
Cultural Elements in the English Translations of the Iranian 'Resistance' Literature: A Textual, Paratextual, and Semiotic Analysis

Mir Saeed Mousavi Razavi ^{*1}, Bahareh Allahdaneh ²

¹Faculty of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran

²Faculty of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages, Islamic Azad University, South Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran

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Abstract

The present corpus-based study addressed the strategies applied in translating the cultural elements (CEs) of the Iranian 'resistance' literature into English. The corpus comprised *Chess with the Doomsday Machine*, *Eternal Fragrance*, and *Fortune Told in Blood* translated by Sprachman, Omidvar, and Ghanoonparvar, re-spectively. The Persian books and their English translations were analyzed on three separate levels: On the textual level, CEs were identified and compared with their English equivalents. The findings indicated that the most frequently used strategy is retention. Regarding the first book, Sprachman's approach, as an English native translator, has been SL-oriented. On the semiotic level, the book cover, and on the paratextual level, Sprachman's preface, where he has introduced the characters of the story and has provided explanations on the Iran-Iraq War, have been intended to attract the TL readership. On the other hand, Omidvar and Ghanoonparvar, as Iranian translators, have had a TL orientation. On the paratextual level, Omidvar has provided information about neither the Iran-Iraq War nor the characters. Ghanoonparvar has given some information about the Iran-Iraq War and the story characters. On the semiotic level, *Eternal Fragrance* has striking differences with the source in Persian while *Fortune Told in Blood* is similar to its Persian counterpart.

Keywords: Cultural elements, Paratextual analysis, Resistance literature, Semiotic analysis, Textual analysis

INTRODUCTION

The study of translation goes hand in hand with cultural studies. Many theorists have tried to define culture. Newmark (1988, p. 94) sees culture as "the way of life and its manifestation to use a particular language as its means of expression". According to Goodenough (as cited in Nord, 1997, p. 23), "a society's culture consists of

whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members". This definition clearly stresses the social, collective nature of culture as well as its normative function.

The role of the translation has become increasingly important in today's world. Through translation, different communities enjoy others' experiences, knowledge, technical-cultural achievements, etc. However, as there are differences be-

*Corresponding Author's Email:
s.mousavi@atu.ac.ir

tween cultures, finding equivalents for CEs is one of the main challenges for translators, particularly when they have to translate religious CEs. In Iran, one of the important sub-cultures is “the Resistance Culture” which is full of religious concepts since it has been influenced by the Islamic Revolution and Holy Defense.

Replete with religious and ideological concepts, the Iranian ‘Resistance’ Literature depicts an ideological stance towards the eight-year imposed war. The term *Defaye- Moghaddas* (Holy Defense) denotes the sacrifices and bravery of Iranian troops and people. After the war, some publishers such as *Soureh Mehr*, *Fatehan*, and *Sarir* decided to translate certain works in this genre into other languages including Arabic, French, and English. This meant that the translators were faced with the difficulty of transferring Iranian values and beliefs into the receiving cultures. From the point of view of research in translation studies, it is important to know how such culture-bound concepts have been dealt with by the translators.

This can have implications for both translation studies academic circles and the market. Translation trainers as well as translation trainees can benefit from the results of such investigations. It can help trainers to incorporate into their syllabus sections related to translation of cultural elements. The trainees can develop a better insight as to the nature of cultural elements in this genre as well as the strategies which can be utilized for an effective rendering of such elements.

Apart from the pedagogical implications, the professional market can also benefit from the findings of such research projects. Awareness and sensitivity regarding the importance of the way cultural elements are dealt with can be raised with publishers wishing to undertake the translation of books in this genre.

The present study was an attempt to provide reliable, corpus-driven answers to the following questions:

- *What strategies have been applied in translating the cultural elements of the Iranian ‘resistance’ literature into Eng-*

lish on the textual, paratextual, and semiotic levels?

- *Is there any difference in this regard between source-community-based translators and target-community-based translators?*

Previous Studies

Many researchers have focused on the relation between culture and translation and have investigated how CSIs or CEs have been handled in translations from English into Persian and vice versa. For instance, Eshtaghi (2015) in her master’s thesis used Newmark’s (1998), Delabastita’s (1993), and Farahzad’s (2012) Models to investigate how the English translator had dealt with culture specific items (CSIs). Her corpus consisted of three books translated from Persian into English. She concluded that the strategy of substitution had the highest frequency among all strategies. In her study titled “Translation of CSIs in Sadi’s *Bustan* by Native and Non-native Translators”, Rasuli (2010) came to the conclusion that both native and non-native translators had resorted to ‘notes’. The main aim of the translators was to offer additional information for TL readers so that they could grasp the specific concepts of the source culture. In another study titled “Strategies for Translation of Cultural Items in Children’s Literature: A Case Study of Mark Twain’s *the Prince and the Pauper*”, Bahmani (2011) argued that the translator had transferred the cultural concepts through acceptable norms and conditions of their own (the target) community. In another research titled “Culture Specific Items in Translation: The Case of Chardin’s *Travelogue*”, Hassani (2010) studied the cultural items and concluded that the translator had used domesticating strategies more frequently than foreignizing strategies.

As one might guess, the question of culture-bound items in translation does not seem to lose its attraction for translation studies researchers and there seems to be a growing interest in this area. The difference between our study and the previous ones, however, lies in the fact that none

of the previous studies focused specifically on the translation of resistance literature from Persian into English. Therefore, it remains to be tested whether cultural items, which have a vital importance in this subgenre, are treated differently by translators in comparison with other genres. In what follows, certain concepts as well as theoretical considerations relevant to the topic at hand will be put forth.

