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Translation of Culture-Specific Items in Three Chapters of the Holy Quran: The Case Study of Translators with Different L1 Backgrounds

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Abstract

Translation of religious texts, including the Quran, is a topic of interest to Translation Studies researchers. Recently, an increasing number of studies in this field have focused on translating culture within the source text. This study aims to highlight how cultural-specific items (CSIs) are translated in selected chapters of the Quran. To achieve this, data were collected from selected verses of three chapters of the Quran (Al-Baqarah, AL-Imran, and An-Nisa chapters), and analyzed using Ghazala's (2008) model of translation procedures, which was adapted from Newmark's model (1988). The model was employed by English translators with different L1 backgrounds in their translation of the Holy Quran by Pickthall (1986), Dolati (in press), and Haleem (2004, 2005) as British, Persian and Arabic natives, respectively. The meaning of the data was taken from English Shia exegesis by Tabatabai (1985). The most frequently used procedure by all translators was cultural correspondence. While the dominance of cultural correspondence in the analyzed translated verses shows that the three translators attempted to translate culture, insufficient paratextual references may cause partial loss of meaning. The findings showed that L1 background could affect the translator's habitus in terms of translation choices in religious texts. This research has implications for translators, translation educators, teachers and students, as well as policy makers in publishing religious texts.

Keywords: Intertextuality, Culture-Specific Items, Islamic translation, Translation Studies

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1. Introduction

The holy Quran is the most important source for Muslims and non-Muslims to gain solid and in-depth understanding of Islam through reading each verse or Ayah and its related intertextual exegesis. For a long time, some Muslim clerics believed it was impermissible to translate the Quran to other languages. Nevertheless, a large number of Muslim converts and scholars in Islamic studies whose mother tongues are not English have created the need for high-quality translations of the Quran that highlight semantic, syntactic, discursal and cultural aspects of language used in the Quranic verses. While it may be far from plausible to convey various linguistic, aesthetic and cultural features of the language represented in the Quranic verses, the translators of religious texts should pay utmost attention to create metatexts with near equivalents for such important elements of meaning. A significant focus of Quranic translation studies has been on micro-textual translation issues and translatability of the Quran. Translation of religious texts appears to be more complicated and critical, given that literal or meaning-based translation without considering linguistic and cultural subtleties and interpretations of the verses may mislead the readership and followers of Islam whose mother tongue is other than Arabic. Thus, it should be rendered by the translators accurately and in most cases, the translation loss in the target text is noticeable and compels the translators to make creative decisions.

Equivalents in English may not convey the full message in several cases. The most common strategy is to borrow the SL term (loaner word) and explain it briefly. The equivalents are intended as approximations of their general meanings. For instance, “Allah” is an Arabic term; it means “God” which is the English Equivalent. Additionally, “Al Salat” means “Prayers” or “Al Zakat” means “Charity”. Other examples include “AL Hallal (permissible)”, “Al sawm (fasting)”, “AL jihad (Holy war)” (Kashgary, 2011, p. 52).

The issue of the significance of culture in translation has been a controversial, much-disputed and also challenging subject within the field of literature which the scholars have perspectives regarding it. As Larson (1984) notes, it is substantial not to ignore the role of culture in the translation process, because its outcomes are more admissible with

closer cultural ties among the speakers of the two languages. As cultures are comparable, the translation process gets easier. In the case of several cultural terms, translators can find near equivalence. Nevertheless, it may be more difficult to find equivalent lexical items in languages having little cultural affinity with one another.

As a result, cultural differences often pose greater challenges to the translator than linguistic differences, especially if the two languages, namely Arabic and English, are linguistically and culturally different. According to Newmark (1988, p. 94) as cited in Ghazala (2015), culture indicates “a way of life and its manifestations” which are unique to society that utilizes a special language for communication. According to Vermeer (as cited in Katan, 2009, p. 82), “culture comprises all of what a society has to know, master, and feel, so one can assess the behavior of members in various roles”. As Gaber (2005, p. 18) stated, “culture means all aspects of the life of a nation or group of people who live in a place and share the same language, beliefs, customs, traditions, and history”.

In Translation Studies, CSIs (Culture Specific Items) appear to be a problematic area for translation with different terms to denote such linguistic elements. As Robati (2016) argues the vagueness of CSIs can be observed in several terms and categorizations. These items were referred to in the Translation Studies as “cultural words” (Newmark, 1988, p. 95), “culture-specific concepts” (Baker, 1992, p. 21), “*realia*”, or “culture-bound phenomena” (Robinson, 1997, p. 171), “cultural elements” (Hagfors, 2003, p.134), and “cultural concepts” (Davies, 2003, p.300).

