default functional requirement of all songs in animated musicals, 'expressive' here specifically refers to musicocentric songs where musicality dominates over semantics. Accordingly, the mapping is as follows:

1. Background songs (musicocentric): Comparable to expressive texts, these songs are primarily atmospheric, relying more on mood and musicality than on semantic density.

2. Plot-related songs (logocentric): Aligned with informative texts, these songs advance the storyline or develop characters.

3. Entertaining songs (imagocentric): Corresponding to operative texts, these songs are visually and performatively driven, designed to amuse and engage the audience.

Given to song dubbing strategies, the study adopts Gottlieb's (1992) subtitling strategies, reformulated by Ghomi (2009) for dubbing. From among the seven adapted strategies, the following five strategies were applied and further redefined in the context of song dubbing.

1. Transfer denotes the close rendering of the source song, retaining its semantic content with minimal deviation.

2. Paraphrase involves rewording the source lyrics in order to preserve meaning while reshaping the expression for greater naturalness and fluency in the dubbed version.

3. Dislocation refers to the replacement of the source song with a different song in the target language.

4. Repetition entails repeating the same song from the original version in the dubbed version without translation.

5. Deletion involves omitting the entire song or its lyrics from the dubbed version.

By aligning song genres with Reiss's (1971/2000) text typology and examining how they interact with specific dubbing strategies, this framework offers a principled, function-oriented methodology. It foregrounds the communicative functions underlying each song genre while systematically exploring how genre sensitivity influences translators' and dubbing directors' strategic choices. Ultimately, this design enables a nuanced analysis of the correlation between song genre and dubbing strategy in Persian-dubbed animated musicals.

**Data analysis**

During the data analysis, a total of 62 songs were identified, comprising 23 background songs, 32 plot-related songs, and 7 entertaining songs. To illustrate the application of dubbing strategies across these categories, the following section presents selected examples from the corpus, highlighting how different approaches are employed in relation to each song type.

**1. Background Songs**

This section examines background songs through two illustrative examples drawn from *Moana* (Clements & Musker, 2016) and *Wall-E* (Stanton, 2008), analyzing how their dubbing reflects the secondary narrative role of musicocentric songs and the strategies employed to preserve atmosphere rather than semantic detail.

Table 2. A background song from *Moana* (Clements & Musker, 2016)

| Source Song | Target Song | Dubbing Strategy |
|---|---|---|
| Tulou… <br> Pardon us… <br> Tulou… <br> Pardon us… <br> Oh Tagaloa <br> Sei e va'ai mai <br> Look down… <br> I le tatou lalolagi <br> Upon our world <br> Sei e va'ai mai <br> Look down <br> … | Tulou… <br> Pardon us… <br> Tulou… <br> Pardon us… <br> Oh Tagaloa <br> Sei e va'ai mai <br> Look down… <br> I le tatou lalolagi <br> Upon our world <br> Sei e va'ai mai <br> Look down <br> … | Repetition |

One of the songs in *Moana* (Clements & Musker, 2016) is originally performed in Tokelauan (see Table 2), serving primarily as a background/atmospheric song that contributes to the animated movie's cultural setting and authentic island identity. The song is not central to the narrative development or character construction but plays an expressive role by immersing viewers in the Polynesian cultural environment.

In the Persian dubbed version, this song is left untranslated and repeated in the original Tokelauan language. From a functional perspective, this choice can be justified. Since the song is musicocentric, its primary communicative function lies in its musical and atmospheric qualities, not in the transfer of semantic meaning. The Tokelauan lyrics, though unintelligible to most Persian audiences, are not essential for understanding the plot or character development. Instead, retaining the original performance preserves cultural authenticity, rhythmic flow, and vocal aesthetics, which are integral to the film's immersive qualities.

Table 3. A background song from *Wall-E* (Stanton, 2008)

| Source Song | Target Song | Dubbing Strategy |
|---|---|---|
| Out there<br>Full of shine and full of sparkle<br>Close your eyes and see it glisten, Barnaby<br>Listen, Barnaby<br>Put on your Sunday clothes<br>There's lots of world out there<br>Get out the brillantine and dime cigars<br>We're gonna find adventure in the evening air<br>Girls in white, in a perfumed night<br>Where the lights are bright as the stars<br>Put on your Sunday clothes<br>We're gonna ride through town<br>In one of those new horse drawn open cars | Out there<br>Full of shine and full of sparkle<br>Close your eyes and see it glisten, Barnaby<br>Listen, Barnaby<br>Put on your Sunday clothes<br>There's lots of world out there<br>Get out the brillantine and dime cigars<br>We're gonna find adventure in the evening air<br>Girls in white, in a perfumed night<br>Where the lights are bright as the stars<br>Put on your Sunday clothes<br>We're gonna ride through town<br>In one of those new horse drawn open cars | Repetition |

In Pixar's *Wall-E* (Stanton, 2008), the background song *Put on Your Sunday Clothes* is a recurring musical motif taken from the 1969 film adaptation of the Broadway musical *Hello, Dolly!*. Within the narrative, the song functions as more than mere background music—it symbolizes human aspiration, joy, and the spirit of exploration, contrasting with the dystopian silence and emptiness of Earth. Despite its strong thematic associations in the source film, the song is not directly tied to dialogue or plot progression in WALL-E (Stanton, 2008). Its primary role is expressive and atmospheric, with additional intertextual significance.

In the Persian dubbed version, this song is repeated without translation, preserving the original English lyrics. From a functionalist standpoint, this decision reflects the recognition of the song's musicocentric and atmospheric role. The Persian audience may not understand the lyrics, but the emotional and symbolic weight of the performance is transmitted primarily through musicality and intertextuality rather than verbal meaning. In line with Reiss's (1971/2000) typology, the song serves an expressive function (evoking feeling, mood, and nostalgia) rather than an informative one, making semantic transfer less essential.

These cases illustrate how repetition as a dubbing strategy is often employed for background or musicocentic songs in Persian dubbing practice. This echoes Low's (2005, 2013) observation that logocentric songs require careful translation, whereas musicocentric songs can often remain untranslated without major disruption. In this case, repetition highlights the peripheral role of the lyrics, aligning with Reiss's (1971/2000) typology, where expressive function takes precedence over informative function.

**2. Plot-related Songs**

This section analyzes two plot-related songs from *Corpse Bride* (Burton & Johnson, 2005) and *Horton Hears a Who!* (Hayward & Martino, 2008), focusing on how their translations employ strategies that prioritize semantic fidelity and narrative coherence to support character development and story progression.

Table 4. A plot-related song from *Corpse Bride* (Burton & Johnson, 2005)

| English Song | Dubbed Song | Backtranslation | Dubbing Strategy |
|---|---|---|---|
| According to plan<br>Our daughter will wed<br>According to Plan<br>Our family led<br>From the depths of deepest poverty<br>To the noble realm of our ancestry<br>… | بر طبق نقشه<br>دختر عروس می‌شه<br>بر طبق نقشه<br>که جدم باعثشه<br>از ژرفای تنگدستی و تباهی<br>شیب اشرافی<br>ارث اجدادی<br>… | According to plan,<br>The daughter becomes the bride<br>According to plan,<br>My ancestor provides<br>From the depths of hardship and decay,<br>An aristocratic slope,<br>An ancestral legacy<br>… | Transfer |

In *Corpse Bride* (Burton & Johnson, 2005), the song *According to Plan* introduces the motivations of the two families arranging the marriage. It conveys essential narrative information: *the Everglots* seek wealth, and *the Van Dorts* desire social status. As a plot-related song sung by film's main characters, its lyrics carry strong logocentric qualities and they directly advance the narrative, reveal character intentions, and establish the film's satirical tone. The Persian dubbed version employs the strategy of transfer, and the semantic content of the source lyrics is preserved with only minor lexical and syntactic adjustments to ensure fluency and naturalness in the target language.

From a functionalist perspective, transfer was the most suitable choice for this case because the song is logocentric, with lyrics that are narrative-driven and directly tied to plot exposition. Preserving the semantic content was therefore essential to retain both the characters' motivations and the satirical critique of social climbing embedded in the original. Any major deviation, such as repetition, deletion, or dislocation, would have risked weakening the audience's grasp of the families' contrasting desires, which form the core of the conflict. By employing transfer, the Persian dubbing successfully maintains the skopos of the song: to convey information clearly while establishing narrative tension.

Table 5. A plot-related song from *Horton Hears a Who!* (Hayward & Martino, 2008)

| English Song | Dubbed Song | Backtranslation | Dubbing Strategy |
|---|---|---|---|
| On the fifteenth of May<br>In the jungle of Nool<br>In the heat of the day<br>In the cool of the pool<br>… | پونزده ماه<br>تو جنگل نول<br>تو هوای گرمش<br>هورتون فیله شنا می‌کرد آب<br>می‌ریختش روی پوست نرمش<br>… | On the fifteenth of the month<br>In the jungle of Nool<br>In its warm air<br>Horton the elephant splashed water<br>And poured it on his soft skin | Paraphrase |

In *Horton Hears a Who!* (Hayward & Martino, 2008) the opening song sung by a non-diegetic narrator serves a plot-related function, introducing both the temporal and spatial setting, as well as the main character, *Horton* the elephant. The Persian dubbed version renders this song through the strategy of paraphrase. While the translation retains the core informational elements of the source text, it modifies the linguistic expression, reshaping the original rhythm into a similarly playful tone in Persian. The phrase *on the fifteenth of May* becomes *on the fifteenth of the month*, a paraphrastic adjustment that simplifies the reference but reduces the specificity of the temporal marker. Furthermore, the playful rhythm of the original is reinterpreted through Persian dubbed version sung by Morteza Ahmadi, a well-known Iranian actor, and further reinforced by the addition of the traditional Iranian instrument *tonbak*, which infuses the song with a culturally resonant soundscape.

From a functionalist standpoint, the use of paraphrase reflects a strategy that balances fidelity to the song's communicative purpose with adaptation to target-language and cultural norms. By preserving the essential informational content while reshaping the verbal expression, the translation successfully fulfills the function of the source song that is introducing the narrative setting and main character in an engaging manner. This approach demonstrates how paraphrase, while altering surface form, can maintain both narrative function and audience engagement, illustrating the flexible yet purpose-driven nature of functionalist translation strategies.

In both *Corpse Bride* (Burton & Johnson, 2005) and *Horton Hears a Who!* (Hayward & Martino, 2008), the treatment of plot-related songs reveals how different strategies shape narrative delivery in dubbing. These examples illustrate how transfer and paraphrase as dubbing strategies align with the functional requirements of plot-related songs. As Low (2005, 2013) and Franzon (2008) note, logocentric songs demand greater attention to semantic fidelity, since they carry narrative weight. The Persian version's use of transfer and paraphrase reflects this necessity; rather than prioritizing musicality or atmosphere, the translators prioritized the accurate delivery of plot information.

**3. Entertaining Songs**

This section examines two entertaining songs from *The Lorax* (Renaud, 2012) and *Cars* (Lasseter, 2006), highlighting how their translations rely on creative strategies—particularly dislocation—to preserve humor, playfulness, and audience engagement.

Table 6. An entertaining song from *The Lorax* (Renaud, 2012)

| English Song | Dubbed Song | Dubbing Strategy |
|---|---|---|
| Pancake, the pancake Pancake, the pancake … | بفرمیود شام عزیزیم، بفرمیود شام خانومیَم، بفرمیود شام آقای محترمیه … | Dislocation |
|  |  |  |

In *The Lorax* (Renaud, 2012), the brief song sung by *the Once-ler*, film's main character, while making pancakes is rendered in Persian through dislocation, as it is replaced with the theme song of a well-known Persian reality TV show centered on cooking and hosting dinners. While the source song is a lighthearted, spontaneous refrain tied directly to the visual of *the Once-ler* making pancakes, the dubbed version shifts the audience's frame of reference by drawing on a culturally familiar tune. This replacement creates intertextual humor for Persian audiences, who immediately recognize the borrowed melody and its associations with food, competition, and entertainment.

From a functionalist perspective, the strategy maintains the performative function of the scene that is enhancing comic relief and supporting the visual cue of cooking; yet it departs from the original's semantic simplicity and narrative neutrality. This case illustrates how dislocation can effectively reinforce audience engagement by exploiting local cultural code and localizing the humor.

Table 7. An entertaining song from *Cars* (Lasseter, 2006)

| English Song | Dubbed Song | Dubbing Strategy |
|---|---|---|
| McQueen and Sally parked beneath a tree, k-i-s-somethin'-somethin'-somethin'-t | می خوام برم به آسمون، آسمون که آبی رنگه، می‌خوام برم به کهکشون، کهکشون خیلی قشنگه ... | Dislocation |



In *Cars* (Lasseter, 2006), the entertaining song sung by *Mater* serves a purely comic and playful function, poking fun at *McQueen* and *Sally*'s budding relationship. In the Persian dubbed version, this song undergoes dislocation, being replaced with a playful rendition of a well-known Iranian classic song. This replacement not only transforms the humor into a culturally familiar register but also evokes a sense of nostalgia through intertextual reference, thereby enhancing its entertainment value for Persian audiences. By drawing on collective cultural memory, the replacement resonates more strongly than a literal translation would have, ensuring that the humor remains accessible and engaging.

From a functionalist perspective, this strategy aligns closely with the function of the scene; since the song is imagocentric and primarily intended for amusement rather than narrative progression, cultural resonance and audience enjoyment are prioritized over strict semantic fidelity. This example illustrates how dislocation can be particularly effective in rendering entertaining songs, as it preserves the performative and affective function of the original while tailoring it to the target culture.

Taken together, these two examples from *The Lorax* (Renaud, 2012) and *Cars* (Lasseter, 2006) demonstrate that dislocation emerges as the dominant strategy for entertaining songs in Persian dubbing. In both cases, the dubbing directors and translators prioritize cultural resonance, intertextual humor, and audience engagement over semantic fidelity, effectively adapting the songs to local cultural codes. This reinforces the argument that in imagocentric, entertainment-oriented songs, the function of generating humor and enhancing audience enjoyment outweighs the need for close adherence to the source text, making dislocation a particularly effective and culturally responsive dubbing strategy.