Cultural Elements (CEs)

Concerning CSIs or CEs, Aixela (1996, p. 56) believes they “are usually expressed in a text by means of objects and systems of classification and measurement whose use is restricted to the source culture or by means of transcription of options and the description of habit equally alien to the receiving culture.” Under the same discussion, he asserts that the main difficulty in analyzing CSIs lies in the difficulty of defining strictly cultural components as opposed to linguistic or pragmatic ones and it is due to the fact that in a language everything is culturally produced, beginning with the language itself.

Aixela (1996) points to a common tendency to identify CSIs with those items especially linked to the most arbitrary area of each linguistic system – its local institutions, historical figures, place names, personal names, etc. which will normally present a translation problem in other languages. As Aixela notes, “CSIs are linguistic items that cause problems for translation due to differences in cultural understanding”. They include: 1. Proper Nouns, 2. Objects, 3. Customs, 4. Institutions, and 5. Expressions and concepts embodied in the source text that do not exist in the culture of the target language readership or are perceived differently.

Aixela (1996) further defines CSIs as: “Those textually actualized items whose function and connotations in a source text involve a translation problem in their transference to a target text, whenever this problem is a product of the nonexistence of the referred item or of its different intertextual status in the cultural system of the readers of the target text” (p. 58).

‘Resistance’ Literature

The word ‘Resistance’ denotes defense against foreign or domestic enemies. The term ‘Resistance Literature’ is a word-for-word translation of ‘*Adab-al-Moghavemah*’ in Arabic. Sangari (2001) explains:

‘Resistance’ Literature is formed under conditions such as repression, domestic despotism, absence of individual and social freedom, lawlessness, and anarchy against bases of power, violence, and national and individual’s interests. As a result, the contents of these works are domestic cruelty or external invasion in all the political, cultural, economic, social areas, and resistance against anti-freedom movements. This concept that related to imposed war which began only 19 months after Islamic Revolution in Iran and finished by acceptance of resolution 598 in 1987 created strong cultural current in the fields of poems, stories, dramas, and innovative experiences among its extensive cultural networks. It is necessary to study, analyze, express, criticize, and reproduce this great event in every aspect”. (p. 9)

Scholars have proposed various descriptions of ‘*Resistance Literature*’. In different countries, there is a part in the literature which deals with situations in which resistance, sacrifices, and fightings have been shaped by people during time.

Kakae (2001) believes the content of resistance literature can be stated in three areas: 1) justification of rightfulness, 2) invitation to resistance, and 3) description of society. He continues: “Therefore, what is presented in these studies like poems and proses is known as Resistance Literature, which is a type of national and tribal sympathy. Put simply, poems and proses whose main content is to invite people to fight and resist against aggressors are known as ‘Resistance’ literature” (p. 9).

Resistance Literature in Iran

Iran's history is full of political fighting for freedom and defending the country against foreign invasions. Therefore, experts have divided the resistance literature into different eras. For example, Basiri (2009, p. 3) suggested the following historical periods:

1. The Period of domestic movements after the advent of Islam
2. The Period of domestic insurgency, protests, civil wars, and foreign attacks such as Mongolia and *Teimur's* attack to Iran and the emergence of *Sarbedaran Movement*
3. The Safavid age and Portuguese attack to southern islands
4. The Iran-Russia War from *Fathali Shah* to the Constitutional Movement
5. The Constitutional Movement to the Islamic Revolution
6. The Islamic Revolution
7. The eight-year Holy Defense (the Iran-Iraq War)

Literature of the eight-year Holy Defense in Iran

Since Iranian people believe that the Iraqi *Bathist* army imposed the war on their country in 1980 and that war is not acceptable according to religious and national teachings, they chose the term 'Holy Defense' for their eight-year fight against the Iraqi *Bathist* military attack.

The resistance literature should be distinguished from 'war' literature. The latter "focuses on works which directly point to the war issues like combatants, events and scenes of war, war equipment, maps, techniques, and works which indirectly point to war issues such as immigration, bombardment of cities, and combatants' families" (Kosari, 1998, p. 113). Some experts claim that this kind of literature is typically meant to criticize war.

Sangari (2011) has presented the following reasons for choosing the term 'Holy Defense' for the Iran-Iraq War: 1) The Iraqi army invaded Iranian territories and Iran did not start the war, 2)

This defense is based on Islamic beliefs, especially the Shia school.

All the symbols and elements of this defense were of a religious nature; choosing religious names and codes for operations, performing special religious rituals at the nights before operations, using religious banners and headbands, and martyrs' wills are but a few examples.

Sangari (2011) divides the eight-year imposed war resistance literature into two periods: 1) The first consisting of all literary works that have been created during the eight years of war; 2) The second comprising works created from the end of the eight-year war up to now.

Strategies

Different scholars have analyzed the strategies and procedures involved in the translation of CEs or CSIs, suggesting various classifications of such strategies. One of the pioneers in this field was Newmark (1988). He suggests several procedures for translating CEs or CSIs, namely "transference, naturalization, cultural equivalence, functional equivalence, descriptive equivalence, synonymy, through-translation, shift or transposition, modulation, recognized translation, translation label, compensation, componential analysis, reduction and expansion, paraphrase, couplet, and notes" (1988, pp. 81-93).

Pedersen's Strategies

There are different translation strategies which have been presented by different scholars. In the present study, researchers used Pedersen's framework to analyze the translation of CEs. Pedersen (2005) employed the word "rendering" instead of "translating" and the term Extra Linguistic Culture-bound Reference (ECR) instead of CSIs. According to Pedersen, culture-bound terms may be intralinguistic and extralinguistic culture-bound references. Based on Pedersen's statement, strategies for rendering extralinguistic CSIs are SL oriented and TL oriented (p. 3).