According to Ghazala, Islamic terminology, like any other terms, may be translated. (Ghazala, 2012, our translation). Linguistic translation only displays half of the battle. Despite the fact that translators somewhat know Arabic, they frequently lack the expertise required to interpret Islamic verses. Because they are unfamiliar with the historical background, they overlook allusions to ideas, people, and events that are obvious to those who know Arabic. As a consequence, the translator is faced with a difficult duty that must be completed correctly and precisely, without regard for personal sentiments that may influence the course of events and things throughout the translation process.

In view of the fact that CSIs are troublesome for translators in many text genres, such items can pose challenges for the translation of Quranic verses in which the translator should pay utmost attention to convey meaning dynamically accurate, accounting for both linguistic and cultural considerations. Since a fair number of religious texts may perform indirect translation and are not acquainted with Arabic, CSIs in Quranic verses could be more complicated.

Regarding empirical evidence, while a large number of studies have focused on CISs in various types of texts, there is paucity of data on such items in Quranic verses. Thus, in view of these issues in translation of culture in religious texts, this study seeks to investigate strategies used for translation of CSIs in the Quran. It also examines how the translator's L1 background as part of their identity affect translation choices in rendering such items in religious texts. This study can be valuable since the translation of Quranic CSIs is investigated with references to interpretations of the verses in the selected chapters of the holy Quran, aligned with intertextuality in translation theories. One of the researchers who has an academic degree in Islamic Studies used her knowledge as well as consulting with books such as the Exegesis of Al Mizan Fi Tafsir Al Quran by Tabatabai (1965), and Thematic Dictionary of the Holy Quran by Seyyed Ali Akbar Ghorashi to examine the appropriateness of equivalents in the case of culture-specific items. This study is among a few that have dealt with the strategies employed by English translators with different L1 backgrounds in the translation of the Holy Quran in the verses Al-Baqarah, AL Imran, and An-Nisa chapters. The analysis of a sample of the translated CSIs with Shia exegesis also gives a practical instrument to use intertextuality in religious texts. For the purposes of this study, the following research questions are adopted:

What are the strategies employed in the translation of the CSIs in the selected verses of Al-Baqarah, AL Imran, An-Nisa chapters based on Ghazala's (2008) model of translation procedures, adapted from Newmark's model (1988)?

Is there any difference between strategies used to render such items in the sample based on the translators' L1 background?

2. Review of Literature

Culture-specific items are a major problem in having no various locations or no equivalents in the target reader's cultural system. Consequently, these cases give rise to trouble in rendering the functions and their meanings in the source text into target text. According to Hatim and Mason (1990), translators have experienced a shift in perception in recent times. They are now seen as cultural mediators rather than mere linguistic intermediaries. Additionally, it is a fact that translators employ a comprehensive strategy in their rendering, either leaning towards a source-language oriented approach or a target-language oriented approach.

A number of studies have surveyed cultural issues in translation of Arabic-English such as (Abdel-Hafez, 2004; Aziz, 1999; Bahameed, 2008; Bahumaid, 2017; Balfaqeeh, 2009; Barkho, 1987; Faiq, 2004; Ghazala, 2002; Homedi, 2004; Shunnaq, 2000). In the field of Quranic translation, a study conducted by Anari & Sanjarani (2016) analyzed CSIs translations in the Holy Quran using Baker's model and found that the most suitable strategy was subordinated translation, and paraphrasing was the least useful strategy.

A Comparative Study by Fallah Tafti (2016) examined the strategies applied in Translation of Culture Specific Items represented in Quranic Verses, translated by Arberry into English and by Ghomshei into Persian. The researcher analyzed the data via the classification of Newmark (1988) and the suggested model by Ivir (1987). The translators only adopted four out of seven strategies in their translations; namely, substitution, literal translation, borrowing and addition. Furthermore, it was shown that there was no gross difference between the frequencies of the employed strategies in translation of CSIs in the Holy Quran by Persian translator and English translator.

In 2016, Robati has adopted Davies' (2003) strategies for the translation of CSIs. Two translations of the Persian and English Quranic-Arabic culture-bound term "Jilbab" were considered by the researcher to compare them with two concerns which are related to the adopted translation strategies: linguistic (Persian and English), and translators' gender (male and female). Then she analyzed the data. Consequently, Localization was the most often utilized approach by

male translators in the English and Persian parallel corpus, whereas globalization and addition were the most frequently used strategies by female translators in the English and Persian parallel corpus.

