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Research Article

Empowering Teachers for the Globalized Classroom: Insights From a Critical Discourse Analysis of Translated Literature

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ABSTRACT

This study examines two Persian translations of Haruki Murakami's *Norwegian Wood* (2001) by Omrani (2019) and Ghabraei (2017), analyzing them through Farahzad's three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) model (2012). By scrutinizing the translators' choices in rendering the novel's ideological and cultural complexities, this research aims to provide valuable insights for English Language Teachers. Analyzing how translators navigate cultural nuances, address sensitive content, and convey the author's intended meaning can enhance teachers' understanding of intercultural communication and the challenges of cross-cultural interpretation. Furthermore, this study demonstrates how the analysis of translated literature can be used as a pedagogical tool to develop students' critical thinking skills, intercultural competence, and awareness of the power dynamics inherent in language and translation. The findings of this research, which reveal varying degrees of fidelity and ideological shifts in the translations, can inform the development of culturally sensitive teaching materials and classroom activities that engage students with the complexities of translated texts and their implications for understanding diverse perspectives in a globalized world.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, Farahzad's CDA Model, Ideology, Translation Criticism



1. INTRODUCTION

Translation plays a crucial role in fostering intercultural understanding, making it an invaluable tool for English Language Teaching (ELT). By exposing learners to diverse perspectives and cultural nuances, translated literature can enrich language learning and cultivate global citizenship (Aydin, 2024; Du & Chen, 2022; Zaker, 2016a). However, the translation process itself is not devoid of cultural and ideological influences, potentially impacting how learners engage with and interpret foreign texts (Amini & Lestari, 2024).

Haruki Murakami's *Norwegian Wood* (2001), a celebrated novel exploring themes of love, loss, and social taboos, exemplifies the complexities inherent in translating literary works. Its translation into Persian by Omrani (2019) and Ghabraei (2017) provides a valuable case study for examining how cultural and ideological factors shape the translation process and, consequently, its potential impact on language learners.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), with its emphasis on the interplay between language, power, and ideology, offers a valuable framework for analyzing these translations (Asadollah-Sharifi et al., 2024; Aydin, 2024; Du & Chen, 2022; Ghorbanzad, 2023; Mirza Suzani, 2024). Farahzad's three-dimensional CDA model (2012) is particularly relevant, as it considers textual, paratextual, and semiotic elements to understand the socio-cultural and ideological forces at play in translation.

By analyzing the strategies employed by Omrani and Ghabraei in translating Murakami's *Norwegian Wood* (2001), this study aims to shed light on the challenges and implications of translating culturally sensitive material. These insights can inform ELT practices by helping teachers to:

- Develop intercultural competence: By analyzing how translators navigate cultural nuances and address sensitive content, teachers can help students develop a deeper understanding of intercultural communication and the challenges of cross-cultural interpretation (Byram, 1997).
- Foster critical thinking: Examining the choices made by translators can encourage students to critically analyze texts, question assumptions, and become more aware of the power dynamics inherent in language and translation (Fairclough, 1989; Nosratinia & Zaker, 2015).
- Enhance reading comprehension: By analyzing how translations may diverge from the source text, teachers can help students develop critical reading skills and become more aware of the potential biases and interpretations that can shape their understanding of foreign texts (Baker, 1992; Nosratinia & Zaker, 2014).

This study contributes to the growing body of research on the role of translated literature in ELT, demonstrating how the analysis of translation can provide valuable insights for developing culturally sensitive teaching materials and fostering a deeper understanding of global perspectives in the classroom.



Critical Discourse Analysis and Translation

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) has emerged as a pivotal tool in analyzing the interplay between language, power, and ideology. Rooted in applied linguistics, CDA delves into the socio-political dimensions of discourse, revealing how language constructs and perpetuates power dynamics (Abu-Zaghlani, 2023). Farahzad's CDA model (2012) integrates these principles into translation studies, providing a framework for examining the ideological and cultural influences that shape translation decisions. This interdisciplinary approach underscores the translator's dual role as a linguistic mediator and a cultural agent (Farahzad, 2012).