## Results and Discussion

The results of the analysis reveal distinct patterns in the application of dubbing strategies across different song genres in Persian-dubbed animated musicals. Table 8 presents the distribution of dubbing strategies (transfer, paraphrase, dislocation, repetition, and deletion) across the three song genres (background, plot-related, and entertaining). A total of 62 songs, comprising 23 background songs, 32 plot-related songs, and 7 entertaining songs were analyzed, with frequencies calculated for each strategy. Table 8 shows clear variations in the choice of strategy depending on genre. For instance, plot-related songs were most frequently rendered through transfer (17 instances) and paraphrase (13 instances), while background songs relied heavily on repetition (14 instances) and dislocation (5 instances). In contrast, entertaining songs displayed an exclusive reliance on

dislocation (7 instances). Although deletion appeared occasionally in background songs (3 instances), it was absent in the other two genres. These frequencies suggest an apparent pattern of genre-sensitive strategy selection, which is further tested statistically using chi-square analysis.

Table 8. Frequencies of song genre vs. dubbing strategy

| Genre/ Dubbing Strategy | Transfer | Paraphrase | Dislocation | Repetition | Deletion | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Background songs | 1 | 0 | 5 | 14 | 3 | 23 |
| Plot-related songs | 17 | 13 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 32 |
| Entertaining songs | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| Total | 18 | 13 | 12 | 16 | 3 | 62 |

A chi-square test of independence was conducted to examine the relationship between song genre and dubbing strategy. The results revealed a statistically significant association, $\chi^2(8, N = 62) = 77.82$, $p < .001$. The effect size, measured by Cramer's V, was 0.79, indicating a very strong association between the two variables (Cohen, 2013)

The standardized residuals and correspondence analysis further clarified the strength and direction of these associations. Plot-related songs were most frequently translated through transfer and paraphrase, suggesting that both faithful and reworded renderings were prioritized when songs carried narrative weight. Background songs, by contrast, showed a strong preference for repetition, highlighting the use of recurring lines or refrains to sustain rhythm and atmosphere rather than narrative precision. Entertaining songs were overwhelmingly linked to dislocation, reflecting a tendency toward performance-oriented replacement. Deletion was relatively rare and did not form a strong association with any particular genre.

The statistical results and visualizations illustrated in Figure 1 and Figure 2 jointly demonstrate that dubbing strategies are strongly genre-sensitive.
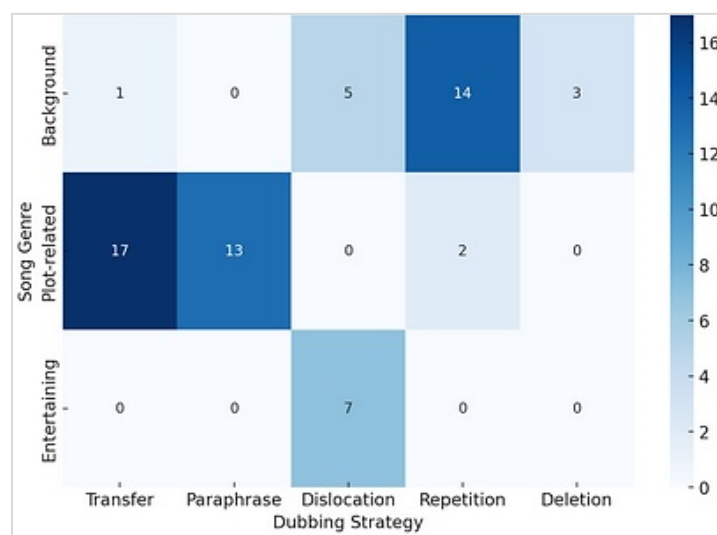


Figure 1. Frequencies: Song genre vs. dubbing strategy

Figure 1 illustrates the heatmap of observed frequencies which makes these tendencies visible at a descriptive level: plot-related songs clustered around transfer and paraphrase, background songs predominantly relied on repetition, and entertaining songs were overwhelmingly associated with

dislocation. Deletion appeared occasionally but with no strong genre correlation, confirming its marginal role as a strategy.



Figure 2. Chi-square distribution

Figure 2 illustrates the heatmap of standardized residuals which deepens this analysis by showing where the observed counts deviated most sharply from statistical expectations. Strong positive residuals (blue) confirmed key associations such as plot-related + transfer/paraphrase, background + repetition, and entertaining + dislocation, while negative residuals (red) indicated genre–strategy pairings that occurred less often than chance, such as plot-related + deletion or entertaining + transfer. These residuals validate the chi-square finding that the relationship between genre and strategy is not only significant but also patterned in consistent and interpretable ways.

Taken together, the results reveal how functional priorities shape translation choices in song dubbing. Plot-related songs, which are closely tied to narrative progression and character development, were predominantly rendered through transfer and paraphrase, strategies that prioritize semantic fidelity and narrative coherence. These songs, whether narrated by a non-diegetic voice as in *Horton Hears a Who!* (Hayward & Martino, 2008) or performed by main characters such as in *Moana* (Clements & Musker, 2016) and *Corpse Bride* (Burton & Johnson, 2005), required careful preservation of meaning to sustain the story's dramatic arc. By contrast, background songs, while contextually relevant, were less integral to plot progression. Often popular tracks performed by well-known artists, as in *Wall-E* (Stanton, 2008), they were more frequently handled through repetition or dislocation, reflecting their primarily atmospheric function where musical ambiance outweighed narrative precision. Entertaining songs, typically performed by characters for comic or playful purposes, showed an exclusive reliance on dislocation, underscoring the primacy of visual performance, humor, and audience engagement over verbal fidelity.

In sum, the strong and statistically significant correlation between song genre and dubbing strategy shows that translators and dubbing directors make strategic decisions not in isolation but in response to the functional role of each song. This finding highlights the utility of combining text typology with empirical statistical analysis to uncover patterned relationships in audiovisual translation practice.

**Conclusion**

This study has demonstrated that the translation of songs in animated musicals is decisively shaped by the dynamic interplay between song genre and dubbing strategy. By adapting Reiss's (1971/2000) text typology to classify songs, in conjunction with Gottlieb's (1992) strategies reformulated for dubbing by Ghomi (2009), the analysis revealed clear, systematic correlations between genre and strategy. The findings show that translators' choices are not arbitrary but are instead informed by the communicative function and narrative weight of each song type. Plot-related songs, which are central to narrative development, were most frequently rendered through transfer and paraphrase, reflecting the need for semantic fidelity and coherence. Background songs, whose function is primarily atmospheric, often employed repetition, maintaining rhythm and cohesion while reducing the pressure for semantic precision. By contrast, entertaining songs, designed to amuse and engage, allowed greater creative latitude and were most often dubbed through dislocation.

These results resonate strongly with broader research in audiovisual translation, confirming that the challenges and strategies observed in this study are part of a wider, systematic pattern. Low (2005, p. 187) stresses that "for musico-centric songs, the musical message is of chief importance … [whereas] logocentric songs have greater difficulty in passing across language frontiers", a distinction that aligns closely with the present study's genre-based results. Likewise, Low (2005) notes that songs typically score lower on semantic transfer than informative texts, while Low (2013, p. 240) characterizes replacement texts in song translation as "manifestations of intercultural communication", reflecting the balancing act between fidelity and accessibility. Franzon (2008) similarly highlights the decisive role of singability and performance value in shaping translational choices. The current findings build on these insights by showing that such tendencies are not incidental but systematically linked to song genre, thereby reinforcing the importance of genre-sensitive approaches in dubbing analysis. Furthermore, the results are consistent with Reus (2020), whose multimodal model underscores the interplay of verbal, musical, and visual dimensions in determining translation strategies.

Taken together, this study underscores the importance of genre sensitivity in dubbing practice. Translators and dubbing directors do not apply strategies uniformly; rather, their choices are systematically guided by the communicative purpose and functional role of each song type. From a methodological perspective, mapping Reiss's (1971/2000) typology onto song genres has proven to be a productive framework for capturing these correlations and for explaining how function-oriented priorities manifest in dubbing. Ultimately, dubbing animated musicals entails far more than achieving singability: it requires a careful balance of linguistic, musical, and visual dimensions, while ensuring that the communicative function of the source material is preserved.

Nonetheless, the scope of this research is limited by its reliance on a relatively small purposive corpus of animated musicals. To enhance the generalizability of the findings, future research should extend this framework to a wider range of films, languages, and dubbing traditions. Comparative analyses across diverse contexts would not only strengthen the explanatory power of genre-based models in audiovisual translation but also deepen our understanding of how dubbing negotiates the tension between universal storytelling and culturally specific reception.

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# Enhancing SRL-Based Translator Education: A Framework for Offering High-Quality Feedback

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## Abstract

Effective feedback has a pivotal role in translator education. However, its implementation has remained unclear as the nature of translation tasks is multidimensional. Thus, this article proposes a framework, which is grounded in the seven principles of good feedback practice identified by Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006), to integrate high-quality feedback into translation classrooms. The seven principles emphasize clarifying performance standards, promoting structured self-assessment, ensuring timely and constructive feedback, encouraging dialogic interactions, supporting learner self-esteem, enabling iterative revision, and examining student performance to refine teaching methods. The customized version for translation classrooms emphasizes the use of rubrics, annotated models, exemplars, reflective journals, peer review, group translation projects, and low-stakes assessment cycles to encourage autonomous and self-regulated learning. The holistic view of the process indicated the reciprocal nature of feedback: while learners benefit from targeted feedback and opportunities for revision and resubmission, instructors also gain insights into students' needs and the areas that call for pedagogical adjustment. When feedback is systematic ally aligned with the course goals, learning strategies, and metacognitive development, strategic competence, critical awareness, and autonomy in translation learners can be facilitated. In effect, the proposed framework offers a structured model that can enhance both instructional effectiveness and translation learners' performance, which contributes to the broader systematization of translator education.

**Keywords:** Translator education, learning theories, SRL, feedback, effective instruction

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**Introduction**

Feedback is a fundamental component of the teaching and learning process. Since it provides necessary information to the learners about their performance, it promotes students' growth and achievement in increasingly diverse, complex educational settings. In the past, feedback was often limited to grading and highlighting mistakes. In contrast, contemporary approaches emphasize its constructive function (Zimmerman & Paulsen, 1995). The value of feedback extends beyond just clarifying learning objectives; not only can it impact academic achievement, as performance can be evaluated in relation to the goals so that modifications could be made (Zimmerman & Paulsen, 1995), it can also improve learners' independence, metacognitive awareness, and engagement (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Panadero et al., 2017; Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019; Mandouit & Hattie, 2023; Wang, 2024; Campos, 2025).

In translator education, in line with other fields, modern educational technologies and pedagogical innovations have further reshaped how feedback can be delivered. In fact, feedback should be more dynamic, accessible, and interactive these days (see Khalili, 2025b; Khalili, in press), as the current trend emphasizes personalized learning and active student engagement (Zimmerman & Paulsen, 1995; Popenici & Kerr, 2017; Hwang et al., 2020). Nevertheless, providing effective feedback remains a complex task for instructors. It is clear that feedback that is poorly structured, delayed, vague, negative-focused, irrelevant, or not personalized, can hinder students' motivation and self-growth (Weaver, 2007). To address these challenges, educators are encouraged to adopt strategies that promote clear communication with students, highlight their strengths and weaknesses, and maintain ongoing dialogue with them, all of which can cultivate a supportive learning environment that facilitates continuous improvement (Weaver, 2007).

In the field of translator education, the role of feedback becomes even more critical, due to the fact that the nature of translation tasks is really demanding and multidimensional. In translation classes, students are expected to develop not only linguistic competence, but also decision-making skills as part of translation competence; these skills closely align with the principles of self-regulated learning (SRL). Therefore, effective feedback in this context must extend beyond surface-level correction of translation errors; instead, it must support learners to monitor their translation choices, evaluate their strategic decisions, and reflect on their evolving translation skills. Such an approach is particularly important in contemporary translation classrooms where students often rely on AI-based tools. If these tools are used uncritically, they can inadvertently diminish the need for autonomous decision-making. Feedback presentation within an SRL-based pedagogical framework can be a solution to counter this risk, because it can guide novice translators toward being more critical about AI translation choices. It can also encourage systematic self-observation and self-reflection.

Even though the related literature highlights the multifaceted value of feedback in encouraging learners' metacognitive engagement and their autonomy, less attention has been devoted to customizing these insights into a structured, practical model which is specifically tailored to the pedagogical demands of translator education. The growing complexity of translator education, which is partly due to the emergence of AI technologies and the subsequent evolving professional expectations, underscores the need for a clear and research-informed framework that can guide instructors in presenting effective feedback. It must be mentioned that the present article does not aim to report any empirical findings; rather, its purpose is to propose a structured feedback framework, which is based on Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick's (2006) principles, for contemporary translation classrooms.

To gain a deeper understanding, it seems necessary to refer to the existing literature on feedback that forms the theoretical grounding of the current investigation. This is addressed in the following section.

**Feedback in Higher Education**

At the turn of the twentieth century, thinkers, such as John Dewey, advanced the notion of experiential learning, and highlighted the importance of reflection as a crucial component of the learning process (see Dewey, 1897/2018; Dewey, 1910; Dewey, 1916/1997). Such thinkers' insights provided an early theoretical foundation for looking at feedback not as an evaluative judgment only, but as part of a continuous learning cycle in which learners engage with and make sense of their own performance. In the following decades, particularly during the 1960s and 1970s, constructivism further emphasized that learners build understanding through cognitive processes including active interaction with their environment, a view which caused feedback to evolve into a more dialogic and formative practice. In fact, feedback was considered a tool that could encourage deeper self-reflection rather than merely serving to assess past performance with an emphasis on errors (Johannes & Haase, 2022; Mandouit & Hattie, 2023).

From these early ideas onward, feedback has been the subject of extensive inquiry, and it was examined from different perspectives. Generally, the research which has been carried out over these years can be categorized into three major themes: examining feedback in terms of its content, its modes of delivery, and its function (Narciss & Huth, 2004; Panadero & Lipnevich, 2022).

On the basis of what was reviewed above, it is essential to consider how feedback has been conceptualized within translator education, as cognitive and procedural requirements of this field make feedback particularly consequential.