In a study conducted by Ayyad & Mahadi (2019), they found the applied strategies by descriptive qualitative analysis. The researchers analyzed the English translation of cultural terms in the Holy Quran. Then they looked for the meaning of chosen terms according to the dictionary namely: *Islamic Words and Expressions* by Saleh (2011) to determine whether cultural terms are domesticated or Foreignized.

In another study, Albashir Mohammed, (2019) utilized a socio-historical interpretation to explore the limitations regarding translating some selected Qur'anic verses into English. It was grasped that the Holy Quran translators confronted some cultural and semantic constraints when translating the Qur'anic verses into English because of cultural and linguistic barriers between the Arabic and English cultures. As well as this, a wide range of translation strategies has been applied by the Quran translators, inclusive of omission, addition, cultural substitution, literal translation, adaptation, and back-translation.

According to Afrouz (2019), the religious background of translators does not play a significant role in choosing specific strategies. In order to accomplish this, the Holy Qur'an and its four English Muslim translations were examined and compared based on the Aixela model. Hence, the factor of 'translator's religious background' does not have a chief effect on rendering ITs.

In a descriptive study conducted by Valipoor, Heidari Tabrizi, & Chalak, (2019), regarding translation strategies applied by Irving (1991) in the translation of CSIs in the chapter of Baqarah. The findings showed that Irving applied domestication and Foreignization in the translation of Quranic CSIs. They found that Irving primarily employed domestication in the translation of Quranic CSIs by 79.9%. Based on his study on the accuracy of translation of cultural-specific items, Abdi (2019) derived that strategy does not influence translation quality, whereas the education level does.

In a study conducted El Haj Ahmed and Shammala (2020), it was shown that the two translators preferred domestication over foreignization, as well as foreignization, which was an appropriate

technique for cultural translation, these findings were demonstrated by utilizing Yusuf Ali's and Talal Itani's translations of fifty Quranic CSIs.

A qualitative work *Translating Culture-specific Items in the Noble Quran Which Relate to Arabian Habits* was undertaken by Zakaryia Almahasees & Mohammad Anwar Al-Taher (2021). This research detected the strategies adopted by ten translators in the verses of Holy Quran that indicate Arabian habits. Moreover, they recognized the procedures employed in translation of CSIs related to Arabian habits using the framework of Ivir (2002). The data were gathered via their reference to Arab habits and culture. The data analysis showed that the Literal translation was the most applied strategies in translation of the translators and the Addition or Paraphrase were the less employed strategies adopted by the translators.

Ayyad, Obeidat, and Mahadi (2021) surveyed the translation procedures applied by Abdullah Yusuf Ali for CSIs in *Al-Ma'idah* Chapter. The findings showed that the translator applied the translation procedures such as Cultural equivalent, functional equivalent, modulation, definition, description, generalization, footnotes, literal translation, explication, and borrowing in his translation. As a result, definition was the most frequent strategy, whereas an explication or generalization is the less frequent strategy, and a footnote was sometimes employed to support other procedures.

A study conducted by Sulhah Ramli, Arnida, and Bakar (2021) that the purpose of this article is to survey the strategy of domestication for the translation of religious cultural elements into English. It is a qualitative study with descriptive data analysis based on document analysis. The study adopts Newmark's (1988) componential analysis in order to explain the meaning of domesticated equivalent.

A recent study by Karimi & Fatehi Rad (2021) involved investigation of the translation strategies in translating the CSIs which regarding the novel of *Th Egyptian* written by Mika Waltari translated into Persian by Zabihollah Mansouri. The researchers analysed the data using the parallel comparison of the source text and its translation. Then they calculated the frequency and percentage of varied translation strategies employed by the translator. Furthermore, the researchers observed the gross difference among the frequencies of the varied

employed strategies by the translator using chi-square test. It was shown that the modulation and omission were the less strategies employed by the translator.

3. Methodology

This study highlights the translation procedures of the CSIs in Al-Baqarah, AL-Imran, and An-Nisa chapters. Ghazala's model is used in identifying the procedures that the English translators employed during the translation process. This study just deals with 9 strategies out of 16 ones.