Farahzad's CDA Model

Farahzad's CDA model (2012), inspired by Fairclough's triadic framework (1993), emphasizes three analytical dimensions: textual, paratextual, and semiotic. The textual level examines lexical choices, grammatical structures, and translation strategies such as omission, addition, and cultural equivalence. The paratextual level considers elements like prefaces, footnotes, and editorial interventions, which often serve as conduits for ideological messaging. Finally, the semiotic level explores visual and symbolic aspects, including book covers and illustrations, that influence the audience's interpretation of the text. This model has been instrumental in analyzing translations of ideologically charged works, as evidenced by studies on political memoirs (Abdi et al., 2021) and feminist literature (Shaheen et al., 2021). These studies demonstrate how CDA reveals the translators' ideological positions, shedding light on their strategies and the socio-cultural factors influencing their choices.

Translation as Ideological Practice

The concept that translation is inherently ideological has been rigorously established within the field of translation studies. Pérez-González (2012) argued that translation functions as a site of ideological negotiation, influenced by the translator's beliefs and the socio-political dynamics of the target culture. This perspective proved particularly relevant in the translation of sensitive subjects, where ideological constraints often require significant modifications to the source text. Schaffner (2010) demonstrated how ideological biases were reflected through lexical and syntactic choices, highlighting the translator's role in shaping meaning. Further, Newmark (2003) acknowledged the importance of cultural sensitivity in navigating these complex challenges, noting the delicate balance required to ensure both fidelity and cultural appropriateness in translation.

Numerous studies have examined the ideological implications of translation using CDA frameworks. Abdi et al. (2022) explored verb tense shifts in translations of political memoirs, revealing how these shifts align with the translators' ideological leanings. Similarly, Mohamadi et al. (2017) analyzed changes in sociocultural discourses in translated poetry, uncovering instances of omission and adaptation driven by ideological considerations. In the context of literary translation, Elewa (2019) investigated how Arabic quotations were ideologically framed in English newspapers, while Shaheen et al. (2021) examined the portrayal of gender identities in feminist literature. Both studies underscore the translator's role in mediating ideologies through linguistic and cultural adaptations.



CDA in the Translation of Murakami's Works

Murakami's novels, renowned for their exploration of existential themes and societal taboos, present unique challenges for translators. The translation of *Norwegian Wood* into Persian exemplifies these difficulties, as cultural and ideological differences necessitate significant interpretive decisions. Omrani (2019) and Ghabraei's (2017) translations illustrate divergent strategies in handling sensitive subjects, from implicit translation to outright omission.

Farahzad's CDA model (2012) provides a robust framework for analyzing these strategies, enabling a nuanced critique of the translators' ideological positions. By examining lexical and grammatical choices, as well as paratextual and semiotic elements, this study offers a comprehensive analysis of how ideology shapes the translation of Murakami's work (2001).

The literature highlights the critical role of CDA in uncovering the ideological underpinnings of translation. Farahzad's model (2012), with its emphasis on textual, paratextual, and semiotic dimensions, offers a versatile tool for analyzing ideological shifts in literary translation. By applying this model to the Persian translations of *Norwegian Wood*, this study aims to contribute to the broader discourse on translation and ideology, emphasizing the translator's role as an active mediator of meaning.

This research contributes to the burgeoning field of translation studies by offering a critical evaluation of how ideological considerations shape translation strategies. Employing Farahzad's CDA model (2012), it not only deconstructs the translators' approaches but also provides insights into the broader implications of ideological manipulation in cross-cultural literary translation. The primary objective of this study is to analyze the degree to which the translators' ideologies have altered the ideological framework of Murakami's *Norwegian Wood* (2001) in its Persian translations. It seeks to uncover the methods used to translate ideologically bound elements and to assess the translators' success in conveying the source text's socio-political and cultural themes. This investigation also aims to evaluate the translators' ability to navigate sensitive subjects within the constraints of the target language's cultural norms.

Accordingly, the following research question was formulated to address the objectives of the study: How has the belief system or ideology of the prototext in Murakami's *Norwegian Wood* (2001) been rendered in its Persian translations, based on Farahzad's model, across the textual, para-textual, and semiotic levels?