In earlier translator education practices, especially in teacher-centered classrooms, feedback typically referred to the comments provided by the instructor, most often delivered post-task, provided only after students had completed the translation and presented their final product. In those classes, feedback served mainly as an evaluative mechanism. It was used as a tool to determine the correctness of the translation rather than guiding learners on how to grow. Classmates and the instructor would comment on the correctness or incorrectness of the translation, and the instructor would subsequently read what was considered the correct version for students to note down. However, as educational and learning theories gained prominence in translator training, not only did attention gradually shift toward incorporating feedback from peers, but with the pedagogical shift toward learner-centered and socio-constructivist models, considerable attention was directed to process-oriented feedback, that is, feedback delivered while the translation task is being performed. Research in translation pedagogy has begun to document the effects of this shift (see Khalili, in press; Khalili, 2025a; Khalili, 2025b; Sato & Lyster, 2012). Some studies on translator education have demonstrated when students and instructors exchange feedback during the task completion sessions, the quality of final translation improves and learners engage in more conscious reasoning, collaborative meaning-making, and self-regulated decision-making (Khalili, in press; Khalili, 2025b); this is in line with broader findings in educational psychology. As a whole, these developments illustrate a gradual shift from external, product-oriented feedback toward a process-oriented type which is more interactive and reflective. The recognition that effective feedback does not rely solely on external sources, and emerges from learners' self-evaluation and self-reflection is a natural extension of this shift. This type of internally generated feedback is evident in SRL-based pedagogical approaches in which learners constantly monitor and thus evaluate themselves, and adjust their own performance accordingly. In effect, effective feedback should encourage learners to engage in self-assessment and self-reflection, and help them identify and bridge the gaps between their current

performance and those goals that they set at the beginning of the course (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). In the context of translator education, integrating internal and external feedback enables learners to make more solid choices including linguistic and cultural considerations during the translation process. This mechanism, which is an essential component of proactive learning, both enhances the accuracy and quality of translations, and makes learners more autonomous, and metacognitively aware (Khalili, in press; Khalili, 2025b). It also leads to the development of strategic translation skills (Khalili, 2025b).

Although there is a lot of research on feedback in the field of education, the number of studies in the field of translator education is rather small. Moreover, even those studies often remain fragmented and lack an integrated structure that aligns external guidance, peer interaction, and internal self-regulation within a unified pedagogical model. This gap is addressed in the following section.

**Framework Proposal**

Feedback in translation classrooms plays a critical role due to the cognitively demanding and multi-layered nature of translation tasks that require linguistic accuracy, textual coherence, pragmatic and cultural appropriateness, strategic decision-making, etc. Considering these demands, it seems that feedback that is systematically conceptualized and pedagogically grounded can be more effective than feedback that remains implicit, incidental, and purely corrective. Therefore, the present study tries to adapt an established model of feedback by Nicole and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) to the specific requirements of translation classrooms, providing a strategic, evidence-informed framework for enhancing learner autonomy, self-regulation, and reflective decision-making.

Nicole and Macfarlane-Dick's (2006, p. 205) seven principles for good feedback practice are as follows:

1. It helps clarify what good performance is (goals, criteria and expected standards are clear);
2. It facilitates the development of self-assessment (self-reflection) in learning;
3. It delivers high quality information to students about their learning;
4. It encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning;
5. It encourages positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem;
6. It provides opportunities to fill the gap between current and desired performance;
7. It provides information that can be used to shape teaching.

Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) presented these seven principles in a general educational context without restricting them to any specific discipline. In what follows, these principles are situated within the domain of translator education.

**1. Clarifying Performance Standards**

Establishing what counts as high-quality translation performance is a prerequisite for effective learning. Students can set meaningful learning goals only when they have a clear understanding of what those goals entail and what they are expected to work toward (Sadler, 1989; Black & William, 1998; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). A recurrent challenge in classes is the misalignment between instructors' and learners' perceptions of course objectives: what the teacher considers the target outcome often differs from what students assume the goal to be (Hounsell, 1997; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). As a result, the feedback provided by the instructor may be only partially useful or even irrelevant from the learner's perspective, because the feedback is oriented toward the instructor's internalized objectives rather than the student's assumed ones. This mismatch produces

confusion, limits the student's ability to act on feedback, and ultimately hinders performance development (Hounsell, 1997; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006).

One of the most effective ways to counter this confusion is to explicitly articulate both course goals and assessment standards (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Objectives that typically remain implicit in the instructor's mind should be made transparent through written documents to outline expectations, performance criteria, and required standards in a clear, accessible way (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). At the very least, instructors should provide straightforward verbal explanations that specify what they have in their minds about competent work (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006) so that the complex nature of assessment criteria becomes more manageable and comprehensible for both instructors and learners.

Clarifying what counts as successful translation is not limited to describing abstract criteria. Learners need concrete illustrations of what quality looks like in practice. For this reason, instructors are encouraged to use exemplars of performance, to use Orsmond et al.'s (2002) terms, including rubrics, annotated model translations, and illustrations of typical errors. Rubrics can clarify expectations by showing what the instructor really means by linguistic accuracy and cultural appropriateness. Annotated model translations can illuminate the reasoning behind strategic decisions so that learners observe how experts navigate alternative solutions, justify decisions, and adapt to contextual constraints.

Moreover, pretests can be used too, as they serve a diagnostic role. Since they reveal students' initial levels of knowledge and skills, they are considered as a baseline assessment that helps instructors decide where to start their explanations. Also, pretests help students identify gaps between their current abilities and the expected performance. Such diagnostic information reduces uncertainty to a great extent when used in combination with rubrics and annotated model translations, and prevents students from relying on guesswork. Thus, it encourages a more strategic approach to translation tasks. Over time, this clarity supports the development of self-regulation and metacognitive awareness, and gets learners to internalize translation standards; as a result, their translation competence will be constantly refined.

## 2. Facilitating Structured Self-assessment

Once learning objectives and performance standards have been clearly explained, it is time for the next instructional intervention. Learners must be empowered to evaluate their progress in relation to those standards. Research indicates when part of the responsibility for assessment is delegated to the learners themselves, learning outcomes are enhanced because learners engage actively with their own work rather than receiving the teacher's feedback passively; this encourages their metacognitive awareness, strategic monitoring, and a sense of ownership over learning (Boud, 1995; McDonald & Boud, 2003).

In practical terms, this delegation can take two main forms: self- and peer-assessment (Cowan, 1999). On the basis of what Cowan (1999) argues, one common type is to ask students to correct their own completed translation tasks and identify areas that require deeper attention, including recurring errors and weaknesses. This is a process that encourages students to scrutinize the reasoning behind their own translational choices instead of merely relying on the teacher's evaluative feedback. Using peer-assessment is another effective method (Cowan, 1999), through which students evaluate one another's translations using some shared criteria. Interestingly, studies have shown that even though learners may often overlook or minimize errors in their own assignments, they display significantly greater accuracy and critical attention when analyzing their

classmates' work (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Engaging with peer output sharpens evaluative judgment and refines learners' internal standards for quality (Boud et al., 1999; Gibbs, 1999).

It should be noted that, according to empirical findings, when learners receive teacher feedback prior to engaging in self- or peer-assessment, their ability to identify weaknesses and areas for improvement is enhanced (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). This sequencing allows learners to better regulate self-evaluation. In effect, when expert guidance and self-reflection are integrated, self-assessment becomes a more effective tool for promoting learning and metacognitive awareness (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006).

Integrating the Motivational Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ), as a further diagnostic tool, can also provide additional insights into learners' status of self-reflection which is a component of self-regulation (see Khalili, 2025b). The results of the MSLQ can help instructors identify students with low self-efficacy; thus, they can provide them with more explicit prompts and structured reflection templates, or even teacher-modeled examples to guide effective self-assessment. In contrast, learners who demonstrate stronger self-regulatory profiles may benefit from open-ended reflective tasks that allow greater autonomy. For both groups, self-assessment functions as a dynamic feedback mechanism: it provides learners with immediate, internally generated information about their current performance relative to expectations, and enables them to detect performance gaps and adjust their strategies for subsequent tasks as well. In fact, consistent engagement in self-assessment changes learners' mindset; they no longer perceive translation quality as something that is determined merely by the instructor; instead, they are capable of monitoring, interpreting, and improving on their own. This shift lies at the heart of SRL and is essential for developing confident, autonomous, and reflective translators.

## 3. Delivering High-quality Information

It is essential that the quality of the external feedback that is provided by instructors as a component of formative feedback be high. Regardless of course type or learners' proficiency, useful feedback must be timely (Gibbs & Simpson, 2004) and brief enough to maintain students' engagement. Additionally, it must be designed in a constructive way; this means not only should it identify weaknesses but also offer clear corrective guidance (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Also, when constructive criticism is balanced with encouragement, learners restore the confidence that is needed for sustained improvement (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). It is very important that feedback should help students progress toward greater self-regulation, and equip them with the insight required to monitor and self-correct future performance independently (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006).

Providing external feedback in translation classrooms involves both responding to what learners translated, and how they approached the task. High-quality feedback explains the underlying source of the problem, for instance, if a communicative intention is misinterpreted or genre conventions are ignored. More importantly, it must offer practical solutions for revision rather than just leaving students to infer the correct solution themselves.

Brief marginal annotations on drafts, such as highlighting an ambiguous syntactic choice and suggesting an alternative, help students understand the reasoning behind revisions without overwhelming them.

Peer feedback can complement instructor feedback if it is guided by clear criteria. As mentioned earlier, peer review is an efficient way to deepen learners' attention to standards and develop their self-reflection. Another supplemental form of feedback can be obtained through AI-assisted translation tasks. Learners can compare their own output with AI-generated alternatives; this

encourages them to analyze why certain choices are more effective (see Khalili, 2025b). The aim is not to accept AI suggestions blindly, but to use them as opportunities for contrastive reasoning (Khalili, 2025b).

Reflective journals and brief post-task commentaries can also strengthen the feedback cycle even if they are not the primary focus (Khalili, 2025b). When students articulate the reasoning behind their translation choices, instructors can target feedback more precisely, creating a loop in which external guidance and learner reflection reinforce each other.

## 4. Encouraging Dialogic Interactions

There is evidence that students often gain little from unidirectional, transmission-style feedback because they are not given opportunities to engage with, question, or make sense of the instructor's comments (Chanock, 2000; Hyland, 2000). For feedback to translate into learning, it must be dialogic: learners need chances to discuss proposed revisions, challenge interpretations, and negotiate criteria with the teacher (Freeman & Lewis, 1998; Laurillard, 2002); without such interaction, external comments risk remaining external: students receive the information but fail to internalize it (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006).

In translator education this argument has direct pedagogical implications. Peer dialogue and collaborative discussion are not merely part of the academic work; they are pedagogically potent because students frequently explain and justify translation choices to each other in ways that deepen understanding. Peer explanation can surface alternative perspectives, expose tacit assumptions, and reveal misunderstandings that a unilateral instructor comment might not. In effect, dialogic exchange supports SRL by forcing learners to articulate reasoning, evaluate options, and reconsider strategies in real time, activities that strengthen metacognitive awareness. To enable such dialogues in translation classrooms, instructors can engage students in structured peer-review with clear criteria and guided prompts so that peer comments are focused, relevant, and actionable; they can also design group translation projects to create natural contexts for negotiation and co-construction of meaning and style. Also, selective sharing of reflective journal entries can be used as prompts for class discussion rather than as private reports; this creates authentic occasions for dialogues that are grounded in students' own reasoning. In fact, the aim is not to give more comments, but to create a more interactive space; this is a shift that directly supports evaluative judgment and autonomous translation practice.

## 5. Encouraging Positive Motivational Beliefs and Self-esteem

There is evidence that instructors can have a positive impact on students' self-esteem, and providing high-quality feedback is an effective way to enhance it (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Research shows that in courses with multiple low-stakes assessment tasks, where students receive frequent and constructive feedback, their performance improves significantly. By contrast, in courses with high-stakes assessments, where only students' grades represent their success or failure, students' attention shifts from learning to final results, a process which hinders the development of SRL. To counteract this limitation, the feedback cycle can be repeated for those translation tasks and projects that need to be graded; this means that after students submit their draft translations, the instructor provides constructive feedback instead of grading, and points out areas which need improvement. Then students revise their work, and resubmit translations; final grading takes place at this point. This makes feedback timely and highly actionable; as a result, students whose confidence and self-esteem have been bolstered can feel more autonomous while engaging with high-stakes translation projects.

**6. Bridging the Gap Between Current and Desired Performance**

A necessary requirement for narrowing the gap between current and desired performance is that learners must be given the opportunity to act on the feedback they receive. Feedback can be considered effective only when students re-engage with the same task and demonstrate improvement; without this observable change, it is impossible to claim that feedback has fulfilled its purpose (Boud, 2000). Although resubmission is less common in higher education, since instructors often move on quickly after delivering feedback due to time constraints, it remains one of the most powerful mechanisms for verifying whether learning has genuinely occurred or not (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006).

As mentioned earlier, in translation training, revision and resubmission opportunities can be integrated into tasks that need grading such as translation quizzes and major translation projects. After students receive targeted feedback, they revise and resubmit the same task. If this cycle is applied selectively, not only can the workload be kept manageable, but it can also be ensured that feedback leads to demonstrable progress. Revision cycles transform feedback from a passive transmission of information into an active learning tool. The comparison between the initial and revised versions shows whether students merely recognized their errors without any further action or actually started to make some adjustments to their decision-making processes. This strengthens SRL by encouraging iterative refinement rather than superficial correction, and ensures that improvement is both intentional and measurable (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006).

**7. Using Feedback to Refine Instructional Methods**

In contrast to the previous principles, which were about the information provided for students, this final principle emphasizes that feedback also flows from students to instructors. Learners' performance provides important information about the effectiveness of instructional methods, the clarity of task goals, and the adequacy of scaffolding (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). When instructors observe patterns of errors, recurring misunderstandings, or challenging areas for students, they gain insight into the teaching methods that they use (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). This is an interpretive use of students' performance, which leads to the refinement of curriculum and practice.

In translation training, instructors can examine students' reflective journals, MSLQ, peer-review discussions, draft translations, and in-class problem-solving activities to identify problems that students constantly face. These observations lead to adjustments in task design, the sequencing of texts for translation, and the level of scaffolding that is needed; this means that teaching remains aligned with learners' needs rather than with some predetermined assumptions. Instructors can refine lesson planning, reinforce neglected competencies, and intervene wherever strategic development is poor. This is how a reciprocal feedback loop is created: instructional decisions evolve in response to students' performance; this ensures that the learning environment remains consistent, purposeful, and pedagogically coherent (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006).

**Conclusion**

The present study sought to operationalize Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick's (2006) seven principles of good feedback practice within the specific pedagogical context of translator education. Since these principles were originally developed as general guidelines for higher education, their relevance to translation training is acknowledged, especially when the teaching method is SRL-focused. When instructional practices are aligned with these principles, the translation classroom, which was

previously a product-oriented space, turns into a place where reflective and autonomous translators can be trained.