SL oriented strategy consists of three subcategories:

- a. Retention: An item from ST can enter the TT. The culture-bound term is usually distinguished from other parts of the text through the use of symbols like quotation marks and italics.
- b. Specification: It means that the translator does not translate CSI and leaves it in its untranslated form, but s/he adds some extra information in the TT that does not exist in the ST, thus making the target CSI more specific than the CSI of the ST. This is done through Explicitation or Addition.
- c. Direct translation: In this strategy, the semantic load of the CSI of the ST does not change and nothing is added, or subtracted. This strategy has two subgroups: calque which is the result of literal translation, and shifted direct translation which refers to those terms that are common in target culture and are less SL oriented.

Pedersen (2005) suggests three subcategories for TL oriented strategies:

- a. Generalization: This involves replacing a CSI referring to something specific by something more general. Typically, this involves hyponymy.
- b. Substitution: It is the removal of the CSIs of the SL and replacing them with something else, either a different term or some sort of paraphrase, which does not necessarily involve a cultural term. This strategy consists of two subgroups: cultural substitution and paraphrase.
- c. Omission: It means replacing the ST with nothing. Of course, what is obvious is that this strategy should be the last choice of the translator if we believe that a good translator should be faithful to the original text.

Also, the other strategy offered by Pedersen is Official Equivalent. "The strategy of using an Official Equivalent is different in kind from the other strategies, in that the process is bureaucratic rather than linguistic. The pivotal point about Official Equivalents is that when one exists, it is highly unlikely that you would have a translation

crisis point, as there is a pre-fabricated solution to the problem" (Pedersen, 2005, p. 3).

METHODS

The parallel corpus used in this study contained three Persian novels (STs) along with their English translations.

Persian Books

هدازدمحا ح، (1184). جنرطش اب نیشام، تمايق نارعت، لوا: تاراشتتا هروس رهم 1.

1. [Ahmadzadeh, H. (1384). *Shatranj ba mashine ghiamat, Chape avval, Tehran: Entesharate Soureya Mehr*]

2. یزمرهمار، م، (1181). هینشکی، رخآ پاچ، موس نارعت : تاراشتتا هروس رهم

2. [Ramhormozi, M. (1386). *Yekshanbeye akhar, Chape sevvom, Tehran: Entesharate Soureya Mehr*]

تاراشتتا بنایدق 1. ناگدازرافغ، د، (1131). لاف نوخ، پاچ، لوا نارعت :

3. [Ghaffarzadegan, D. (1375). *Fale khoon, Chape avval, Tehran: Entesharate Ghadiani*]

English Books

1. Sprachman, P, (2009). Chees with The Doomsday Machine (the translation of تمايق): Soureh Mehr Publishing House
2. Omidvar, F, (2014). Eternal Fragrance (the translation of رخآ هینشکی): Sarir Publisher
3. Ghaffarzadegan, D, (2009). Fortune Told in Blood (the translation of نوخ لاف): SourehMehrpublishing House
4. For ease of reporting, these books will be referred to as B1, B2, and B3, respectively. The analysis of the CEs was conducted on three levels: textual, paratextual, and semiotic.

Textual Analysis

The data was collected through studying three Persian books and finding cultural elements according to Aixela's (1996) definition and categorization. A total of 134 CEs was found and extracted from the whole corpus. Table 1 presents the details.

Table1
CEs in the whole corpus

Books	Number of CEs
B1 (Chess with the Doomsday Machine)	56
B2 (Eternal Fragrance)	72
B3 (Fortune Told in the Blood)	6
Total	134

Afterwards, the three translations were studied to find the English equivalent for each CE. The Persian CEs were then aligned and tabulated for comparison with their English equivalents. The translational relationships were investigated according to Pedersen's (2005) strategies. The textual analysis was carried out to determine the frequency of each strategy and the most frequently used strategy. As a result, researchers could determine which translations were SL oriented and which ones TL oriented on the level of text.

Paratextual Analysis

On the paratextual level, linguistic features, prefaces, and epilogues were analyzed and discussed. Linguistic features are book titles,

authors, and translators' names, etc. After that, the translators' prefaces and epilogues were investigated.

Semiotic Analysis

For the semiotic analysis, the book covers, the pictures inside the books, colors, logos and all other semiotic features were taken into consideration in the whole corpus. This helped identify how the semiotic CEs had been dealt with in the translations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The 134 CEs extracted from the corpus were classified in accordance with Aixela's (1996) categorization. They are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Classification of CEs

Books	Proper Nouns	Objects	Customs	Institution	High Difficult Items
B1	10	2	13	5	24
B2	16	3	21	17	17
B3	0	0	4	0	2
Total	26	5	38	22	43

Textual Level

Pedersen's (2005) taxonomy was utilized to analyze the translational strategies undertaken to render the Persian CEs into English. A total of 143 strategies were identified. Retention, Specification

(Explicitation, Addition), Direct Translation (Calque, Shifted Translation), Generalization, Substitution (Cultural Substitution, Paraphrase), and Omission are the strategies proposed by Pedersen.