2. METHODOLOGY

Instrumentation

This study is grounded in Farahzad's CDA model (2012), which offers a tripartite framework for examining translation through textual, paratextual, and semiotic dimensions. The textual level focuses on linguistic elements, analyzing lexical choices, syntactic shifts, and translation strategies, such as omission, addition, or cultural adaptation that may reflect ideological influences. The paratextual level examines external components, including prefaces, footnotes, and editorials, which often convey overt or implicit ideological framing by translators or publishers. Finally, the semiotic level explores visual elements, such as book covers, typography, and design features, which contribute to shaping the audience's interpretation of the translated text. This framework ensures a systematic and multidimensional analysis, offering



critical insights into the ideological factors embedded in the process of translation.

Materials

The materials analyzed in this study include Murakami's *Norwegian Wood* (2001) as the source text (prototext) and its two Persian translations by Omrani (2019) and Ghabraei (2017) as the target texts (metatexts). These translations were selected due to their engagement with sensitive cultural and ideological themes, making them particularly relevant for exploring the dynamics of translation and ideology. The analysis focused on ideologically significant content, such as cultural sensitivities, sociopolitical references, and terms reflecting ideological tensions. Additionally, paratextual materials, such as prefaces and footnotes, along with semiotic elements, including book covers and layout designs, were incorporated to facilitate a comprehensive analysis of the translations.

Design

This study employed qualitative and descriptive methodologies to ensure a comprehensive and systematic exploration of the research question. The qualitative component focuses on in-depth textual, paratextual, and semiotic analyses based on Farahzad's CDA model (2012), enabling a critical examination of how translation strategies reflect or alter the ideological content of the source text. This interpretative analysis is complemented by a quantitative component, which categorizes and tabulates translation strategies, including omissions, substitutions, and adaptations. The quantitative analysis provides empirical data that identifies patterns and frequencies of specific strategies, contributing to a more robust understanding of the translators' approaches. By integrating qualitative and quantitative methods, this design ensures that the study combines analytical depth with empirical rigor, providing a well-rounded evaluation of the ideological shifts in the translations.

Procedure and Data Analysis

The research follows a systematic approach to data collection and analysis, ensuring alignment with the objectives and theoretical framework of the study. Initially, textual samples were purposively selected from the prototext and metatexts, prioritizing passages with clear ideological implications, such as those containing culturally sensitive terms, or sociopolitical references. The samples were examined within the framework of Farahzad's CDA model (2012).

At the textual level, the linguistic features of the selected passages were analyzed to identify translation strategies, such as omissions, additions, shifts, or adaptations, and their ideological implications. This analysis assessed how these strategies aligned with or diverged from the ideological framework of the source text.

At the paratextual level, prefaces, footnotes, and introductions provided by the translators or publishers were scrutinized to uncover explicit or implicit ideological framing. This level of analysis sought to understand how external textual components influenced the reception and interpretation of the translated works.

At the semiotic level, visual and design elements, including book covers and typographic choices, were analyzed to evaluate their role in framing the text's ideological and cultural dimensions.



Following these individual analyses, the findings were synthesized and compared across the two translations to identify patterns of divergence or convergence in translation strategies. Particular attention was given to instances of omission, manipulation, or adaptation that reflected the translators' ideological positioning. Quantitative data, presented in Table 1, complemented the qualitative findings, summarizing the frequency and distribution of translation strategies employed. This integrated analysis ensures a comprehensive understanding of how ideology is negotiated and embedded in the translations, offering critical insights into the intersection of language, culture, and power in the process of translation.

3. RESULTS

This section presents an analysis of the data extracted from the prototext and metatext, following Farahzad's CDA model (2012). The analysis was conducted across three levels: textual, paratextual, and semiotic. Data were meticulously collected and subjected to a detailed examination.

Textual Level Analysis

In the textual level analysis, English samples from Murakami's *Norwegian Wood* (2001) and its translations by Omrani (2019) and Ghobaraei (2017) were rigorously examined. Both translators exhibited significant ideological shifts, particularly in their handling of culturally sensitive content. The examination of lexical choices, grammatical structures, and translation strategies revealed a marked tendency toward omission and implicit translation to manage the explicit content in Murakami's *Norwegian Wood* (2001).