The analysis indicated that there is a dual perspective on feedback on the basis of Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick's (2006) seven principles. In fact, principles one through six primarily address feedback directed at learners, as mentioned earlier, including clarifying goals and standards, encouraging self-assessment, ensuring high-quality and constructive input, emphasizing the dialogic nature of feedback, supporting motivation and self-esteem, and providing opportunities for revision and resubmission. Together, these six principles serve to enhance students' translation competence and metacognitive awareness, and at the same time, make learners more autonomous and well-equipped to navigate complex translation tasks with confidence and reflective judgment. The seventh principle, however, highlights feedback that flows from students to instructors this time. When educators observe learners' performance and peer discussions, and reflect on patterns in students' journals, they gain critical insights into the effectiveness of their teaching methods, and subsequently, the appropriateness of tasks with respect to gaps in students' understanding. This approach sees feedback both as a tool for student improvement, and a tool by which instructors can adjust their teaching methods. In this way, feedback functions as both a driver of student growth and a lens for reflective teaching, reinforcing a holistic, sustainable, and learner-centered approach to translator education.

Ultimately, presenting feedback in a structured, theory-based manner contributes to the further systematization of translator education. In the past, classroom design in translator education was rarely based on theories of teaching and learning. However, there has been a recent trend in all academic disciplines, including translator education, towards becoming more and more research-based, which has provided an increasing potential for course design based on fundamental principles of teaching and learning. By doing so, translation classrooms can become more coherent, effective, and learner-centered; this gives students a chance to develop autonomous, reflective, and strategically competent translation skills.

## Acknowledgements

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# Ideological and Cognitive Negotiation of Metonymy in Three English Qur'an Translations

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## Abstract

The dominant view of early English Qur'an translations as uniformly literal has obscured significant strategic and ideological diversity, particularly in the handling of metonymic expressions. This study examines how Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Marmaduke Pickthall, and Mohammed Habib Shakir have rendered 50 Quranic verses that contain clear metonymies. Using a qualitative comparative design, metonymies were classified by cognitive type, and translation strategies were coded as preservation of the original vehicle, sense-for-sense replacement, hybrid explicitation, or deletion. Analysis of 150 renderings revealed that, while preservation predominated overall (52.7%), translators diverged sharply. Pickthall preserved the source vehicle in 70% of cases, Shakir in 52%, and Yusuf Ali in only 36%, preferring sense rendering (50%). Strategic choices aligned closely with translator habitus (devotional literalism, reformist rationalization, Azhari pragmatism) and formed a consistent theological-sensitivity hierarchy; divine attributes were almost universally retained, human-submission expressions unanimously domesticated, and cause-effect idioms produced the clearest ideological split. These findings challenge the monolithic literalist narrative, demonstrate translator ideology as the primary driver of cognitive continuity or disruption, and provide a framework for future analyses of figurative language in sacred-text translation.

**Keywords:** Conceptual metonymy, equivalence strategies, Qur'an translation, theological sensitivity, translator ideology

**Introduction**

The Holy Qur'an deploys metonymy not as incidental ornamentation but as a core cognitive and theological instrument. Through contiguity-based mappings, a single linguistic vehicle provides mental access to a target concept within the same idealized cognitive model, thereby veiling sensitive realities, elevating discourse, and anchoring transcendent truths in embodied human experience (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Radden & Kövecses, 1999; Su, 2023). Expressions such as *yad Allāh* (the Hand of Allah), *wajh Allāh* (the Face of Allah), *al-bayt* (the House for the Ka'bah), or euphemistic circumlocutions for sexual and eschatological phenomena exploit this mechanism with exquisite precision. Precisely because these mappings are exegetically contested and culturally embedded, their rendition into English generates acute tension. Literal preservation risks anthropomorphism or pragmatic opacity, whereas interpretive reformulation threatens to erode rhetorical refinement and doctrinal nuance (Elsayed, 2025; Naseef, 2018; Khan, 2021).

Three influential English translations of the Qur'an—Marmaduke Pickthall's *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran* (1930), Abdullah Yusuf Ali's *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary* (first published in 1934 with editions into the late 1930s), and the later English translation attributed to M. H. Shakir (first printed circa 1968)—have played significant roles in shaping global Muslim readership and scholarly engagement with the Qur'an. Despite the emergence of numerous modern renderings, these translations remain among the most frequently cited and circulated versions, both in print and digital platforms. Each translator's linguistic choices and interpretive orientations reflect distinct religious, cultural, and ideological backgrounds, making their treatment of figurative and metonymic expressions a revealing site for exploring how personal conviction influences cognitive and strategic choices in translation.

The study of Quranic translation has consistently underscored how translator identity influences interpretive and linguistic outcomes. Each of the three English translators examined here—Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Marmaduke William Pickthall, and the so-called Mohammed Habib Shakir—embodies a unique configuration of religious, cultural, and intellectual influences that shape their approach to Qur'anic metonymy. Abdullah Yusuf Ali (1872–1953), born in Bombay to a Gujarati Muslim family and educated at Cambridge, was deeply influenced by Islamic reformist and modernist thought (Fakhr-Rohani, 2023; Kidwai, 2007). His *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary* (1934–1937) demonstrates a balanced method retrospectively aligned with *dynamic equivalence* (Nida, 1964), paraphrasing metonymic expressions to enhance rational and cross-cultural accessibility. Marmaduke Pickthall (1875–1936), a British convert to Islam, produced *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran* (1930) with a strong commitment to *formal equivalence* (Newmark, 1988), adopting a reverent, literal tone that preserves metonymy in its figurative form (Kerwanto et al., 2025). The translation attributed to M. H. Shakir, first published in print in the late 1960s (commonly dated to around 1968), and sometimes linked, erroneously, to the Egyptian judge Muḥammad Ḥabīb al-Shākir (1866–1939), remains a case of uncertain authorship (Abdel Haleem, 2004; Falahi, 2009). Despite the attribution dispute, the Shakir version itself has been noted for its relatively concise style, restrained use of commentary, and generally straightforward lexical choices (Mir, 2011; Abdelanby Younes Younes, 2025). Its tendency to balance the preservation of figurative expressions with semantic clarity reflects an approach aimed at minimizing interpretive ambiguity that might otherwise hinder reader comprehension.

Collectively, these translators exemplify Yusuf Ali's reformist didacticism, Pickthall's devotional literalism, and Shakir's linguistic pragmatism—distinct orientations that reflect their diverse religious and intellectual backgrounds and explain the variation in their handling of Quranic metonymy.

Prior scholarship, while extensive, has inadequately triangulated cognitive mechanisms, translation strategies, and translator biography. The present study contends that only by integrating Conceptual Metonymy Theory with Equivalence Theory can we explain both what cognitive shifts occur and why particular ideological stances produce them. It therefore addresses five interrelated research questions:

1. How do Yusuf Ali, Pickthall, and Shakir render Quranic metonymic expressions?

2. What translation strategies—figurative preservation, explicitation, sense rendering, or deletion—predominate in each rendition?

3. How do the translators' religious affiliations, native languages, and ideological orientations shape these strategies?

4. What patterns emerge across metonymy types (part-for-whole, cause-for-effect, place-for-institution/event, object-for-user)?

5. How do these strategic choices impact semantic accuracy, rhetorical elevation, and theological interpretation?


**Literature Review**

The literature on Quranic metonymy translation reflects an intersection between cognitive linguistics and translation studies, revealing how ideological and theological constraints shape strategic decisions. Existing research demonstrates that metonymy, more pervasive and culturally embedded than metaphor, demands cognitive as well as pragmatic sensitivity. Scholars have proposed theoretical models—particularly Conceptual Metonymy Theory and Equivalence Theory—to clarify how translators negotiate meaning, contiguity, and ideology when rendering sacred texts. Empirical studies further reveal a consistent tension between fidelity to divine expression and communicative accessibility, often mediated by the translator's ideological profile.

*Theoretical Framework*

This investigation integrates Conceptual Metonymy Theory (CMT) and Equivalence Theory to illuminate both the cognitive architecture of Quranic metonymy and the ideological motivations governing its translation.

CMT (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Radden & Kövecses, 1999; Su, 2023) conceptualizes metonymy as a fundamental cognitive operation whereby a vehicle grants mental access to a target within a shared idealized cognitive model (ICM). Dominant Quranic patterns include "part for whole" ("Hand" for divine power), "place for institution/event" ("the House" for pilgrimage), "object for user" ("the Pen" for angelic recording), and "effect for cause" in euphemistic discourse. These mappings are rarely decorative; they simultaneously fulfil theological, euphemistic, and cultural functions (Sherwani, 2016; Ahmad et al., 2020). Translation thus forces decisions about preserving contiguity relations or restructuring them for target-language cognition.

Equivalence Theory (Nida, 1964; Newmark, 1988) distinguishes formal equivalence (source-oriented fidelity) from dynamic equivalence (target-oriented effect). Pickthall's devotional literalism exemplifies formal equivalence; Yusuf Ali's reformist didacticism inclines toward dynamic equivalence through paraphrase and commentary. Shakir negotiates a pragmatic hybrid. The frameworks complement each other synergistically. CMT elucidates what cognitive transformations occur when contiguity is disrupted or maintained, whereas Equivalence Theory explains why translators, shaped by ideology, elect particular transformations. This synthesis reveals that strategic choice is never purely technical but always ideologically mediated.

*Review of Empirical Studies*

A pronounced literalist bias pervades scholarship on Quranic and ḥadīth metonymy, justified by the sacred text's perceived untranslatability. Belarbi and Messaoudi (2020) rigorously demonstrate that foreignisation dominates culture-bound Quranic metonymy because translators fear altering divine wording. Khan (2021) corroborate this across thirty-two renderings of *Verse 43* of *Sūrat al-Nisāʾ*, revealing pervasive literal shifts that engender opacity for non-specialist readers. In ḥadīth translation, Muhammed (2021) and Ali and Ahmad (2022) explicitly advocate source-oriented foreignisation for kināyah ʿan ṣifah and women-related metonymy to safeguard original cultural flavor, while Abdulsattar Mutar (2024) observes uniform literal procedures supplemented only by explanatory notes. Ibraheem (2020) further illustrates that even varied strategies for coitus-related metonymy fail to capture full connotative layers, reinforcing ideological caution.

Conversely, multiple scholars contend that unreflective literalism generates theological risk and pragmatic failure. Elsayed (2025) persuasively argues that literal rendering of taboo-related metonymy produces "intolerable mistakes", mandating functional equivalence supported by footnotes or glossaries. Abdelhakim Muhammad (2017) reveals that although Arberry and Hilālī-Khān achieve semantic transfer, they largely fail to preserve rhetorical effect in *Sūrat al-Nisāʾ*. Naseef (2018), in the most comprehensive kināyah study to date, demonstrates that even source-oriented translations regularly sacrifice euphemistic and persuasive functions. Hassan (2020) extends this critique across five major Qur'an versions, documenting systematic shortcomings in conveying metonymy and euphemism.

Ideological orientation emerges as the decisive mediating variable. Ahmad et al. (2020) underscore the necessity of footnotes to compensate for literalism's cultural gaps, whereas Sherwani (2016) contends that translators must actively negotiate target-culture ICMs to avert outright untranslatability. Parvaz and Afrouz (2021) similarly highlight the dominance of literal translation in Mojaddedi's *Masnavi*, reflecting reverence for the source text's sanctity. In a related postcolonial context, Farghal and Alenezi (2022) investigate the English and French translations of Ahlem Mostaghanemi's *Dhākirat al-Jasad*, revealing how ideological forces such as Orientalism and cultural hegemony shape translational manipulation and censorship. Their findings reinforce that translation is never ideologically neutral and that historical and cultural narratives can be subtly reshaped through linguistic strategy and selective equivalence.

Cognitive linguistics has begun dismantling the literalist-functional binary. Su (2023) employs topological analysis to expose the intricate contiguity operations translators perform. Bond and Maudslay (2025) and Khishigsuren et al. (2022) provide robust multilingual evidence that metonymy is significantly more universal than metaphor, suggesting greater preservability than typically achieved. Michl (2019) experimentally confirms that metonymy is perceived as far more literal than metaphor, explaining translators' conservative bias. Brdar and Brdar-Szabó (2014) document multi-tiered metonymies that partially vanish in translation, a phenomenon clearly operative in sacred texts.

Comparative religious and literary studies reinforce these insights while underscoring Islamic exceptionalism. Mikre-Sellassie (1993) and Kuczok (2009) emphasize contiguity recognition in biblical metonymy, and Choi (2016, 2020) identifies systematic types in the Gospels with striking cross-cultural continuity. Non-sacred corpora—body-part metonymy in Mahfouz (2022), Austen's euphemisms (Beizaee & Suzani, 2019), metonymic proper names (Lahiani, 2022), cinematic metonymy (Moloodi & NabaviZadeh Namazi, 2021), and Bible-to-Toba Batak translation (Sihotang, 2024)—collectively illustrate that secular translators more readily override source figurativity. Khayrullayeva and Jumayeva (2024) distinguish lexicalized from discursive metonymy, highlighting layered challenges in sacred contexts. Recent integrative overviews (Ahmad & Ghafar, 2025; Qassem,

2022) explicitly demand interdisciplinary frameworks uniting rhetoric, exegesis, and cognitive linguistics.

Despite the extensive scholarship on Quranic metonymy translation, previous studies have not effectively triangulated specific metonymy types, observable strategies, and translator biographies within a unified cognitive-equivalence framework, particularly regarding Yusuf Ali, Pickthall, and Shakir. While metaphor in the Qur'an has received sustained attention, metonymy—though more frequent and theologically sensitive—remains underexplored. Most studies focus either on rhetorical or cognitive perspectives in isolation and rarely relate findings to translator identity.

This study addresses this gap by synthesizing Conceptual Metonymy Theory and Equivalence Theory to examine how translators' ideological backgrounds shape their cognitive and strategic translation choices. By demonstrating the distinct patterns of Pickthall's convert literalism, Yusuf Ali's reformist didacticism, and Shakir's Azhar-trained pragmatism, it highlights the ideological foundations of metonymy translation and advances both translation studies and cognitive linguistics, offering insights for future renditions that balance sanctity with intelligibility.

## Methodology

*Research Design*

This study adopts a qualitative, descriptive, and comparative design that integrates cognitive linguistics and translation studies. Such a design is particularly suited to investigating how complex figurative meanings are negotiated across languages and cultures (Creswell, 2014; Duff, 2008). The descriptive component documents the precise linguistic realizations of metonymy in three landmark English translations of the Qur'an, while the comparative dimension systematically contrasts these realizations to reveal stylistic and ideological variation. The cognitive-linguistic strand, rooted in Conceptual Metonymy Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Radden & Kövecses, 1999), treats metonymy as a conceptual rather than merely ornamental phenomenon, and the translation-studies strand, informed by Equivalence Theory (Nida, 1964; Newmark, 1988), classifies the strategic choices translators make. This multi-layered approach triangulates textual, conceptual, and biographical data, thereby satisfying Creswell and Poth's (2018) criterion that rigorous qualitative research must explore meaning within its full contextual frame.