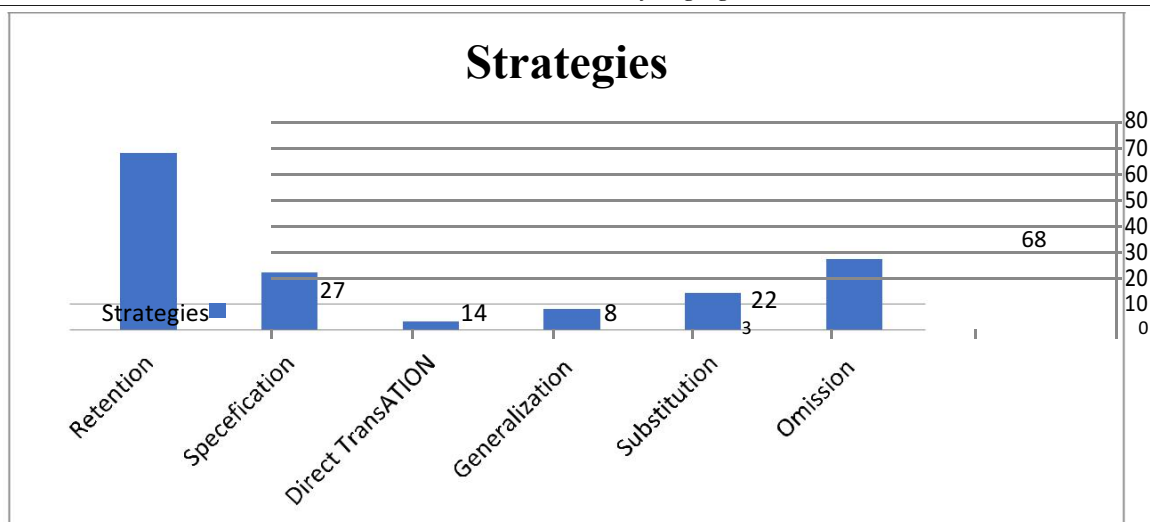


Figure 1. Translation Strategies

and 5 below, some examples of the CEs found in the corpus (B1, B2, and B3, respectively) will be presented and discussed.

As Figure 1 shows, the most and least common strategies were retention and direct translation with 68 and 3 occurrences respectively. In Tables 3, 4,

Table3
CEs in B1

Strategy	Target Text	Source Text	No.
Retention	"You fell asleep up there again, and time for morning <u>prayer is over!</u> " With	باز تو این بال <u>خواب رفتی؟</u> نماز صبحت <u>اقضا شد!</u>	1
Explication	only my feet and legs washed for <u>prayer</u> , I walked toward the blocks.	مسح پاها را کشیده به طرف بلوک ها رفتم	2
Calque	Inside the room the sandbags were piled so high that, though the lamp was lit, I had to grope around in the dark to <u>find my prayer mat</u> .	با آن که فانوس روشن بود؛ اماتوی اتاق گونیکار شده، کورمال کورمال جانمزم را پیدا کردم	3
Explication	As <u>soon as I stood up in prayer</u> , I sensed someone behind me ...	در حین قنوت بودم که احساس کردم یک نفر پشت سرم بی حرکت ایستاده،	4
Explication	Afterwards <u>while I was bent down prostrate</u> , I thought I heard footsteps....	و بعد در رکوع، صدای پاهایش	5
Retention	<u>the mosque</u> and church were attached to each other like that. Why wasn't there any space between them? And	این مسجد و کلیسای به هم چسبیده یعنی: "چی؟ چرا اینها این قدر نزدیک به هم ساخته ن؟"	6
Generalization	we headed for his home so he could tell Javad's mother about their son's <u>death</u> .	و به سمت خانه راه افتادیم تا با قاسم و من، خبر شهادت جواد را به مادرش بدهیم	7
Omission	"Sorry! But I salaamed as you were <u>opening the door</u> .	وقتی در رو باز میکردید؛ او هلا ببخشید من سالم کردم	8
Substitution	I followed automatically. We entered <u>the church</u> .	بی اختیار به دنبالش وارد صحن نمازخانه شدم 121	9

been used. Retention is the most SL-oriented strategy.

[*Mashepaha*], is one مسح پاها The second item, of the actions of Muslim's ablution in which a person should touch the top of his/her feet with

As shown in Table 3, in the translation of item 1, the translator has used the strategy of retention. The word نماز [*Namaz*] was translated to 'prayer'. Also, in the translation of item 6 the strategy of retention (the word 'mosque') has

their wet hand. For the translation of this item, the translator has used the strategy of explicitation and made it clear for TT readers with more explanation. According to Pedersen (2005, p. 3), "Explicitation could be seen as any strategy involving the expansion of the text, or spelling out anything that is implicit in the source text." Explicitation is used for item 5 for the word *عوکر* [Roku], which is one of the religious obligations of Muslims' prayer. The person who wants to perform *عوکر* [Roku] should bend down after standing up right. Here the translator has decided to explicate the concept.

The third item, *زامناج* [Janamaz], has been translated to prayer mat. Muslims traditionally use something like a rug for praying on. The translator has used the strategy of calque which is a type of direct translation.

The translator has used the strategy of paraphrase for item 4. He has used 'As soon as I stood up in prayer' for *مدوب تونق نبحرد* [Dar hine ghonut budam]. In fact, the action of *تونق* [Ghonut] in the prayer is when the person stands up with their hands raised up in front of the face while the palms of the hands are faced upwards. This strategy involves rephrasing the source CE, either through reduction to sense, or by complete-

ly removing all trace of the cultural term and instead using a paraphrase that fits the context.

The other strategy which is TL-oriented is generalization. The translator has used generalization for item 7, *تداهش* [Shahadat], translated as 'death'. This strategy involves replacing a culture-bound term referring to something specific by something more general. The proper equivalent could be martyrdom; the translator has used a more general word. *تداهش* [Shahadat] or martyrdom, in Islam, means to be killed for the cause of God. There are verses in the Quran referring to this concept and the martyrs' position in Heaven. "Indeed, Allah has bought from the faithful their souls and their possessions for paradise to be theirs: they fight in the way of Allah, kill, and are killed. A promise binding upon Him in the Torah and the Evangel and the Quran. And who is truer to his promise than Allah? So, rejoice in the bar-gain you have made with him, and that is the great success" (Quran, Tt-Taube, Surah 9, Ayah 111).