The novel's depictions of existential crises pose challenges for translators working within conservative cultural contexts, such as those in Iran. The findings illustrated that both translators modified Murakami's direct language to be more acceptable to Iranian readers. Omrani (2019), for instance, employed a subtler form of cultural adaptation, opting for softer language or indirect references instead of more explicit content. For example, where the prototext described intimate scenes, Omrani often softened the expression or omitted certain details entirely. Conversely, Ghobaraei (2017) undertook more extensive omissions, removing entire passages that contained sensitive content, thus more drastically altering the ideological message of the original text.

The inclination toward cultural adaptation was particularly evident in the treatment of sensitive content, which often faces strict societal sensitivities in Iranian culture. Both translators utilized various strategies to moderate or eliminate direct references to explicit content.

Ghobaraei's extensive use of omission can be interpreted as a response to stringent censorship laws in Iran. These omissions extended beyond explicit content to include subtler references to relationships and moral conflicts in the novel. In contrast, Omrani (2019) made fewer omissions but adapted align it with Iranian cultural expectations by substituting sensitive words with more acceptable alternatives. This practice highlights the translator's dual role as both a linguist and a cultural mediator.

Both translations also revealed a tendency to manipulate the ideological message of the source text. These manipulations often manifested through changes in tone and the reframing of



sensitive themes, such as love, identity, and personal freedom, to resonate more effectively with Iranian cultural and moral values. For instance, Omrani (2019) employed euphemistic translations for sensitive terms, substituting them with more culturally acceptable phrases. These choices reflect an ideological stance that seeks to respect the social sensibilities of the target audience while preserving the essence of the source text.

Paratextual Level Analysis

Prototext

The Norwegian wood (Murakami, 2001).

Metatext 1

جنگل نروژی (عمرانی، ۱۳۹۸).

Metatext 2

چوب نروژی (غبرایی، ۱۴۰۱).

Alteration Type: Paratextual/The Titles of Books

Sample Analysis

The original Japanese title of the novel, *Noruwei no Mori*, corresponds to the standard Japanese translation of the Beatles song "*Norwegian Wood* (This Bird Has Flown)." Within the novel, this song is frequently referenced and serves as the favorite song of the character Naoko. Notably, the Japanese word *Mori* in the title translates to "wood" in the sense of a "forest" rather than the material "wood," as referenced in the song's lyrics. This distinction is significant, as forest settings and imagery play a crucial role throughout the novel.

In light of this explanation, Ghabraei's translation of the title fails to capture the nuanced meaning of the original. Conversely, Omrani's translation more accurately conveys the intended sense of the title, preserving the connection to the novel's themes and imagery.

Semiotic Level Analysis

The analysis reveals that the book cover for the translation by Ghabraei (2017) remains identical to the original cover of Murakami's *Norwegian Wood* (2001). In contrast, the book cover for Omrani's (2019) translation exhibits noticeable censorship. Specifically, the girl's face and collar are altered and blacked out to comply with cultural sensitivities.

4. DISCUSSION

This study aimed to investigate the ideological shifts introduced in the Persian translations of Murakami's *Norwegian Wood* (2001) by Omrani (2019) and Ghabraei (2017), using Farahzad's CDA model (2012). As revealed in Table 1, both translators, while working



within different cultural and socio-political contexts, employed various strategies to manage the ideologically charged content of the source text. These strategies—such as omission, softening, and adaptation—were not merely linguistic choices but ideological interventions reflecting local cultural sensitivities and societal norms. The study underscores the complex and often ideological nature of translation, demonstrating how translators act as mediators between cultures, shaping the reception of foreign texts in accordance with the ideological climate of the target culture.