*Corpus and Data Collection*

The corpus comprises 50 Quranic verses containing unequivocal metonymic expressions. Selection was guided by classical Arabic rhetorical scholarship—which classifies metonymy under kināyah and majāz mursal—and by established inventories of Quranic figurative language (Kidwai, 2007). The Arabic source text is taken from the standard Madīnah Mushaf (King Fahd Complex edition).

The three target texts are Abdullah Yusuf Ali's *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary* (first published in 1934), Marmaduke Pickthall's *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran* (1930), and M. H. Shakir's *The Qur'an: English Translation of the Meanings*, which first appeared in print in the late 1960s (commonly dated to around 1968) and was widely reprinted in subsequent decades.

Inclusion criteria were strictly applied: the presence of at least one clear metonymic expression, representation of major thematic domains (divine attributes, social/legal relations, eschatology, ritual), and availability of unambiguous renderings in all three translations. Exclusion criteria eliminated verses dominated by metaphor, verses with disputed figurative status among major exegetes (e.g., al-Ṭabarī, al-Qurṭubī, Ibn Kathīr), and verses where Yusuf Ali's editorial commentary might obscure the base translation. The final sample of 50 verses aligns with the depth-over-breadth principle common in qualitative translation research (Baker, 1993; Olohan, 2004).

*Analytical Framework*

Analysis proceeds through the complementary lenses of Conceptual Metonymy Theory (CMT) and Equivalence Theory (ET). Under CMT, each metonymic expression is classified according to the typological framework of Radden and Kövecses (1999) and Kövecses (2002): Part-for-Whole / Whole-for-Part, Cause-for-Effect / Effect-for-Cause, Place-for-Institution/Event/People, Object/Instrument-for-User/Action, and Producer-for-Product. This classification captures the cognitive mapping operative in the source text.

Translation strategies are simultaneously categorized using Equivalence Theory (Nida, 1964; Newmark, 1988) into four primary patterns: Metonymy → Metonymy (preservation of the vehicle; formal/semantic equivalence), Metonymy → Literal/Sense rendering (replacement of vehicle with target; dynamic/functional equivalence), Metonymy → Metonymy + Explicitation (vehicle retained with added clarification, often via parenthesis or footnote), and Metonymy → Deletion or Generalization (figurative structure neutralized). The dual coding enables a precise description of both cognitive continuity/disruption and strategic orientation, following Barcelona's (2003) argument that figurative language must be analyzed as conceptual mapping rather than surface ornament.

*Data Analysis Procedures*

Analysis unfolded in four iterative stages. First, each verse was examined against classical tafsīr and balāgha sources to confirm the presence and type of metonymy. Second, metonymies were coded according to the CMT typology outlined above. Third, the three English versions were aligned and coded for equivalence strategy, with inter-coder agreement established through initial independent coding followed by discussion until consensus. Fourth, translation choices were interpreted in light of verified biographical data on each translator's religious formation, linguistic competence, and stated translation philosophy (Fakhr-Rohani, 2023; Kerwanto et al., 2025; Smith, 2009).

Data reduction, display, and conclusion-drawing followed Miles and Huberman (1994). Thematic patterns emerged inductively, while cognitive categories were applied deductively. Final thematic refinement employed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis to ensure transparency and replicability.

*Reliability, Validity, and Trustworthiness*

Reliability was enhanced through methodological triangulation (textual, cognitive, biographical) and source triangulation (multiple exegetical authorities). Validity was secured by grounding metonymy identification in orthodox tafsīr consensus, thereby preventing idiosyncratic readings. Two external experts in Arabic rhetoric and Quranic translation reviewed the initial 50-verse classification; discrepancies were resolved through deliberation, yielding 100% final agreement.

An audit trail documenting all coding decisions was maintained. Intra-coder consistency was checked by re-coding 20% of the data after a four-week interval (agreement > 95%). Trustworthiness criteria—credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability—were addressed following Creswell and Poth (2018). Researcher positionality (as a scholar trained in both cognitive linguistics and Islamic studies) was explicitly acknowledged and mitigated through systematic reference to primary exegetical sources.

*Ethical Considerations*

The study treats the Quranic text with the utmost scholarly respect, citing it accurately and avoiding theological pronouncement. All translations are public-domain works used with full attribution and without alteration. Analysis remains strictly linguistic and cognitive, never venturing into doctrinal reinterpretation. The research adheres to Chesterman's (2001) Hieronymic Oath of accuracy, clarity,

and cultural respect. No ethical clearance is required for textual analysis of public-domain religious scripture, but academic integrity has been scrupulously observed.


## Results

The present section reports the findings derived from the systematic analysis of 50 Quranic verses containing metonymic expressions, as rendered by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Marmaduke Pickthall, and Mohammed Habib Shakir. The purpose of this analysis was twofold: first, to quantify and classify translation strategies through the dual lens of Conceptual Metonymy Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Radden & Kövecses, 1999) and Equivalence Theory (Nida, 1964; Newmark, 1988); second, to demonstrate that observed strategic variation was not random but ideologically driven, systematically correlating with each translator's documented religious formation and linguistic orientation.

*Overall Rendering of Metonymic Expressions in the Three Translations*

Far from displaying a uniform approach, the 150 renderings (50 verses × 3 translators) produced a clear hierarchy of strategies. Preservation of the original metonymic vehicle occurred in 79 cases (52.7%), sense replacement in 48 (32%), and hybrid explicitation in 23 (15.3%). Table 1 lays bare the global picture.

Table 1. Overall Rendering Strategies across the Corpus (N = 150 renderings)

| Strategy | Frequency | Percentage |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Metonymy → Metonymy | 79 | 52.7% |
| Metonymy → Sense | 48 | 32.0% |
| Metonymy → Metonymy + Sense | 23 | 15.3% |

Although Table 1 confirms that preservation remained the most common choice, this apparent consensus dissolves when the data are disaggregated by translator, as Table 2 demonstrates with stark clarity.

Table 2. Rendering Strategies Distributed by Translator (N = 50 verses per translator)

| Translator | Metonymy→Metonymy | Metonymy→Sense | Metonymy→Metonymy+Sense |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yusuf Ali | 18 (36%) | 25 (50%) | 7 (14%) |
| Pickthall | 35 (70%) | 8 (16%) | 7 (14%) |
| Shakir | 26 (52%) | 15 (30%) | 9 (18%) |

The contrast could hardly be sharper: Pickthall retained the source vehicle in seven out of every ten instances, Yusuf Ali did so in barely one-third, and Shakir positioned himself decisively between the two extremes. This quantitative asymmetry already undermined any claim of translational uniformity and pointed unmistakably toward ideological causation.

*Predominant Translation Strategies Employed by Each Translator*

Having established the global pattern, the analysis next isolated the dominant strategy that characterized each translator's practice.

Pickthall's approach was overwhelmingly literalist. In 70% of verses, he preserved the metonymic vehicle intact. Divine-attribute metonymies were rendered with unwavering fidelity—يَدُ اللَّه فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ (48:10) became "the hand of Allah is above their hands"; بِيَمِينه (39:67) "in His right hand"; بِأَعْيُنِنَا (11:37) "under Our eyes". Human action and causal metonymies received identical treatment: مَا

يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا (42:30) كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ "what your right hands have earned"; أَعْصِرُ خَمْرًا (12:36) "pressing wine"; (2:275) "swallow usury". Even where euphemism or potential opacity was at stake, Pickthall refused to dilute the original contiguity.

Yusuf Ali, by contrast, exhibited a marked preference for sense rendering (50%). Wherever literal retention risked anthropomorphism or obscurity, he systematically replaced the vehicle with its conceptual target: مَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ (42:30) → "things your hands have wrought"; أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّه (2:112) → "submits his whole self"; لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ (26:84) → "honorable mention on the tongue of truth" (with heavy explicitation); فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ (4:92) → "free a believing slave". This consistent intervention reflected a deliberate cognitive re-mapping from embodied to abstract domains.

Shakir, meanwhile, emerged as the mediator: preservation dominated (52%), yet he employed sense rendering (30%) and hybrid strategies (18%) far more frequently than Pickthall. He retained divine-attribute vehicles (48:10, 39:67) but shifted to sense in many human-action and causal cases (42:30, 2:275), demonstrating a pragmatic sensitivity to both source sanctity and target intelligibility.

*Influence of Translator Background on Handling of Metonymy*

These sharply contrasting profiles did not arise in a vacuum; they mapped with extraordinary precision onto each translator's documented religious formation, linguistic competence, and ideological orientation (Table 3).

Table 3. Strategic Profile and Biographical Correlation

| Translator | Preservation Rate | Dominant Ideological Driver | Key Biographical Evidence |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pickthall | 70% | Devotional literalism and post-conversion awe | British convert; regarded Arabic as an inimitable miracle (Kerwanto et al., 2025) |
| Yusuf Ali | 36% | Reformist-didactic rationalization | Indian Muslim; Cambridge-educated; modernist agenda to make Islam intellectually palatable (Fakhr-Rohani, 2023; Kidwai, 2007) |
| Shakir | 52% | Scholarly-juridical pragmatism | Egyptian Azharī jurist; native Arabic speaker; exegetical caution (Smith, 2009) |

Pickthall's extreme literalism was the direct product of his conversion experience: he regarded any deviation from the Arabic vehicle as a betrayal of the Qur'an's linguistic sanctity (Kerwanto et al., 2025). Yusuf Ali's systematic sense rendering reflected Cambridge-educated rationalism and a reformist mission to eliminate perceived anthropomorphism for modern, often non-Muslim readers (Fakhr-Rohani, 2023; Kidwai, 2007). Shakir's balanced approach embodied traditional Azharī caution and native-speaker sensitivity to exegetical nuance (Smith, 2009). Native-language competence and institutional training thus amplified these ideological orientations.

*Patterns in Translating Different Types of Metonymy*

The analysis further revealed that the strategy was not only translator-specific but also type-specific, as Table 4 documents with exhaustive examples.

Table 4. Strategy Distribution by Metonymy Type

| Type | Verse (Arabic) | Yusuf Ali | Pickthall | Shakir | Pattern |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Part-for-Whole (Divine) | إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ (48:10) | The hand of Allah is over their hands | The hand of Allah is above their hands | The hand of Allah is above their hands | Preservation (3/3) |

| Part-for-Whole (Divine) | وَالسَّمَاوَاتُ مَطْوِيَّاتٌ بِيَمِينِه (39:67) | rolled up in His right hand | rolled in His right hand | rolled up in His right hand | Preservation (3/3) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Part-for-Whole (Human submission) | بَلَى مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّه وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ (2:112) | whoever submits his whole self to Allah | whosoever surrendereth his purpose to Allah | whoever submits himself entirely to Allah | Sense (3/3) |
| Cause-for-Effect | وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ (42:30) | because of the things your hands have wrought | What your right hands have earned | on account of what your hands have wrought | Mixed (Pickthall preserves; others → Sense) |
| Effect-for-Cause | قَالَ أَحَدُهُمَا إِنِّى أَرَانِى أَعْصِرُ خَمْرًا (12:36) | I see myself (in a dream) pressing wine | I dreamed that I was pressing wine | I saw myself pressing wine | Preservation (3/3) |
| Place-for-People | وَسْئَلِ الْقَرْيَةَ الَّتِى كُنَّا فِيهَا (12:82) | Ask in the town where we have been | Ask the township where we were | And inquire in the town in which we were | Preservation (2/3) |

Part-for-Whole metonymies involving divine attributes exhibited near-universal preservation (100% in divine cases), safeguarding orthodox contiguity. Human-submission cases triggered a unanimous sense rendering to avoid anthropomorphism. Cause-and-effect idioms produced the clearest ideological split, with Pickthall alone retaining the hand-vehicle in almost every instance.

*Effects of Translation Choices on Semantic and Theological Interpretation*

Finally, the analysis revealed how these translation choices profoundly shaped semantic accuracy, rhetorical elevation, and theological interpretation.

Pickthall's consistent preservation sustained the Quranic principle that embodied vehicles are theologically legitimate means of apprehending the transcendent (Radden & Kövecses, 1999). Yet this strategy risked reinforcing anthropomorphic imagery for non-specialist readers and occasionally sacrificed immediate intelligibility (e.g., retaining "right hand" in 39:67 without mitigation).

Yusuf Ali's systematic sense rendering enhanced semantic transparency and mitigated perceived anthropomorphism, aligning with reformist anxiety about literal readings in a post-Enlightenment context (Kövecses, 2002). However, this approach frequently eroded the Qur'an's deliberate use of embodied cognition (e.g., wajh → "whole self"; aydīkum → "things … wrought"), potentially flattening rhetorical elevation and weakening the experiential force of divine discourse.

Shakir's pragmatic mediation preserved contiguity in theologically sensitive domains (divine attributes) while allowing sense rendering where misinterpretation was likely (human-action idioms), thereby maintaining both figurative dignity and exegetical safety. This balanced approach most closely approximated classical tafsīr methodology, which routinely clarifies metonymic vehicles without eliminating them entirely.

These divergent strategies thus produced distinct theological receptions: Pickthall prioritized sanctity and source-domain fidelity; Yusuf Ali privileged rational accessibility and doctrinal caution; Shakir negotiated a middle path that respected both. The findings exposed the inescapable tension between formal fidelity and functional effect in sacred-text translation (Nida, 1964) and confirmed that translator habitus was the decisive variable shaping how Quranic metonymy travelled into English.

**Discussion**

The present study has exposed a far more complex and ideologically charged terrain of metonymic translation than the dominant narrative of unreflective literalism in English Qur'an renderings would admit. Across 150 cases, preservation of the source vehicle appeared to prevail (52.7%), yet this superficial consensus shattered under scrutiny, revealing sharp asymmetries that ranged from Pickthall's near-absolute fidelity (70%) to Yusuf Ali's decisive shift toward sense-for-sense abstraction (50%), with Shakir mediating between the two poles. These asymmetries were neither random nor merely stylistic; they mapped systematically onto translator habitus, metonymy type, and perceived theological risk. The following subsections interpret these findings in critical dialogue with existing empirical scholarship, explicitly evaluating convergences, divergences, and theoretical incompatibilities through the dual lens of Conceptual Metonymy Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Radden & Kövecses, 1999) and Equivalence Theory (Nida, 1964; Newmark, 1988).