Ghazala's (2008) model is an analysis model for translation procedures that includes, among other items:

Cultural equivalent. Finding the expression in TL that is applied precisely in the same context. So, this meaning becomes totally identical with the SL expression. For instance: the word the true believer is transferred as it is into Arabic المومن or the word The British Council is transferred as it is into Arabic البريطاني المركز الثقافي. In the case of cultural equivalents, the same connotation is attempted to be conveyed.

Cultural correspondence. The English cultural term is precisely and literally the same correspondent term in Arabic. For instance: the word Security Council is transferred as it is into Arabic مجلس الأمن.

Naturalization. Some culture-specific terms descend from the SL, which are halfway between English and Arabic. For instance: the word jihad is transferred as it is into Arabic جهاد or the word Hajj is transferred as it is into Arabic حج or the word Democracy is transferred as it is into Arabic ديمقراطية.

General sense. Disregard the cultural implications of SL terms, possibly because there is no cultural equivalent in TL. For instance: the word Muslim Hajj Rituals is transferred as it is into Arabic الحج مناسك or the word Paddy fields is transferred as it is into Arabic حقول الأرز.

Transcription. Converting the English word into Arabic Alphabet in the same way that it is pronounced. The word ka'ba is transferred as it is into Arabic الكعبة, or the word Koran is transferred as it is into Arabic القرآن.

Paraphrase. A long procedure, used when there is no other way to explain an uncertain cultural term in translation. For instance: the word Ham is transferred as it is into Arabic شرائح لحم الخنزير.

Translation label. Temporary translations, they are enclosed in square brackets [...], or quotation marks/inverted commas ("..."). For instance: the word the calf [for worship] is transferred as it is into Arabic العجل.

Deletion. An item of the SL cultural expression can be eliminated totally for its lack of significance to the TL readers.

Footnotes. Providing long details about an unfamiliar or ambiguous cultural term.

The categorization of CSIs in the Arabic verses was also made in this study by Newmark (2010: 174-177) and classification of Qur'anic culture specific items by Yasmeen El-Sayed (2020: 5-6). They include:

Classifications of Newmark (2010: 174-177)

Ecology. Geological and geographical environment

Flora, Fauna, plains, hills, winds, sea, mountains, cities, states, etc.

Public life. Concern politics, law or governmental patterns in a community

Social life. Terms or phenomena about economy, occupations, social welfare, health or education systems.

Personal life. Composed of food, clothing, housing patterns, transport customs and related concepts: gestures, postures, body language, hobbies, entertainment, and sports, containing the idioms regarding those pursuits.

Private passions. Religion, music, poetry, and related different particular organizations like churches or poetry societies.

El-Sayed (2020: 5-6)

Gender-related CSIs.

إيلاء (dhihar), ظهار (dhihar), قِوَامَةٌ (qiwamah), نُشُوز (nushuz), ضرب (darab), (‘ila’)

Jihad-Related CSIs.

إِرْهَاب (‘Irhab), قِصَاص (qisas), جِزْيَةٌ (djizyyah), جِهَاد (jihad)

Prophet-related CSIs.

الْمُذْتَر (Muddathir), الْمُزْمَل (Muzzamil)

Material culture.

جِلْبَاب (djilbab), تَبْرُج (tabarrudj), خِمَار (khimar)

Delexicalized CSIs.

إِفْك (‘Ifk), جَنَابَةٌ (djanabah), عِدَّة (iddah)

To account for the translation of CSIs in this study, the source text of the Holy Quran in Arabic and its English translations translated by Pickthall (1960), Dolati (in press), and Haleem (2004, 2005) were studied. The present research is a case study and adopted a qualitative descriptive design. This study uses content analysis as the method for data collection. After reading the entire verses of chapters of Al-Baqarah, AL-Imran, and An-Nisa and their translations, a sample of verses in Quran and its translation in English was in terms of lexically carefully analyzed to detect the CSIs and the strategies employed by the translators with different L1 Backgrounds to translate them into English. Then, the categories of CSIs by Newmark (2010) and El-Sayed (2020) have been adopted as the theoretical framework of this research for analyzing culture-specific items. For transparency, every procedure is commented on and displayed with images in Tables.

4. Results and Discussion

The following tables exhibit the frequencies and percentages of procedures in the case of each translator of the selected Quranic verses.