So Iranian people believe that the soldiers who were killed during the Islamic Revolution years (1970s) and the imposed war (1980-1988) are martyred because they defended their country, people, and religion.

Table 4
CEs in B2

NO.	Source Text	Target Text	Strategy
1	بلاقناز ادعب بپهورگاب هبلط هک مقرا یارب تاغلبیت هب نادابا... ...	I had been acquainted with <u>some of the students, studying in the seminary.</u>	Explicitation
2	رفس هب مق هشیمه یارب ام مه لاف دوب مه اشامت....	Our journey to <u>Qom</u> had always been fun for us.	Retention
3	زا نان کگنس و بابک بلاغز نیمزریز یاه کیزن مرح هک شیاهاوید اب یشاک دیفس هدیشوپ هندش دوب.	The sweet memories of <u>eating Sangak Nans with Kebabs</u> in the underground restaurant near Harm Hazrat Masuma, the holy shrine of Qom (s.a).	Retention
4	لت دیرخ یتاغوس یارب هچب یاه لحم هک لاومعم همسجم یاه یلافس حیستو رطعو دوب.	Buying gifts for friends and neighbors are still vivid in my memory. The walls in those restaurants were covered with white tiles.	Omission
5	بیاوم هک مرحمان وا ار هدینن دوب و هب شیاهلپ مسق دادیم هک مشچ مرحمان هب نا هداتقین دوب	Whenever she wanted to ask something from God, she would swear him by her hair and legs that she said Almighty Allah was aware they had never been exposed to <u>strangers.</u>	Generalization
6	لاومعم نیب یاهورین بزح بهلا و هورگ یاه یسایس بیچ نیققانمو هک زونه هب تداهجم ترهش، دنتشاد بریگرده یاه نت هب نت خر دادیم.	I joined Hizbullah to argue with communists and so called Mojahids whom people called <u>Monafiqs (hypocrites).</u>	Retention and Addition

In the first item in Table 4, the translator has decided to use the strategy of explication to clarify the word *هبلط* [Talabeh]. In Iran, *هبلط* [Talabeh] is a student at the seminary. After passing several grades, this person will become a clergyman.

In the second item, the strategy of retention has been used to translate *مق* [Ghom] to 'Qom'. Names of cities are culture-specific. Therefore, translators often use the strategy of retention for locations' names. Also, in the third item, the translator has utilized this kind of strategy to translate *یلاغزابکوکگنسنان* [Nane sangak va kababe zoghali] into 'Sangak Nans with Kebabs'. In Iran, 'Sangak', is one of the traditional types of bread

with wheat flour which is usually eaten with Kebab. In the fourth item, the word *حییست* [Tasbih] has been omitted. In item 5, a more general word 'stranger' has been used for the word *مرحمان* [Namahram].

In the sixth item, both addition and retention have been used. The translator has used the word hypocrisy in parenthesis to explain *نیقفانم* [Mo-nafeghin]. *نیقفانم* [Monafeghin] refers to a terrorist group consisting of Iranians who act against the I.R.I. officials and commit terrorist attacks against revolutionary people. They cooperated with the *Bathist* regime during the Iran-Iraq War.

Table 5
CEs in Book 3

No.	Source Text	Target Text	Strategy
1	زونه مرواب دوشیمن ود ات هجب؛ دندوب هذزیس هدرهچ هلاس دندبرس ور یناشیپی ناش دوب.	They were two kids. Thirteen or fourteen years old. They had <u>headbands</u> on their foreheads.	Retention
2	"گنجوت اولح شخپ دندکیمن".	"Wars are not all <u>peaches and cream</u> ."	Substitution
3	تفگ: "تین مدرک".	He said: " <u>I made my wish</u> ."	Retention
4	لثم قرو یارب ناوج یاه هزات هب نارود، هدیسر و یلوک یاه فک نیب یارب هلاخ کنز اه و تخب هتشرگرب اه.	Like the card playing of young people who have just come into some money, and <u>gypsy palm readers, old maids, and those whose luck has turned</u> .	Explicitation
5	زا نیا ریاشع ره هچ بیوگب یمرب دیأ زا نیا لام اهراد.	These <u>tribal people</u> are capable of anything. These herdsmen.	Retention
6	یتقو هلاسوگ هب ایند، دمأ دندبچیب وت هیبچ ناشیاه و رد دندفر.	When the calf was born, they wrapped in their <u>shawls</u> and took off.	Substitution

Table 5 shows that the strategy of retention has been used for item 1. In the sixth item, *هیبچ* [Chapieh] translated to 'shawl', is an instance of substitution. *هیبچ* [Chapieh] is a kind of cloth that people use to protect their face and head from sunshine. But, during the Holy Defense, *هیبچ* [Chapieh] was the symbol of *Basiji* combatants who participated voluntarily in the war to defend their country.

Paratextual Level

Chess with the Domsday Machine

The translator, a celebrated U.S. expert on the Persian language and a professor at Rutgers University in America, first presents some facts about the Iran-Iraq War. Secondly, he introduces

the characters involved in the story to provide the readers with a broad picture. This kind of information helps the readers identify with the hero and other characters when reading the story. The Persian book *شترانج با ماشین گیات* [Shatranj ba mashine ghiamat] has an appendix containing some letters related to the Iraqi headquarters. The letters were found during the eight-year-war. The translator has also decided to translate this part of the book, which is not part of the story.