*Diversity of Rendering Practices across Three Landmark Translations*

Whereas a substantial body of scholarship has portrayed English Qur'an translation as overwhelmingly foreignizing and source-oriented (Belarbi & Messaoudi, 2020; Khan, 2021; Abdulsattar Mutar, 2024; Muhammed, 2021; Ali & Ahmad, 2022), the present data compel a significant qualification of that claim. Pickthall's 70% preservation rate does indeed corroborate the literal foreignisation thesis: his refusal to dilute even potentially opaque vehicles mirrors the devotional literalism repeatedly documented in ḥadīth and kināyah translation. However, Yusuf Ali's mere 36% preservation rate stands in direct contradiction to this consensus, demonstrating that dynamic, receptor-focused strategies were already being implemented systematically in the 1930s, decades before functionalist scholars such as Elsayed (2025) or Hassan (2020) began lamenting their absence. This incompatibility undermines any monolithic characterization of early English Qur'an translation and suggests that previous studies, often skewed toward post-1950 or overtly sectarian renderings (e.g., Hilālī-Khān), have over-generalized a tendency that was never universal.

*Hierarchy and Distribution of Translation Strategies*

Turning to the strategies themselves, deletion was effectively non-existent, confirming the shared taboo against omission in sacred-text translation. Preservation dominated Pickthall and, to a lesser extent, Shakir, whereas sense rendering emerged as Yusuf Ali's primary technique (50%). Hybrid explicitation remained a minority option (14–18%).

These findings simultaneously support and challenge existing positions. On the one hand, Pickthall's practice aligns seamlessly with the source-oriented bias Parvaz and Afrouz (2021) identified in Persian Masnavi translation and with the conservative procedures Abdulsattar Mutar (2024) observed in contemporary ḥadīth renderings. On the other hand, Yusuf Ali's systematic abstraction lends powerful empirical backing to functionalist critiques that have long argued for the necessity of sense-for-sense procedures (Elsayed, 2025; Naseef, 2018; Abdelhakim Muhammad, 2017). The incompatibility lies in timing and scope: whereas functionalist scholars have typically presented domesticating strategies as marginal or exceptional, the present corpus reveals that one of the most influential early translators had already made them the default. This evidence substantially weakens the claim that literalism remained hegemonic throughout the first half of the twentieth century.

*Role of Translator Habitus and Ideological Orientation*

Perhaps the most decisive contribution of the study is its quantitative demonstration that strategic choice was governed first and foremost by translator habitus. Pickthall's extreme literalism reflected post-conversion reverence for Arabic inimitability (Kerwanto et al., 2025); Yusuf Ali's abstraction embodied modernist rationalization and a didactic mission to render Islam palatable to Western

readers (Kidwai, 2007; Fakhr-Rohani, 2023); Shakir's mediation derived from Azharī juridical caution and native-speaker exegetical competence (Smith, 2009).

Although earlier scholarship has acknowledged ideological influence in principle (Sherwani, 2016; Ahmad et al., 2020; Parvaz & Afrouz, 2021), it has rarely moved beyond anecdotal illustration. The present findings, by contrast, establish a near-perfect predictive correlation between documented biography and micro-level strategy, thereby transforming ideology from a speculative variable into a measurable one. This advance directly addresses the lacuna identified by recent integrative reviews (Ahmad & Ghafar, 2025; Qassem, 2022) and exposes the explanatory inadequacy of purely textual or doctrinal accounts that ignore translator agency.

*Type-Specific Patterns and Theological Sensitivity*

Strategy proved strikingly sensitive to metonymy type, producing a clear hierarchy of preservability. Divine-attribute contiguities (yad Allāh, yamīn) elicited 100% preservation, human-submission expressions triggered unanimous sense rendering, and cause-and-effect idioms generated the starkest ideological split.

This graded pattern both corroborates and significantly refines cognitive-linguistic scholarship. The exceptional resistance of divine-attribute metonymies aligns with Michl's (2019) experimental finding that metonymy is perceived as more literal than metaphor and with Brdar and Brdar-Szabó's (2014) observation that high-level contiguity chains resist shift. Yet the unanimous domestication of human-submission cases—even by Pickthall—reveals a theological override mechanism that purely cognitive models cannot account for: perceived risk of anthropomorphism trumped source-form fidelity across all three translators. Conversely, cause-and-effect idioms exposed raw ideological fault lines, with Pickthall alone defending embodied vehicles that Yusuf Ali and Shakir judged dispensable. These findings dismantle the binary literalist-functionalist framework that has dominated Quranic translation studies and replace it with a more nuanced, hierarchical model of theological-cognitive interaction.

*Consequences for Meaning, Rhetoric, and Theology*

Finally, the strategic divergence produced markedly different theological and rhetorical effects. Pickthall's preservation sustained the Quranic use of embodied contiguity as a legitimate mode of transcendent apprehension (Radden & Kövecses, 1999) but risked reinforcing anthropomorphic literalism for non-specialist readers—a danger functionalist scholars have long highlighted (Elsayed, 2025; Hassan, 2020). Yusuf Ali's systematic abstraction eliminated that risk and enhanced immediate intelligibility, yet at the cost of flattening image-schematic structure and rhetorical elevation (Kövecses, 2002)—precisely the loss Naseef (2018) and Abdelhakim Muhammad (2017) deplored in source-oriented renderings. Shakir's selective mediation, preserving contiguity where orthodoxy demanded while clarifying elsewhere, achieved the highest concurrent fidelity to semantic accuracy, figurative dignity, and exegetical safety, approximating Newmark's (1988) communicative ideal more closely than either extreme.

*Synthesis and Implications for Qur'an Translation Studies*

In conclusion, the present study decisively refutes the still-prevalent notion of uniform literalism in early English Qur'an translation. By triangulating rendering strategies, metonymy typology, and translator habitus within a unified cognitive-equivalence framework, it resolves apparent incompatibilities in the literature and reveals a far more dynamic historical reality: the 1930s already witnessed a sophisticated ideological contestation enacted at the level of embodied contiguity. Pickthall defended sanctity through formal fidelity; Yusuf Ali pursued rational accessibility through dynamic equivalence; Shakir negotiated a pragmatic synthesis rooted in classical exegesis. These findings not only fill the empirical and theoretical gap repeatedly signaled by recent overviews

(Ahmad & Ghafar, 2025; Qassem, 2022) but also demand a paradigm shift: future research must treat translator ideology and cognitive structure as inseparable determinants of sacred-text mediation, extending the present model to contemporary renderings and additional target languages if the full theological stakes of metonymic translation are to be grasped.

## Conclusion

The present study has decisively refuted the long-standing assumption that early English translations of the Qur'an uniformly privileged literal preservation of metonymic expressions. Across a rigorously constructed corpus of 50 verses and 150 renderings, preservation emerged as the majority strategy (52.7%), yet this apparent conservatism concealed profound ideological and cognitive stratification. Pickthall's extreme literalism (70% preservation) embodied post-conversion reverence for the inimitable Arabic original, Yusuf Ali's systematic sense rendering (50%) reflected a modernist commitment to rational accessibility and the elimination of perceived anthropomorphism, and Shakir's mediating profile (52% preservation, 30% sense rendering) demonstrated the pragmatic caution of traditional Azharī scholarship combined with native-speaker exegetical nuance. Strategic choices were further governed by a clear hierarchy of theological sensitivity: divine-attribute metonymies were preserved almost unanimously, human-submission expressions were unanimously domesticated to avert misreading, and cause-and-effect idioms produced the sharpest ideological cleavage. Translator habitus, rather than textual constraint alone, emerged as the decisive variable shaping how embodied conceptual mappings travelled into English.

These findings substantially advance the integration of Conceptual Metonymy Theory and Equivalence Theory in sacred-text translation studies. They confirm that metonymy is cognitively closer to literal meaning than metaphor, yet simultaneously reveal that perceived theological risk can override this proximity, forcing even the most source-oriented translator toward functional intervention. The graded preservability hierarchy that emerged offers a predictive model that transcends the exhausted literalist-functionalist dichotomy and reconciles previously incompatible positions in the literature.

Practically, the study highlights the inescapable trade-offs between sanctity, rhetorical elevation, and receptor intelligibility in Qur'an translation. Shakir's balanced approach—preserving contiguity where orthodoxy demands while clarifying elsewhere—emerges as a particularly viable model for achieving communicative equivalence without compromising doctrinal integrity. Translation trainers and publishers would therefore do well to emphasize biographical awareness and cognitive-linguistic analysis alongside traditional exegetical training.

Several limitations must nevertheless be acknowledged. The corpus, though carefully selected and grounded in classical rhetorical scholarship, is restricted to 50 verses and three translators from a narrow historical window (1930–1939). Direct evidence of translators' decision-making processes remains indirect, derived from published prefaces and secondary sources rather than private documentation. The analysis also deliberately excluded extensive paratextual material (especially Yusuf Ali's commentary), focusing instead on the base translation layer.

Future research should extend the present framework in multiple directions. Comparative studies of post-1950 translations (Abdel Haleem, Cleary, Irving, Hilālī-Khān, and others) would clarify whether the ideological spectrum observed here has narrowed or shifted under contemporary pressures. Replication in non-Indo-European target languages—Turkish, Malay, Persian, Swahili—would test the cross-linguistic robustness of the theological-sensitivity hierarchy. Experimental reader-response studies could measure actual comprehension and theological perception among diverse audiences, shifting the focus from translator intention to receptor effect. Finally, large-scale corpus analyses

employing computational tools could validate the present findings across thousands of instances while capturing rarer metonymy types that necessarily fell outside the current qualitative sample.

Ultimately, this investigation has shown that the translation of Quranic metonymy in the 1930s was not a passive act of linguistic transfer but a sophisticated site of ideological and cognitive negotiation. By illuminating how sanctity, rationality, and exegetical responsibility were contested at the level of embodied contiguity, the study not only revises our historical understanding of a formative moment in Muslim intellectual encounter with the West but also equips contemporary scholarship with more precise instruments for analyzing how revelation continues to be mediated across linguistic, cultural, and theological boundaries.

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# Film Remake as a form of Intersemiotic Translation

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## Abstract

The article approaches Hollywood remakes of foreign films as intersemiotic translation. Analysing one selected film pair—Seven Samurai (1954) / The Magnificent Seven (2016), the study employed a two-phase methodology consisting of Description-Comparison (phase 1) and Interpretation (phase 2). The first phase identifies shifts in plot structure, narrative techniques, characterisation, and setting, while the second phase interprets those identified shifts through three main lenses: economic motivations (market-driven localisation), creative reinterpretations (auteurist vision), and socio-cultural negotiations (recontextualising identity). The findings of this study reveal that plot structure represented the most common transformation category, followed by narrative technique, characterisation, and setting; thus, the remakes reflect the proliferation of strategic recalibrations by Hollywood filmmakers in pursuit of commercial and cultural resonance within American audiences. The study also indicates that remakes function not merely as adaptations but as forms of intersemiotic translation shaped by market logics, auteurial choices, and socio-cultural repositioning. It contributes to Translation Studies by illuminating the role of remakes in cultural negotiation, originality, repetition, and transnational cinematic exchange.

**Keywords:** Film remake, intersemiotic translation, plot structure, narrative techniques

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**Introduction**

Cinema acts as a medium for globalization and provides a site for cultural exchange as it allows for the passage of narratives across language, culture, and time. One example of globalization and cultural exchange between Anglophone and international audiences is Hollywood's remake of foreign films into English-speaking versions of a film. The remake is not merely a replication of the original film; it encompasses all the adaptation processes that allow for the expansion of our understanding of creativity, cultural authority, and engagement with global audiences. This article positions film remakes as acts of intersemiotic translation, with reference to Jakobson's (1959) framework, wherein narrative, visual, and cultural signs are transposed across semiotic systems to align with new socio-cultural and industrial contexts. This reframing is indicative of how remakes negotiate new industrial imperatives and audience expectations rather than simply reproducing source narratives. Remakes are commonly dismissed as derivative works in today's public discourse, and the translational dimension of the adaptation processes of remakes has not been studied in-depth in the field of Translation Studies, which has historically focused on the linguistic transfer of texts rather than on the multimodal adaptations (Gambier, 2003; Chiaro, 2009).

This study tries to address this gap by analysing one purposefully selected Hollywood remake of a foreign film, selected for its culturally significant transformation and its illustrative value for intersemiotic translation. While prior research has examined remakes' broader cultural and economic implications (Forrest & Koos, 2002; Mandiberg, 2008), few studies systematically dissect the interplay of creative, economic, and socio-cultural forces shaping specific adaptation shifts in plot structure, narrative techniques, characterisation, and setting. Adapting Perdikaki's (2016) two-phase methodology—descriptive-comparative and interpretive—this article maps these shifts and their motivations, revealing how remakes negotiate power asymmetries, often domesticating foreign narratives while revitalising stories for contemporary contexts and audiences. Despite being developed for literary-to-film adaptation, Perdikaki's framework is suitable because it focuses on functional shifts rather than medium-specific codes. By theorizing remakes as intersemiotic translations, it also contributes to the field of Translation Studies by shedding light on their role in global narrative circulation, cultural negotiation, and the politics of representation.

**Literature Review**

The idea that remakes of films can also be seen as a type of translation is becoming increasingly popular in Film and Media Studies, with scholars such as Aufderheide (1998), Wills (1998), Grindstaff (2001), Forrest and Koos (2002), and Mandiberg (2008) paving the way for considering remakes as translational acts. However, within Translation Studies, remakes remain underexplored, often shadowed by conventional audiovisual translation topics like dubbing and subtitling (Gambier, 2003; Gambier, 2004; Chiaro, 2009; Baker & Saldanha, 2008; Nemati Lafmejani & Parham, 2016). Film remakes, then, have received little attention in Translation Studies because the discipline of Translation Studies has traditionally focused on the transfer of meaning based on language (Ehteshami, 2022; Arjmandi & Ehteshami, 2025), and film adaptations have often been overlooked due to their multimedia nature. To this end, the current study contends that remakes are indeed a distinct subset of translation, defined by multimodality, corporate authorship, and adaptation norms. The film remake is a practice that dates back to the early years of filmmaking and is indicative of changing social norms, evolving technologies, and changing audience demands (Cuelenaere, 2020), serving as both cultural reinterpretations and economic strategies to capitalise on familiar narratives while minimising production risks.

**Cinematic Adaptation and Translation**

To understand remakes of films as adaptations requires a much closer examination of how adaptation relates to translation in cinema. Adaptation and translation are conceptually similar, yet they differ in some aspects. Cahir (2006), for example, pointed out that an adaptation is a way to modify a work so that it retains its core characteristics but is presented in a different cultural context, while the act of translation creates an autonomous yet interconnected entity. Applied to remakes, this framing further highlights how filmmakers translate foreign films' narrative, visual, and cultural elements into Hollywood's cinematic signification, balancing fidelity with creative autonomy.