Table 1*Number and Kinds of Alterations*

Alterations	Metatext by Omrani (2019)	Metatext by Ghabraei (2017)
Denotative and Connotative Meaning	0	0
Omission	10	24
Selection of Wrong Equivalence	4	5
Explication	5	8
Inversion	0	0
Covert / Overt	5	7
Positive / Negative	4	10
Passive / Active	1	1
Shift of Agency	1	1
Reduction (Under Translation)	4	8
Expansion	1	3
Manipulation	11	15
Total Number of Alterations	46	82

At the textual level, both Omrani (2019) and Ghabraei (2017) demonstrated significant ideological shifts, especially in their handling of sensitive content. The analysis of lexical choices, grammatical structures, and translation strategies revealed a clear tendency toward omission and implicit translation in response to the explicit content in Murakami's **Norwegian Wood** (2001). The novel's frank depictions of various existential crises may present difficulties for translators working in conservative cultural contexts, such as those in Iran. Based on the findings, both translators adjusted Murakami's direct language to make it more palatable to Iranian readers. Omrani (2019), for instance, employed a subtler form of cultural adaptation, opting for softer language or indirect references in place of more explicit content. For example, where the prototext described intimate scenes, Omrani often softened the expression or omitted



certain details entirely. On the other hand, Ghabraei (2017) engaged in more significant omissions, removing entire passages that contained sensitive content, thereby altering the ideological message of the original text more drastically. This practice of omission aligns with the views expressed by Abdi et al. (2022), who note that ideological censorship often involves deleting content that contradicts the cultural norms of the target society.

The tendency toward cultural adaptation was particularly evident in the treatment of content that is often subject to strict societal sensitivities in Iranian culture. Both translators used various strategies to either tone down or eliminate direct references to explicit content. Ghabraei's more extensive use of omission can be interpreted as a response to the stringent censorship laws in Iran, which often require the removal or alteration of material considered immoral or offensive (Venuti, 2012). These omissions did not only involve explicit content but extended to subtler references to relationships and moral conflicts in the novel.

On the contrary, Omrani (2019) made fewer omissions but adapted the language to align it with Iranian cultural expectations by replacing sensitive words with more acceptable alternatives. This practice speaks to the translator's role as both a linguist and a cultural mediator, a concept echoed in the work of Schaffner (2003), who argues that translators frequently make strategic decisions to align the text with the expectations of the target culture.

Both translations also revealed a tendency to manipulate the source text's ideological message. These manipulations were often carried out through changes in tone and the reframing of sensitive themes, such as love, identity, and personal freedom, in ways that resonate with Iranian cultural and moral values. This is in line with findings by Munday (2016), who discussed the inherent ideological role of the translator in shaping the ideological content of translated texts. Omrani (2019), for instance, employed euphemistic translations for explicit terms, which were often substituted with more culturally acceptable phrases. These choices reflected an ideological stance that sought to respect the social sensibilities of the target audience while preserving the essence of the source text.

The paratextual analysis further illuminated the ideological positioning of the translators. Both Omrani (2019) and Ghabraei (2017) included prefaces in their translations, but their engagement with the novel's themes differed. Omrani's preface was relatively neutral and did not address the controversial aspects of the text directly. This may reflect a more cautious approach to the ideological tensions within the novel. Ghabraei's preface, by contrast, took a more engaged stance, attempting to frame the novel's themes within a broader socio-cultural context. This reflects his more overt engagement with the ideological content of the original text. The role of prefaces in translations has been highlighted by scholars such as Van Dijk (2015), who notes that they provide a space for translators to insert their own ideological frameworks and interpretations. In both cases, the prefaces served not only to introduce the text to readers but also to subtly guide their interpretation of the novel's controversial themes. The translators' prefaces can thus be seen as a form of ideological mediation, where the translators framed Murakami's work within an acceptable cultural and ideological context.

The semiotic analysis of the book covers also revealed ideological shifts, particularly in the visual representation of the translated texts. Ghabraei's (2017) translation retained a cover design similar to the original Japanese edition, preserving its aesthetic integrity. However, Omrani's translation featured a more culturally sensitive design, where certain elements of the



original cover, such as facial features, were obscured or altered to align with local sensitivities. This form of visual adaptation reinforces the idea that translation is not a neutral linguistic act but one that involves significant ideological manipulation. As highlighted by Fairclough (2013), semiotic elements, including visual representations, play a powerful role in framing how texts are received by the target audience. The ideological shifts in both translations are thus not confined to the linguistic level but extend to the very design and presentation of the text.