Table 1. *Procedures Used by Pickthall*

<i>Strategy of The First English Translation</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Cultural Correspondence	60	60%
Cultural Equivalent	7	7%
Deletion	-	0%
Footnote	-	0%
General (Sense)	4	4%
Naturalization	11	11%
Paraphrase	5	5%
Transcription	6	6%
Translation Label	7	7%
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100%</i>

According to Table 1, cultural correspondence and naturalization were among the most frequent translation procedures used by Pickthall. This shows that the translator strived to create the text that the reader feels more acquainted with based on their familiar cultural notions. A fairly higher number of naturalization also shows the translator's habitus for finding dynamic equivalence due to his familiarity with target language culture.

Table 2. *The Frequency of Procedures Used by Dolati*

<i>Strategy of The Second English Translation</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Cultural Correspondence	63	63%
Cultural Equivalent	3	3%
Deletion	-	0%
Footnote	-	0%
General (Sense)	3	3%

Naturalization	-	0%
Paraphrase	6	6%
Transcription	19	19%
Translation Label	6	6%
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100%</i>

Table 2 shows cultural correspondence and transcription were most frequently used by Dolati. This shows that the translator chose to familiar cultural concepts for translation of the CSIs as the main procedure whereby creating a more familiar text for the reader. A fairly moderate use of transcription shows how the translator's familiarity with Arabic text is reflected by choosing this strategy that brings the reader closer to the text. The limited use of paraphrase also indicates the translator's choice to render untranslatability in the text.

Table 3. *Frequency of Procedures Used by Haleem*

<i>Strategy of The Third English Translation</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Cultural Correspondence	58	58%
Cultural Equivalent	1	1%
Deletion	1	1%
Footnote	4	4%
General (Sense)	2	2%
Naturalization	14	14%
Paraphrase	11	11%
Transcription	4	4%
Translation Label	7	7%
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100%</i>

In the case of Abdel Haleem's translation, while cultural correspondence quite outnumbers the other types of strategies, paraphrase and transcription were used in a notable number of cases.

This indicate that the translator chose to bring the reader closer to the text, despite having the general tendency to find equivalents with similar connotations. While the dominance of cultural correspondence in the analyzed translated verses shows the three translators attempted to translate culture, insufficient paratextual references may cause partial loss of meaning.

4.1. CSIs and Their Corresponding Equivalents Analyzed through Shiite Islam Lens

While analyzing the data, the researchers probed equivalents through Shiite Islam sources for interpretations and exegesis as well as the possibility that the reader may be a convert who is familiar with Islamic terms or someone interested in knowing the cultural differences between the source and target texts. Based on the analysis, several important issues were brought up to the researchers' attention. Below is the sample analysis of a few of these verses.

Cultural Equivalent Sample

Al-Baqarah: 3

وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ ﴿٣﴾

Pickthall: "and establish worship"

Dolati: "and perform the prayer."

Abdel-Haleem: "keep up the prayer

Table 4. *Translations of Aş-Şalāat by Pickthall, Dolati, and Haleem*

Strategy	M	D	H
Cultural	worship	the	the prayer +
Equivalent		prayer	footnote

Table 4 demonstrates the English translations of Salat in al-Baqarah chapter. It shows there are two meanings for "Aş-Şalāat": worship (Pickthall), and prayer (Rahim Dolati, Abdel Haleem). It means the translators found a connotatively similar word for "Aş-Şalāat" in

English. This meaning becomes totally identical with the Arabic language. However, they have different semantic load in the TL. Because Salat is one of the obligatory acts of worship that every Muslim must do five times a day, and "prayer" or "worship" does not mean Aṣ-Ṣalāat, and the word "Aṣ-Ṣalāat" should be translated in its original form, which is Salah or namaz. As a result, "Aṣ-Ṣalāat" is one of the Quranic and Islamic words that do not have a common cultural meaning and characteristic with the target language "English" and should be used in exactly the same original and Arabic form.

Of course, when this word is included in the vocabulary of the English language, they will take the phonetic and syllabic form of that language. Therefore, this sort of words "Az-Zakāata, Ṣiyāmin and piety" should be used in the same way so that they become popular little by little and are used frequently as loanwords in the target language (Veysi, 2003). Consequently, according to al-Mizan exegesis, Salah means attention and flexibility. In this case there is the dissimilarity between Pickthall and Dolati with the meaning of the intended interpretation in terms of cultural meaning. So, the first and the second English translation were not able to convey accurately the CSI found in this verse.

4.2. Cultural Correspondence Sample

The English cultural term is precisely and literally the same correspondent term in Arabic. There are hundreds of samples of complete "cultural correspondence" that can be seen among Arabic and English, especially "at the level of collocations, idioms, and proverbs of cultural origins". As a matter of fact, there is good proof to eradicate these claims that culture cannot be translated and "cross-cultural links or correspondence is impossible" (Ghazala, 2008, pp.196-197).