According to Cahir (2006), with support from ideas offered by Jean-Luc Godard, all film adaptations will have an element of originality due to how each filmmaker has interpreted what they are recreating from a specific point of view. Approaching translation in this way challenges, as Cahir (2006) pointed out, the prevailing notion that source texts invariably surpass their adaptations. This perspective can be seen in film remakes because how an audience *accepts* a new film will depend on how familiar they are with the original. This resonates with the remake process, where directors prioritise specific elements (narrative coherence, aesthetic style, or emotional resonance) that stand independently while remaining tethered to their sources. For instance, when remaking foreign films, successful remakes take advantage of the visual/auditory elements inherent in a film in order to create a cohesive narrative on an aesthetic level as well as from a cultural standpoint, translating the meaning of the original film across borders (Cahir, 2006). This entire process can be viewed as a hierarchical series of creative decisions in which filmmakers balance content from the original work along with the level of accessibility for their audience and their own artistic direction, reminding us that filmmaking is an art form in and of itself. Seen in this light, the current study attempts to show how Hollywood transforms foreign films into something more than just an imitation and instead introduces a form of cultural and semiotic Translation that has taken place.

The interplay between adaptation and translation, furthermore, provides a critical framework for understanding film remakes as intersemiotic translations. In doing so, it is worth discussing how these films interact with multiple cultural, semiotic, and contextual systems. Rooted in polysystem theories (Even-Zohar, 1978), Cattrysse (as cited in Sungur & Süverdem, 2023) identifies the characteristics that both adaptation/translations share, highlighting their context-dependent, intertextual nature and goal-oriented processes. Building on this, both adaptation and translation operate within intricate systems, where the final product diverges from its source (Sungur & Süverdem, 2023).

Khutorna (2023) extends this by framing cinematic adaptations as intersemiotic translations, a fusion of word and image that renews the meanings of sources. Since this procedure is inherently innovative, it gives filmmakers an opportunity to emphasize certain narrative aspects over others and reframe them according to their own inspiration. This framework, when applied to remakes, demonstrates their potentiality of transformation in which shifts in narrative or in aesthetics are an outcome of conscious choices aiming at engaging target audiences, hence urging scholars to investigate such dynamics further.

Perdikaki (2017) further situates adaptation and translation within cultural poly-systems, influenced by patronage (Lefevere, 1982) and socio-political contexts. Remakes, like translations, are shaped by creative, industrial, and cultural forces, functioning as inter-system processes that connect cinematic traditions across borders (Hutcheon, 2012). This view positions remakes as dynamic cultural practices, negotiating narrative exchanges and external influences to produce contextually relevant texts.

**Intertextuality of Film Remake**

The varied forms that film remakes take indicate that they are not simply copies or reproductions of a previously made film, but rather a continuum within the socio-cultural framework of cinema that reflects and creates multiple meanings through the semiotic system of film. Verevis (2006) defines remakes as films derived from prior screenplays, new iterations of existing films, or works that explicitly acknowledge their source through citational practices (Horton & McDougal, 1998; Mazdon, 2000; Grindstaff, 2001). This introduces an intertextual approach that, as Stam (2000, p. 202) suggests, frames remakes as "open-ended possibilities" within cinematic discourse, where repetition is institutionalized through iterative structures (Wills, 1998). Such structures are shaped by industrial factors like copyright and canon formation, ensuring remakes' persistence as distinct entities (Altman, 1999). Verevis (2006) further posits remakes as intertextual structures stabilised by their acknowledged connection to a source, while their commercial function as *pre-sold* commodities leverages audience familiarity to mitigate financial risk (Altman, 1999; Druxman, 1975). Greenberg's (1998) typology—close, transformed, and disguised remakes—illustrates varying degrees of fidelity and acknowledgment, from faithful reproductions to uncredited reinterpretations.

Loock (2024) highlights the role of remakes in reshaping cultural memory, intertwining nostalgia with contemporary relevance, while Cuelenaere et al. (2019) highlight remakes' hybridity, speaking about how recontextualisation may omit original subtexts or reinforce stereotypes, shaping cultural identities through appropriation. Representations of gender and disability, for instance, reflect both universal and context-specific meanings, with remakes challenging or perpetuating outdated portrayals (Cuelenaere et al., 2019). Sutton's (2004) application of Freudian Nachträglichkeit further enriches this, framing audience reception as a transformative process where memories of the source reshape the remake's meaning, aligning with intermodal translation's emphasis on reconfiguration over direct transfer.

**Film Remake as Translation**

Approaching film remakes as a form of translation extends beyond linguistic transfer and embraces broader multimodal and cultural reinterpretations. This view resonates with earlier critiques of linear fidelity-based models in Translation Studies (Mousavi Razavi & Tahmasbi Boveiri, 2019) To this end, the scholarly oversight within Translation Studies marginalizes remakes, as Evans (2014) highlights, in favour of dominant audiovisual topics such as dubbing and subtitling, due to an emphasis on verbal elements over films' multifaceted nature (Forrest & Koos, 2002; Mandiberg, 2008). This ambivalence, as Braudy (1998) notes, stems from a reluctance to fully classify remakes as translations, often framing them as adaptations instead, which obscures their intersemiotic dynamics. Wehn's (2001) analysis of *Three Men and a Baby* (1987) as a transformation of *Trois hommes et un couffin* (1985) exemplifies this and advocates for a broader translation theory that integrates visual and narrative codes. Reflecting a tension in defining their translational scope, such perspectives yet hesitate to label remakes as translations outright.

Building on Pedersen's (2014) transcreation, the term can be used here to provide inspiration for a new way of looking at remaking films. This idea integrates elements of translation and adaptation, placing more importance on creating a culturally and emotionally resonant piece of work rather than simply creating a product that faithfully reproduces its source. While localization is focused on making technical changes to a film, transcreation allows the film to be remade into something that speaks to the target audience's cultural/emotional context and resonates with that audience (Pedersen, 2014). This approach is further relevant to remakes, where filmmakers balance the source's intent and innovation to suit new cultural frameworks, ensuring both communicative accuracy and emotional impact. By framing remakes in this way, the current study is indicative of

remakes' role in cross-cultural storytelling, reconfiguring narratives to bridge global audiences while maintaining a dialogue with the original text.

**Methodology**

By viewing the remake of a movie as an intersemiotic translation, the reinterpretation of foreign movies made by Hollywood, here, is accomplished through the cinematic language. This study, then, is conducted based on a two-phase methodology, adapting Perdikaki's (2016) framework for analysing literary-to-film adaptations to systematically investigate Hollywood remakes as intersemiotic translations. The study examines one chosen film pair—*Seven Samurai* (Akira Kurosawa, 1954) / *The Magnificent Seven* (Antoine Fuqua, 2016), selected for its cross-cultural relevance, reflecting Hollywood's dominance in global remaking practices.

The corpus of films consists of 1 source film and 1 remake, for a total of approximately 340 minutes of screen time. Each film was viewed multiple times, with scene-by-scene coding of shifts. All shifts were manually coded using a predetermined coding scheme based on Perdikaki (2016). To ensure coding reliability, the researchers repeatedly viewed and double-checked the films.

*Phase 1: Descriptive-Comparative Analysis*

The first phase involves a close comparative viewing of each film pair to identify adaptation shifts across four categories (Perdikaki, 2016): plot structure (the events that comprise the fictional story), narrative techniques (concerns with ordering, duration of story events and the modes through which the narrative is communicated), characterisation (depiction of characters within the narrative of a fictional story), and setting (temporal and spatial context within which the narrative of a fictional story takes place). Plot structure shifts encompass modulation (amplifying or simplifying events), modification (altering events), and mutation (adding or excising events). Narrative techniques include temporal sequence shifts (modulating duration, modifying order via analepses/prolepses, or mutating through event additions/omissions) and presentation shifts (modulating verbal/visual modes, modifying narrative delivery, or mutating stylistic devices). Characterisation shifts involve modulation (amplifying/simplifying traits), modification (dramatising, objectifying, or sensualising characters), and mutation (adding/omitting characters). Setting shifts cover modulation (amplifying/simplifying temporal/spatial elements), modification (altering ideological contexts), and mutation (introducing/eliminating locations or periods). This phase quantifies shifts to map transformation patterns, ensuring a granular analysis of how the source film is reconfigured. Table 1 provides an overview of the descriptive categories and the associated types of shifts.

Table 9. Descriptive-Comparative Categories and Shift Types

| Shift Types | Descriptive-Comparative Categories | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Plot Structure | Narrative techniques | | Characterisation | Setting | |
| | | Temporal Sequence | Presentation | | Temporal | Spatial |
| Modulation | Amplification Simplification | Duration | Narration→ Narration | Amplification Simplification | Amplification Simplification | |
| Modification | Alteration | Order | Narration→ Demonstration | Dramatisation Objectification Sensualisation | Alteration | |
| Mutation | Addition Excision | Addition Excision | | Addition Excision | Addition Excision | |

*Phase 2: Interpretive Analysis*

In the second phase of this research, the analysis examines the reasons behind the shifts that have been identified and categorizes them as creative (e.g., auteurist reinterpretation of genre conventions), economic (e.g., market-driven localisation for commercial appeal), or socio-cultural (e.g., recontextualising identity or social issues). Taking into account the literature from both Translation Studies and Film Studies (Hutcheon, 2012; Verevis, 2006; Cuelenaere et al., 2019), this phase contextualises shifts according to industry practice, audience expectations and cultural negotiation, and examines how remakes attempt to find a compromise between fidelity and innovation in order to appeal to American audiences. By utilising a combination of quantitative and qualitative information, the methodology reveals the interaction of artistic, commercial and cultural influences in relation to intersemiotic translation and consequently provides further understanding of remakes as evolving cultural artefacts.
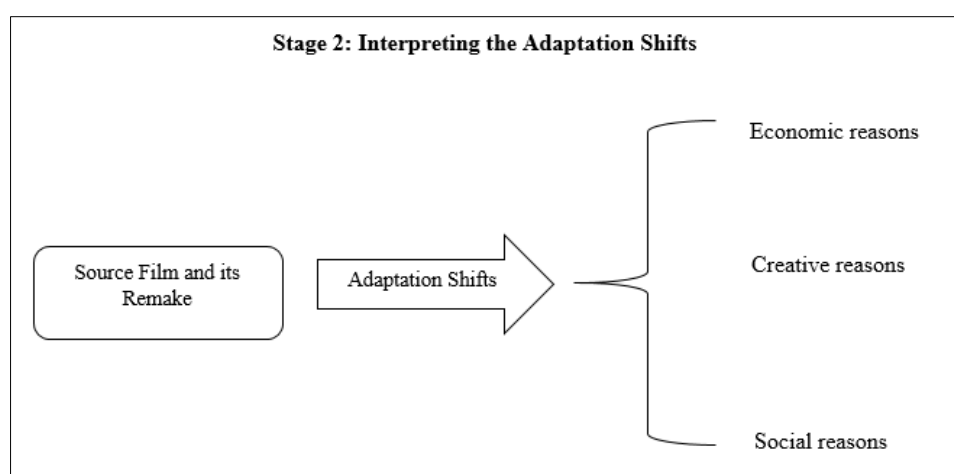


Figure 1. Second Stage of Identifying Adaptation Shifts

## Results

The analysis of *Seven Samurai* (1954) and its Hollywood remake *The Magnificent Seven* (2016) is indicative of multiple types of adaptation shifts (Figure 1) that exemplify the multilayered dynamics of intersemiotic translation. Employing Perdikaki's (2016) two-phase methodology, this section presents findings from a descriptive-comparative analysis, identifying shifts in plot structure, narrative techniques, characterisation, and setting, followed by an interpretive exploration of the creative, economic, and socio-cultural motivations behind these shifts. The results further indicate how the remake recontextualises the original's narrative so it resonates with new audiences.

## Phase 1: Descriptive-Comparative Analysis of Shifts

### 1. Plot Structure Shifts

The examination of *Seven Samurai* (1954) and *The Magnificent Seven* (2016) begins with transformations in plot structure, defined as the ordered sequence of narrative events. Three key types of shifts are identified: *modulation*, where events are intensified or diminished to alter their narrative significance; *modification*, entailing substantial alterations to events that redirect the story's arc; and *mutation*, involving the introduction or removal of events, fundamentally reshaping the narrative's framework. A total of 15 plot structure shifts were identified (five modulations, six modifications, four mutations) and examples of each shift are provided in this section.

*Mutation:* In *Seven Samurai*, there are bandits watching over the village as they prepare to attack the village later, which creates tension due to the fear the villagers have. *The Magnificent Seven*, on the other hand, starts off with Bartholomew Bogue attacking Rose Creek immediately, burning down the church and killing the people living there. This change of focus turns the story from a fight against an unknown problem to a fight against a particular enemy and changes the story from being about farmers to being about fighting against capitalism. Moreover, *Seven Samurai* concludes with Kambei's reflection on the futility of their victory, as farmers prevail. *The Magnificent Seven* ends with Emma's eulogy, valorising sacrifice with heroic redemption, shifting from existential ambiguity to affirmative resolution.

*Modification: Seven Samurai* features the village elder advising the hiring of samurai, driving the recruitment journey. In *The Magnificent Seven*, Emma Cullen, a grieving woman, persuades Chisolm, shifting the motivation from collective wisdom to individual moral agency, aligning with modern sensibilities. In *Seven Samurai*, furthermore, an early bandit probe highlights the grim stakes, with losses reinforcing futility. *The Magnificent Seven* transforms this into a decisive victory, boosting the townsfolk's confidence and aligning with action-hero conventions.

*Modulation (Simplification):* The prolonged, arduous training in *Seven Samurai* underscores the villagers' reliance on samurai. *The Magnificent Seven* condenses this into a stylised montage, focusing on solidarity and empowerment, reflecting contemporary cinematic pacing and populist themes.

*2. Narrative Techniques shifts*

The analysis of narrative techniques in *Seven Samurai* (1954) and *The Magnificent Seven* (2016) focuses on two dimensions: *temporal sequence shifts*, concerning the order and duration of events, and *presentation shifts*, examining the interplay between visual and verbal narration. Representative examples of each are listed, with additional shifts identified but not detailed.

*A. Temporal Sequence Shifts*

Total Temporal Sequence Shifts identified were seven (four modulations, two modifications, one mutation).

*Mutation (Chronological Expansion):* In *Seven Samurai*, the narrative delays the bandits' attack, building tension through the farmers' despair before the hiring quest. *The Magnificent Seven* opens with Bogue's immediate assault on Rose Creek, dramatising villainy upfront. This reorders the timeline to prioritise instant conflict, aligning with Hollywood's emphasis on early stakes (Cuelenaere et al., 2019).