Eternal Fragrance

In the beginning of this book, the translator, Farahnaz Omidvar, shows the heroine's struggles as a rescuer in real war situations in the city of *Abadan* under siege. She helped other people

while she had been separated from her own family. But, Omidvar has not introduced the characters before the beginning of the story. She has translated the caption of the pictures and documents at the end of the Persian book. Therefore, these pictures and documents appear at the end of the translation as well.

Fortune Told in Blood

Ghanoonparvar, who is a professor at Texas University and teaches Persian Language and Literature, has translated the book *لاف نوخ* [Fale khood]. In his preface, he first gives some explanations about the Iran-Iraq War. After that, he criticizes Ghaffarzadegan's work. Ghanoonparvar tries to present information about the Iran-Iraq War and introduces the author of the story and his literary style. A translation of a newspaper interview with the author appears at the conclusion of the translation.

Semiotic Level

تمايق نيشام اب جنرطش and its Translation, *Chess with the Doomsday Machine*

In this part, book covers of تمايق نيشام اب جنرطش [Shatranj ba mashine ghiamat] and its translation, *Chess with the Doomsday Machine*, are compared.

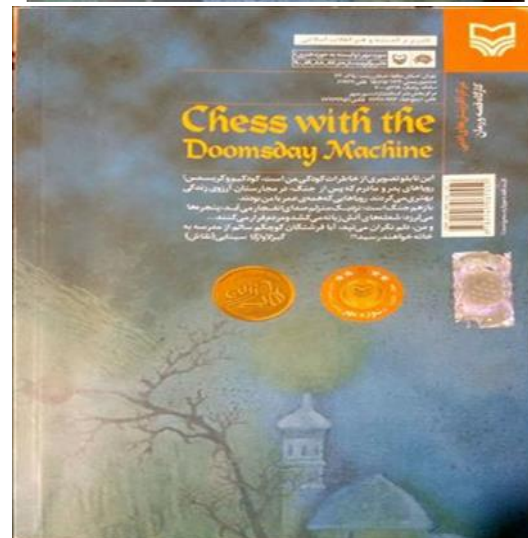


Figure2. Cover pages of تمايق نيشام اب جنرطش

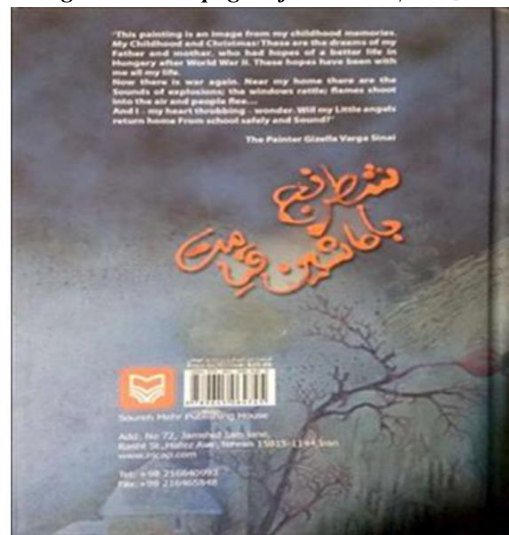
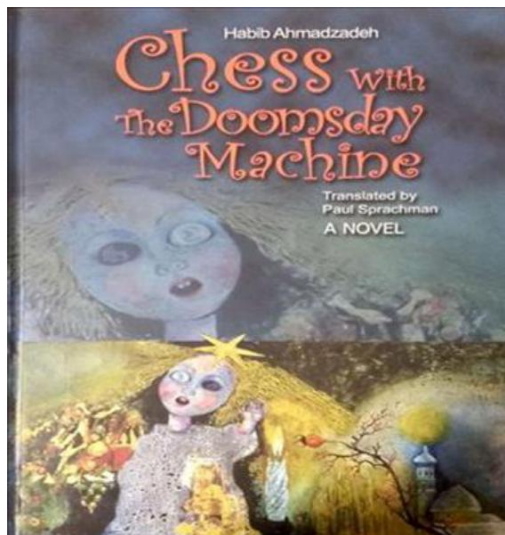


Figure 3. Cover pages of *Chess with the Doomsday Machine*

As Figures 2 and 3 show, the translated book is like the Persian book both in terms of the front and back cover. It seems the illustrator has tried to keep the same concept of the Persian book especially by repeating Gizella Varga Sinai's statement. Gizella Varga Sinai wanted to depict war-stricken children who are the main victims of every war. The title of the translation, *Chess with the Doomsday Machine*, is a literal translation of the Persian title اب تمايق نيشام اب جنرطش [Shatranj ba mashine ghiamat]. Paul Sprachman seems to

have tried to carry out a word-for-word translation for the title in order to attract the target readers' attention since the word 'Doomsday Machine' sounds ambiguous at first sight. In fact, the translator has used the strategy of retention for translation of the title as well.

رخآ هبنشكى and its Translation, Eternal Fragrance

In this part, book covers of رخآ هبنشكى and its translation, *Eternal Fragrance*, are compared.