The findings of this study contribute to the broader field of translation studies by underscoring the ideological nature of the translation process. As Venuti (2012) argues, all translations are ideological in nature, shaped by the translator's decisions, which are influenced by both personal beliefs and external socio-political pressures. This study supports the notion that translation involves a continuous negotiation of power and ideology, where the translator plays a central role in shaping the ideological messages conveyed to the target audience. Omrani (2019) and Ghabraei's (2017) translations of *Norwegian Wood* illustrate this process, as both translators made decisions based on their ideological positions, as well as the constraints of the cultural context in which they were working. In addition to contributing to the study of translation, these findings also have broader implications for intercultural communication. As noted by Pérez-González (2012), translation is an act of cultural mediation that bridges the gap between different linguistic and cultural systems. However, as this study demonstrates, translation is also an act of ideological mediation, where cultural and ideological values from the source culture are adapted, omitted, or transformed in order to align with the expectations of the target culture. This mediation process reflects the broader power relations between cultures, where dominant ideologies in the target culture shape the reception of the translated text.

The study also highlights the significant role of translation in the global circulation of literature and ideas. While translations can open windows into foreign cultures and perspectives, they also carry the potential for ideological manipulation, as translators make choices about what to retain, alter, or omit based on local cultural norms. In the case of Murakami's *Norwegian Wood* (2001), the translators' decisions reflect a balancing act between staying true to the source text and adapting it to fit the target culture's expectations. These findings contribute to the ongoing discourse on translation and ideology, encouraging scholars to critically examine the power dynamics at play in the translation process.

Ultimately, this study reaffirms the importance of considering translation as a site of ideological negotiation. By analyzing both linguistic and non-linguistic elements, including the prefaces and book covers, this study sheds light on the complex ways in which translators mediate not just meaning but also ideology. The findings underscore the need for a more nuanced understanding of translation as a multifaceted, context-dependent process, where every decision—whether linguistic, cultural, or visual—reflects an ideological stance.

5. CONCLUSION

This study sought to examine the ideological shifts in the Persian translations of Murakami's *Norwegian Wood* (2001) by Omrani (2019) and Ghabraei (2017), with a particular focus on how the translators' choices reflect and mediate ideological influences. Grounded in Farahzad's CDA model (2012), the research aimed to explore the strategies employed by the translators in handling sensitive content and ideologically loaded themes in the source text.



The findings of the study highlight the ideological complexity inherent in the translation process. The analysis revealed that both Omrani (2019) and Ghabraei (2017) employed strategies of omission, softening, and cultural adaptation to navigate the explicit themes of existentialism in Norwegian Wood, often aligning the translations with the socio-cultural norms of the Iranian context. These strategies not only reshaped the linguistic content but also altered the ideological impact of the novel, potentially affecting how it would be received and interpreted by Persian-speaking readers.

These findings have significant implications for English Language Teaching (ELT). By analyzing how translators navigate cultural nuances and address sensitive content, teachers can gain valuable insights into the complexities of intercultural communication and the challenges of cross-cultural interpretation. This understanding can inform the development of culturally sensitive teaching materials and classroom activities that help students:

- **Develop intercultural competence:** By examining how translators adapt the source text to the target culture, teachers can help students understand the challenges of intercultural communication and the importance of cultural sensitivity in globalized contexts.
- **Foster critical thinking:** Analyzing the translators' choices encourages students to critically examine texts, question assumptions, and become more aware of the power dynamics inherent in language and translation.
- **Enhance reading comprehension:** By analyzing how translations may diverge from the source text, teachers can help students develop critical reading skills and become more aware of the potential biases and interpretations that can shape their understanding of foreign texts.

Furthermore, this study underscores the importance of incorporating translated literature into ELT curricula (Zaker, 2016b). By analyzing translated texts, students can gain a deeper understanding of cultural diversity, develop critical thinking skills, and enhance their intercultural communicative competence.

The study faced certain limitations, such as the exclusive reliance on Farahzad's CDA model (2012) and the focus on only two Persian translations of Norwegian Wood (2001). However, the findings contribute to the growing body of research on the role of translated literature in ELT, demonstrating how the analysis of translation can provide valuable insights for developing effective teaching materials and fostering a deeper understanding of global perspectives in the classroom.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.



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