*Modulation (Ellipsis): Seven Samurai* allocates extensive runtime to episodic samurai recruitment, emphasising individual philosophies. *The Magnificent Seven* compresses this into rapid introductions, using concise scenes to assemble the team, reflecting contemporary action film pacing.

*Modification (Reordering/Prolepsis):* In *Seven Samurai*, villagers' combat contributions emerge late, post-samurai losses. *The Magnificent Seven* introduces their role earlier during preparation, foregrounding empowerment to reflect democratic values through proleptic structuring.

*B. Presentation Shifts*

Total Presentation Shifts, which were identified, are seven (one modulation, five modifications, one mutation).

*Modification (Verbal to Visual Narration): Seven Samurai* conveys villagers' mistrust of samurai through dialogue (e.g., "They are all bandits at heart"). *The Magnificent Seven* expresses this via

visual cues like hesitant glances, with Emma as the primary voice, aligning with modern visual storytelling preferences.

*Modulation (Verbal Rephrasing):* The coda in *Seven Samurai* uses extended dialogue to reflect on battle costs, ending with Kambei's sombre line. *The Magnificent Seven* employs a briefer eulogy by Emma, paired with uplifting music, modulating tone for optimistic closure.

*Mutation (Introduction of Verbal-Visual Narration): Seven Samurai* implies Kambei's authority without a backstory. *The Magnificent Seven* introduces Chisolm's traumatic past through a verbal monologue with close-up visuals, a new presentational element tied to narrative mutation.

Therefore, by combining the two shift types under narrative technique, it is revealed that 14 major shifts have been occured during the remake of Seven Samurai (1954) into its 2016 American version.

*3. Characterisation Shifts*

The examination of characterisation shifts in *Seven Samurai* (1954) and *The Magnificent Seven* (2016) is indicative of how individual characters are depicted, along with their relationship with each other, in three ways: modulation (amplifying or simplifying traits), modification (substantial changes like dramatisation or objectification), and mutation (adding or removing characters). Here representative examples illustrate these shifts, with additional shifts identified but not detailed, as summarised in Table 1. In total, the analysis found that there were 11 characterisation shifts (four modulations, four modifications and three mutations).

*Modulation*

*Amplification of Chisolm's Leadership:* In *Seven Samurai*, Kambei's leadership is understated, defined by pragmatic calm and humility. *The Magnificent Seven* amplifies Chisolm into a morally driven Western lawman, his tactical prowess and personal vendetta against Bogue enhancing his narrative prominence.

*Simplification of Group Dynamics: Seven Samurai* features complex samurai interactions, with distinct tensions and personal arcs (e.g., Kikuchiyo's identity struggle). *The Magnificent Seven* streamlines these into archetypal camaraderie, reducing nuanced frictions for accessible banter.

*Modification*

*Dramatisation of Goodnight Robicheaux:* Kyūzō in *Seven Samurai* is a stoic swordsman with minimal dialogue, defined by discipline. In *The Magnificent Seven*, Goodnight is reimagined as a PTSD-afflicted sharpshooter, his psychological depth explicitly dramatised to align with modern character complexity.

*Objectification of Red Harvest:* In *Seven Samurai*, all samurai possess narrative agency tied to social roles. *The Magnificent Seven* portrays Red Harvest as a stereotypical Native warrior, his role reduced to functional skills with limited inner life.

*Mutation*

*Omission of Distinct Villagers: Seven Samurai* individualises farmers like Rikichi and Manzo, enriching emotional stakes. *The Magnificent Seven* consolidates villagers into a homogenous group, with Emma Cullen as the sole prominent voice.

*Addition of Diverse Ensemble: Seven Samurai* features a uniform Japanese samurai team. *The Magnificent Seven* introduces a multicultural ensemble (e.g., Vasquez, Red Harvest, Billy Rocks, Chisolm), reconfiguring the group to reflect contemporary diversity.

*4. Setting Shifts*

The analysis of setting shifts in *Seven Samurai* (1954) and *The Magnificent Seven* (2016) focuses on the temporal and spatial frameworks, including their socio-political and ideological contexts. Three types of shifts are identified: modulation (amplifying or simplifying temporal/spatial elements), modification (substantially altering the environment or era), and mutation (adding or removing time periods/locations). Below, representative examples illustrate these shifts, with additional shifts identified but not detailed. Total Setting Shifts verified in this remake were nine (three modulations, two modifications, four mutations).

*Modulation*

*Amplification of Capitalist Context:* In *Seven Samurai*, the 16th-century Japanese village setting subtly reflects social upheaval. *The Magnificent Seven* amplifies the late-19th-century American frontier's socio-economic context, foregrounding capitalist exploitation and land disputes through Bogue's industrialist role, making it a central ideological driver.

*Simplification of Historical Context: Seven Samurai* embeds a rich historical backdrop of civil wars and feudal hierarchies. *The Magnificent Seven* simplifies post-Civil War America's context, with references to westward expansion as peripheral texture rather than a core narrative element.

*Modification*

*Transposition to American West: Seven Samurai*'s feudal Japanese setting, with rice paddies and villages, is relocated to the mythic Rose Creek, marked by saloons and deserts, reorienting the narrative within a Western framework.

*Ideological Shift to Corporate Oppression: Seven Samurai* centres on peasant-bandit class conflict within feudal codes. *The Magnificent Seven* reframes this as townsfolk opposing capitalist tyranny, aligning with critiques of economic exploitation.

*Mutation*

*Omission of Agrarian Economy: Seven Samurai* ties the narrative to rice farming, central to the peasants' survival. *The Magnificent Seven* removes this, presenting a generic town-based livelihood without agricultural specificity.

*Addition of Mining Economy: The Magnificent Seven* introduces mining as a new economic driver, symbolising capitalist greed and motivating Bogue's aggression, absent in *Seven Samurai*.

All identified macro-level shifts across the four defined categories—plot structure, narrative techniques, characterisation, and setting—for *Seven Samurai* (1954) and *The Magnificent Seven* (2016) are consolidated in Table 2 and Figure 2 to provide a comprehensive overview of the adaptation dynamics.

Table 10. All Identified Shifts Across Original Film and its Remake

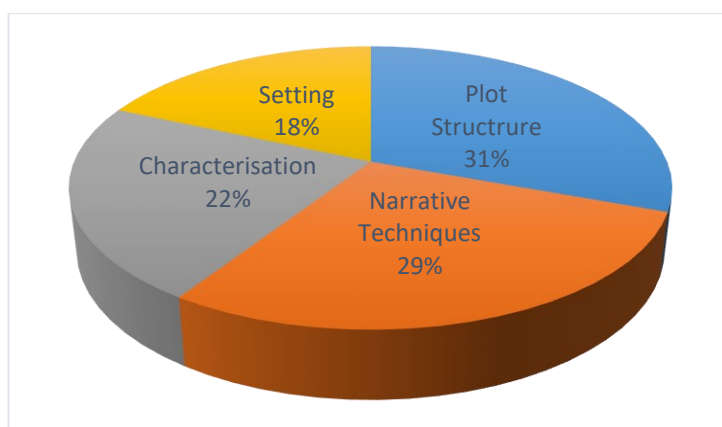| Shifts | Modulation | | Modification | Mutation | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Amplification | Simplification | Alteration | Addition | Excsion | |
| Plot Structure | 5 | | 6 | 4 | | 15 |
| Narrative Techniques | 5 | | 7 | 2 | | 14 |
| Characterisation | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 11 |
| Setting | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 9 |
| Total | 17 | | 19 | 13 | | 49 |

Figure 2. Shift Occurrences Across Original Film and its Remake

**Phase 2: Interpretive Analysis**

This phase interprets the motivations behind the identified shifts in *Seven Samurai* (1954) and *The Magnificent Seven* (2016), categorising them as creative, economic, and socio-cultural. Drawing on Perdikaki's (2016) framework, the analysis elucidates how these shifts reflect deliberate strategies to recontextualise the original narrative for contemporary audiences, balancing fidelity with innovation (Hutcheon, 2012).

*Creative Motivations:* Antoine Fuqua's remake should be considered as an attempt to preserve the ethical essence of *Seven Samurai* (centred on service and sacrifice) while reinterpreting it through a modern cinematic lens. Fuqua, revering Kurosawa's storytelling as a *masterpiece of universal resonance* (Erkara, 2016), made an effort to retain the same moral basis, yet adapting the samurai ethos into a Western framework with heightened action aesthetics. His admiration for Kurosawa's storyboard-like visual compositions inspired a blend of classical gravitas and contemporary dynamism, ensuring the remake's stylistic relevance while honouring its source (Fuqua, 2018).

*Economic Motivations:* By remaking *Seven Samurai*, a well-known film worldwide, it reduced commercial risk (Verevis, 2006). This film is marketed with actors such as Denzel Washington and Chris Pratt, which helps to attract different types of customers through these stars (Butler, 2016). The film's story is a familiar one, but told in an updated format and using visual effects creates an appealing combination that allows Hollywood studios to take advantage of their pre-existing fan bases, ensuring that the film reaches a wide audience, although critics have had mixed feelings about it (Suderman, 2016).

*Socio-Cultural Motivations:* Fuqua's casting of a multiracial ensemble—Black, Asian, Native American, Mexican, and female—against the homogeneous cast of actors that predominantly characterized the Western genre challenged the traditional homogeneity of that genre and better reflected contemporary inclusivity and historical diversity in the American frontier (Erkara, 2016). By framing the conflict as resistance against corporate exploitation, the remake transforms Kurosawa's feudal struggle into a modern allegory of justice, resonating with current socio-political concerns (Wynne, 2016). This recontextualisation aligns with evolving cultural consciousness, broadening the narrative's relevance (Cuelenaere et al., 2019).

*The Magnificent Seven* emerges as a trans-creative reinterpretation, preserving *Seven Samurai*'s moral core while adapting its form to suit modern audiences. Economically, it capitalises on star power and narrative familiarity, while socio-culturally, it redefines genre conventions through diversity and contemporary metaphors, exemplifying intersemiotic translation's dynamic interplay.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

Analyzing shifts of adaptation between the original work *Seven Samurai* (1954) and its remake *The Magnificent Seven* (2016) has provided insights into the complex process of intersemiotic translation, reconfiguring a Japanese epic into a Hollywood Western to align with new cultural, ideological, and industrial contexts. In categorising the different shifts across plot structure, narrative techniques, characterisation, and setting, this study demonstrates how the remake takes the original narrative by Kurosawa and reinterprets it in a way that appeals to modern viewers' tastes, creating a balance between maintaining elements of fidelity while also permitting room for innovation.

*Plot Structure Dynamics:* The 15 identified plot structure shifts, predominantly modifications and mutations, reflect a strategic reorientation from *Seven Samurai*'s episodic defence narrative to *The Magnificent Seven*'s spectacle-driven structure. For instance, the mutation of the opening from a delayed bandit threat to Bogue's immediate assault reframes the conflict as a moral battle against capitalist oppression, aligning with Hollywood's action-centric ethos (Verevis, 2006). Modifications, such as reordering events for dramatic effect, and modulations, like amplifying climactic battles, cater to audience expectations for heightened suspense and visual impact, underscoring the remake's commercial recalibration.

*Narrative Technique Transformations:* With 14 shifts, narrative techniques shift from Kurosawa's contemplative pacing to Fuqua's accelerated rhythm. Modulations, such as condensed training montages, and modifications, like reordered revelations, on the other hand, enhance suspense and align with Western genre conventions (Hutcheon, 2006). The mutation introducing action-heavy sequences reflects a shift towards visceral engagement, prioritising modern audience preferences over introspective depth, thus facilitating a trans-creative adaptation that bridges cultural temporalities.

*Characterisation Reconfigurations:* The 11 characterisation shifts amplify psychological complexity in the remake's heroes, such as mutating Kikuchiyo's tragic arc into Chisolm's vengeful narrative, while simplifying villagers into archetypal figures. These changes embed Western tropes of individualism, mitigating cultural dissonance by aligning characters with American ideals of heroism. The diverse ensemble's introduction further reflects a deliberate recontextualisation to address contemporary inclusivity.

*Setting Recontextualisation:* The 9 setting shifts, though fewer, carry significant ideological weight. The modulation of the Japanese village into a frontier mining town, alongside mutations like the addition of a mining economy, repositions the narrative from feudal class struggles to a critique of corporate exploitation. This geographical and ideological shift embeds frontier iconography, aligning with Hollywood's narrative traditions while reflecting Fuqua's vision for diversity-inflected storytelling.

The remake of *Seven Samurai* into *The Magnificent Seven* exemplifies intersemiotic translation, rearticulating cultural narratives through a Hollywood lens. Dominated by plot and narrative shifts, the adaptation prioritises commercial viability, leveraging the original's brand recognition while introducing multicultural elements to resonate globally (Loock, 2024). Fuqua's trans-creative approach preserves Kurosawa's moral core—service and sacrifice—while reconfiguring masculinity and ideology to reflect modern sensibilities, albeit with limited innovation in gender roles. Economically, the remake's star-driven strategy and action-oriented spectacle align with Hollywood's lower-risk model, though its moderate success highlights constraints in creative divergence (Bohnenkamp et al., 2014). Socio-culturally, it negotiates globalised cultural flows, transforming Eastern stoicism into Western individualism, affirming remakes as dynamic vehicles for cultural reinterpretation (Evans, 2014).

This study also sheds light on how remakes function as critical sites of cultural negotiation, mirroring processes of domestication and recontextualization (See also Hosseini & Mousavi Razavi, 2024) central to Translation Studies. Similar to interlingual translation, remakes selectively retain, transform, or omit elements to align with the priorities of the target audience and cultural context. In *The Magnificent Seven*, narrative shifts amplify action-oriented spectacle, characterisation reconfigures samurai into diverse Western heroes, and setting transformations recast feudal struggles as critiques of capitalist oppression, resonating with American socio-political discourses while attenuating Japanese cultural nuances. Concurrently, these adaptations adhere to Hollywood's commercial logic, balancing familiarity with innovation to ensure market appeal, akin to strategies in commercial publishing.

The remake of a film should be seen as a dynamic intersemiotic translation rather than an imitation of the source material and a continuation of its legacy. Remakes illustrate the generative potential of translation to transform meaning and provide access to audiences globally by overcoming temporal, cultural, and geographic barriers. This research extends Translation Studies by positioning remakes as a vital lens for understanding cinema's ongoing reinvention within a globalised media landscape, highlighting their role in negotiating cultural identities and industrial demands.

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