Al-Baqarah:35

أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةِ ﴿٣٥﴾

Pickthall: "thou and thy wife in the Garden."

Dolati: "you and your mate dwell in the Garden."

Abdel- Hameed: live with your wife in this garden.'

Table 5. *Translations of Al-Jannata by Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall, Rahim Dolati, and Muhammad A.S. Abdel Haleem*

Strategy	P	D	H
Cultural Correspondence	in the Garden	in the Garden	in this garden

Table 5 above demonstrates the English translations of Jannat in the Baqarah chapter. It shows there are two meanings for “Al-Jannata”: in the garden (Pickthall, Dolati), and in this garden (Abdel Haleem). So, the English cultural term “Garden” is precisely and literally the same correspondent term in Arabic “Al-Jannat”.

According to Almizan exegesis, Imam Sadiq (AS) said Adam's garden was a garden of this world. It would not have been possible for him to come out of a garden of the hereafter. “A garden of this world has been used in contrast to the garden of everlasting abode.” It refers to a position among “this world and the hereafter”. “Adam’s garden was not the garden of everlasting abode, but neither was it a garden like that of ours al- Barzakh is the state, place and time between one’s death and the Day of Resurrection. The said garden maybe called a garden of al-Barzakh, and it may well have been situated in this world.” (Commentary Almizan, Vol 1, pp. 196,197)

As a result, there was the dissimilarity between Pickthall, Dolati, and Abdel-Haleem with the meaning of the intended interpretation in terms of cultural meaning. So, the first and second, and third English translations were not able to represent accurately the CSIs found in the Holy Quran according to Shia commentary.

Table 6. The Frequency of The Classifications of The Quranic CSIs

<i>Classifications Of the Quranic CSIs</i>	<i>Frequen cy</i>	<i>Percenta ge</i>
Ecology	27	27%
Public life	8	8%
Social life	6	6%
Personal life	6	6%
Customs and Pursuits	14	14%
Private passions	16	16%
Gender-Related CSIs	4	4%
Jihad-Related CSIs	3	3%
Prophet-Related CSIs	15	15%
Material culture	-	0%
Delexicalized CSIs	1	1%
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100%</i>

5. Conclusion

This study intended to bring the reader into a closer understanding of the concepts, categories, and translation strategies of culture specific items in the Holy Quran and surveyed the strategies adopted for rendering them into English. According to the results, the strategies of Cultural equivalent, cultural correspondence, Naturalization, general sense, transcription, paraphrase, translation label, deletion, and footnotes were employed in the translation of the CSIs in the selected verses of Al-Baqarah, AL-Imran, An-Nisa chapters based on Ghazala's (2008) model of translation procedures, adapted from Newmark's model (1988). Cultural equivalent was dominantly used by all three translators, which shows they would like to establish a sense of cultural affinity to the text for the readership. While this indicates how the translators attempted to render culture, in the case of sacred texts with

a wide range of readership, the translation of culture should be done with references to intertextuality that among others include exegesis and interpretations. The important point is that to translate the Holy Quran and find equivalents in any other language, it is not enough to know Arabic and the target language. A person who undertakes this important task must have sufficient proficiency in Islamic knowledge and be familiar with the sciences of philology, syntax, derivation, as well as the science of hadith and speech, the interpretation of the verses, and in general with the Quranic knowledge apart from sufficient translation skills.

While there was no significant difference between using the most frequent strategy to render such items in sample based on the translators' L1 backgrounds, familiarity with the Arabic language affected the translators' choices in limited cases. The application of such strategies could depict a more realistic picture of the Quran for the readers who are converts and those interested in Islamic studies. This study is limited to the corpus analyzed and other corpora with differing theoretical frameworks may yield variant results. Future lines of research can explore various aspects of culture at the level of discourse and intertextuality in religious texts. Furthermore, the influence of the translator L1 background can be further explored with other variables such as style, linguistic, academic and cultural backgrounds under the habitus of the translator. This study's findings are useful for translators, translation educators and translation teachers and students, giving them a practical guideline on how to translate culture specific items which are abundantly used in religious texts. This study has implications for policy makers in publications as well, raising the awareness of publishing houses on the necessity of translations that are more tuned to specialized readership that request translations based on different denominations of Islam, including Shiite.

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