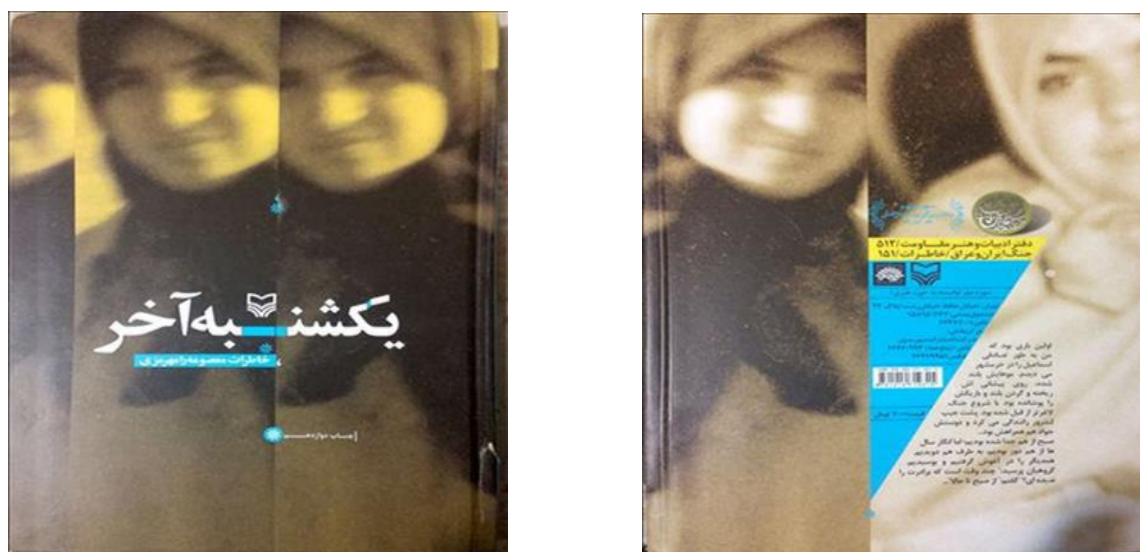


Figure 4. Cover pages of رخآ هبنشكى

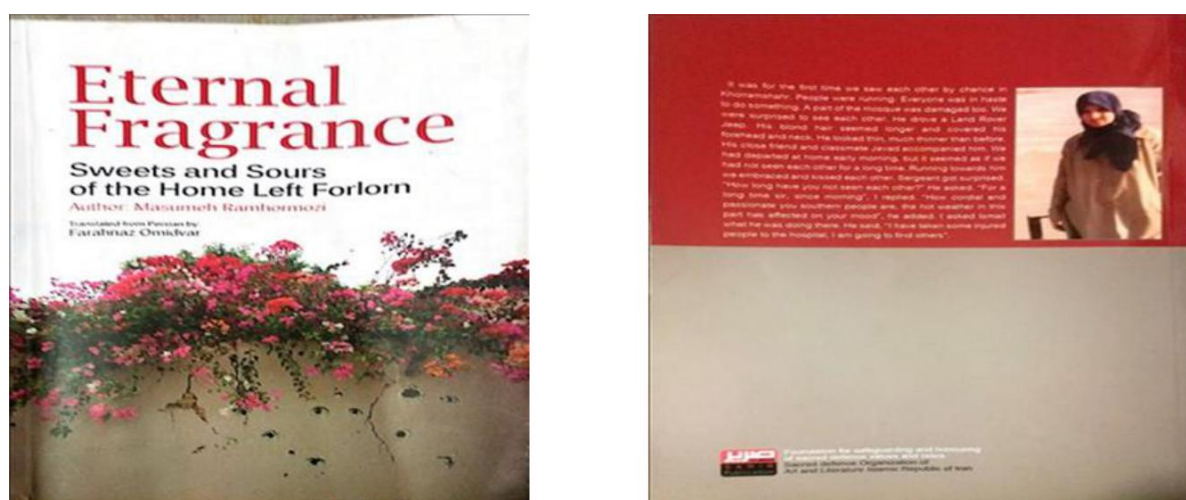


Figure 5. Cover pages of *Eternal Fragrance*

As Figures 4 and 5 show, the cover design of the translated book is completely different from that of the Persian book. The only similarity, however, is the picture of the heroine which ap-pears in both cover designs. Similarly, the trans-lator has opted for a free translation of the title; *Eternal Fragrance* for رخا هبشکی [Yekshanbeye akhar], which means ‘the last Sunday’. In fact, she has used the strategy of substitution.

Apparently, the translator has decided to come up with a title of her own based on the main concept of the story.

نوخ لاف and its Translation, Fortune Told in Blood

In this part, book covers of نوخ لاف [Fale khoon] and its translation, *Fortune Told in Blood*, are compared.



Figure 6. Cover pages of نوخ لاف

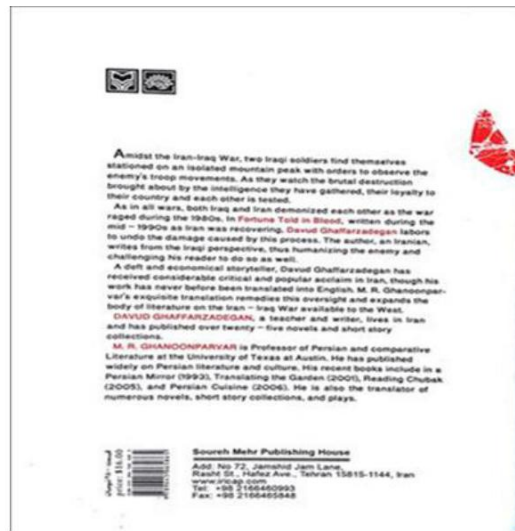
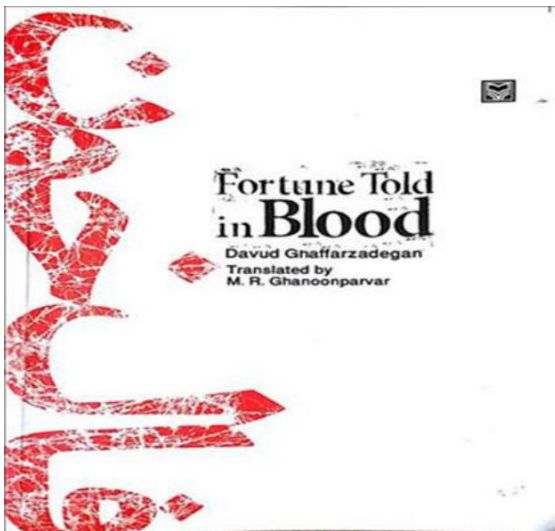


Figure7. Cover pages of Fortune Told in Blood

Both the Persian and English books are similar to each other in cover design. It seems that the white background of the cover design symbolizes peace while the red color of the writings stands

for war. Perhaps the illustrator is trying to imply that war and peace are very close to each other. *Fortune Told in Blood* can also be considered as a literal translation of the Persian title نوخ لاف

[*Fale khoon*]. Another interesting finding is that the words of the Persian title *نوخ لاف* [*Fale khoon*] do appear on the cover of the English translation as well.

LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The translation of the “Resistance” Literature into other languages has been on the increase during the last decade in Iran. The first limitation faced in our study was related to the fact that the distinction between this genre and others is not clear-cut. Many works seem to depict, at least to some extent, traces of the resistance subgenre. However, other features tend to be more dominant. In such cases, the books were excluded from the corpus of the study. Care was taken to ensure that only those books which clearly have the characteristics of this subgenre are included in the study. This made it very difficult to compile the corpus.

The other limitation was related to lack of access to translation of such books. Many such books are translated and circulated only in the target communities, mainly American or European countries. Therefore, the translations are not available in the Iranian book market. An example for this situation is the book *دل*. Hence, the number of the books which were compatible with our criteria and which were also accessible in the Iranian book market was very limited.

Initially, one of the purposes of the study was to gather and present information about the number of copies each translation sold in the market. It was assumed that such data could help us come to an understanding of the reception of each translation within its target community. Unfortunately, our repeated attempts to gather this information failed; the publishers refused to provide any such information on account of confidentiality.

The findings indicate that the most frequent translation strategy is retention. This means that the translators seem to try to preserve the cultural ‘tone’ of the source in such texts. However, the translations differ from one another in terms of the second most common strategy.

The native English translator, Paul Sprachman, who has translated *نیشام اب جنرطش* [*Shatranj ba mashine ghiamat*], has had an SL-orientation: retention is his most frequent strategy. Where retention has not been possible, he has tended to opt for explicitation as his second most frequent strategy. On the paratextual level, he has given information about the Iran-Iraq War and has analyzed the characters of the story. On the semiotic level, the translation closely resembles the Persian source. The publisher, *Mazda* has tried to preserve the ST signs. Moreover, the translation of the title follows a source-oriented approach. On the whole, in spite of the fact that the translator is a native of the target language/culture and the publisher is based in the target community (the U.S.), the translation seems to follow an SL-oriented approach on all levels.

Ghanoonparvar has used substitution as the second most frequent strategy. On the paratextual level, he has given information about the Iran-Iraq War and the characters of the story. On the semiotic level, *Fortune Told in Blood* resembles *نوخ لاف* [*Fale khoon*] in terms of book cover design. The translation of the title, too, is source-oriented. It is important to note that although a native of Persian, the translator has been living in the U.S. (the target community) for over 50 years and is thus very well familiar with the target audience as well as their needs and expectations.

On the contrary, Omidvar’s second most common strategy is omission. The findings showed that on the paratextual level, Omidvar has tried to make an epilogue which is similar to the Persian source, with the heroine’s personal pictures. However, in the preface, she has provided information about neither the Iran-Iraq War nor the characters of the story. Sprachman and Ghanoonparvar have more informative prefaces. Also, on the semiotic level, *Eternal Fragrance* is different from *رخا هبتشکی* [*Yekshanbeye akhar*]. The book covers are completely different. The publisher *Sarir*, as an Iranian publisher has decided to design a different book cover; in addition, the translation of the title follows a free approach.

It may be concluded from our finding that contrary to expectation, target-community-based translators (Sprachman and Ghanoonparvar) have been more successful in transferring the original 'tone' of the source texts in terms of the cultural elements than the source-community-based translator. The pre-requisite to this success, however, is the translator's sufficient knowledge about the source linguacultures, which is the case about the translations investigated in the present study.

This can have implications for the publishing

houses which may have an interest in ordering and publishing translations of such works. They may use the findings of this study, and others alike, in briefing, or even selecting the translators to work with. From a pedagogical perspective, translation teachers can use these findings for developing their syllabus for translation courses. Translation students may also find it interesting to see how the handling of such concepts related to culture can affect the overall quality of their translations.

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Biodata

Dr Mir Saeed Mousavi Razavi is an assistant professor in the field of Translation Studies at the Faculty of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran. He graduated with a PhD degree from Allameh Tabataba'i University in the field of English Translation Studies. He has been teaching translation-related courses at Allameh Tabataba'i University as a part-time lecturer since 2010, and as a permanent faculty member since 2015. His research has embraced translation /interpreting pedagogy, translation evaluation, translation criticism, and research methodologies among other areas. He has also been working as a professional English-Persian interpreter in Iran since 2007.

Email: s.mousavi@atu.ac.ir

Bahareh Allahdaneh holds a master's degree in the field of Translation Studies from Islamic Azad University, South Tehran Branch in Iran. Her master's thesis about cultural elements in translation. Culture and translation is an area in which she would like to do more research as well as translation.

Email: b.allahdaneh@gmail.com