Natural or Directional: Criticizing the Persian Translation of Melville's Moby Dick Using Pym's Different Concepts of Translation

Hamidreza Abdi [iD]

Ph.D. candidate, Translation and Language Sciences, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Spain, Email: hamidreza.abdi@upf.edu

Abstract

Criticism of a translation evaluates its quality, accuracy, and effectiveness in communicating with the target readers. To ensure objectivity, such criticism requires a clearly defined model. Pym (2007) develops a model that focuses on two main concepts: directional equivalence and natural equivalence. Directional equivalence highlights the difference between the translation and the original, which is easily recognizable. In contrast, natural equivalence pertains to what different languages and cultures inherently produce within their own systems to convey a message, function, or referent. These two concepts make Pym's model effective for broad evaluations of translations. This study applied Pym's framework to objectively criticize the Persian translation of Melville's (2021) *Moby Dick* to investigate the type of equivalence—directional or natural—the Persian translator employed. To do so, a comparison was made between the original and its translation to examine the translation techniques adopted by the translator at the micro-level, leading to the determination of his overall strategy at the macro-level based on Malone's (1988) taxonomy of translation techniques, including matching, zigzagging, recrescence, repackaging, and reordering. The findings revealed that the translator employed all of Malone's techniques but leaned toward those that prioritized naturalness over directionality. This approach enabled the production of a translation that maintained a close relationship between the source and target languages, ensuring effective communication with Persian readers. The findings of the current study offer pedagogical implications that may be beneficial for translation students, novice critics, and translation teachers.

Keywords: directional equivalence, natural equivalence, trancism, trajections

1. Introduction

Translation has been defined from various perspectives, resulting in multiple definitions. According to Nida and Taber (1969), translation involves reproducing the message of the source language (SL) in the receptor language using the closest natural equivalent. Levy (1967) views translation as both a communication process and a decision-making process, meaning that translation aims not only to convey the original knowledge to foreign readers but also to involve the translator in making decisions within the context they have pre-established. Frawley (1984) describes translation as recodification, which he defines as a set of propositions about how, why, when, and where coded elements are transformed into different codes (p. 251).

These perspectives highlight different missions for translation, such as conveying a message, facilitating communication, and recodification, all of which aim to be achieved through suitable equivalents in the target text (TT). When the two language systems are closely related, finding appropriate equivalents for source language items is less challenging, and the translator encounters fewer difficulties in the translation process. The divergence between the SL and target language (TL) contributes to the uniqueness of translation, rejecting the assumption of identical quality and underscoring the autonomy and competence of the translator (Korkuz, 2023). In essence, greater linguistic differences between languages result in less cultural similarity due to the presence of cultural items specific to each language and culture (Abdi, 2022).

Nida (1964) emphasizes that cultural differences, rather than language structures, pose the greatest challenge for translators dealing with cultural items. This difficulty arises from the need to find suitable equivalents in the target culture (TC) for objects, facts, and phenomena from the source culture (SC), as noted by Abdi (2021b). This underscores the significance of culture and its impact on translation, necessitating that translators possess cultural competence in addition to linguistic and extralinguistic skills. Albir and Soler (2016) argue that translators must be knowledgeable about both the SC and TC (bicultural knowledge), the world at large (encyclopedic knowledge), and specific subject areas (subject knowledge).

Furthermore, a thorough understanding of a variety of translation techniques (see, for example, Ayora, 1977; Molina & Albir, 2002; and Pederson, 2005) used at the micro-level is of great importance to translators. They also need to broaden their knowledge about opposed translation methods like Nida's (1964) formal and dynamic equivalences and House's (2015) overt and covert translations applied at the macro-level. This means that translators need advanced skills in applying these techniques and strategies to effectively manage cultural elements. Additionally, the context in which the source text (ST) item is used is crucial and should not be overlooked. Eco (2001) supports this by stating that TL expressions are never exactly equivalent to SL expressions, as they can convey more in one context and less in another.

Pym (2007) introduces two distinct types of equivalence in translation: directional equivalence and natural equivalence. Directional equivalence, as described by Pym (2014), involves

cases where an equivalent is primarily found on one side rather than the other, suggesting terms like replace, lead, or reproduce. This type of equivalence highlights the difference between the translation and the original, which is easily recognizable. In contrast, natural equivalence pertains to what different languages and cultures inherently produce within their own systems to convey a message, function, or referent. This implies that natural equivalence aligns with what target readers are familiar with, facilitating effective communication.

Pym (2014) asserts that an equivalent is natural if the SL item corresponds directly to the TL item. In a broader sense, the relationship between SL and TL values should be reciprocal, allowing them to translate each other seamlessly.

Pym's (2007) distinct equivalences can be effectively demonstrated through the example of translating the term *dining room* into Persian. The desired equivalence in Persian is اتاق ناهارخوری. While achieving the SL equivalence is possible through a literal translation, resulting in a longer expression, the challenge arises as this type of room is not common in most Iranian homes. This makes the SL equivalence unfamiliar to the target readers. In this case, اتاق ناهارخوری can be categorized as a *directional equivalent*, where the translation deviates from the ST due to cultural differences.

On the other hand, if an alternative equivalent, such as اتاق پذیرایی, is used for the term *dining room*, it precisely conveys the intended meaning without any deviation. This equivalent can be identified as a *natural equivalence*. This is because it aligns with what the term *dining room* implies, maintaining a two-way correspondence between the SL and the TL. The result is a seamless translation where no substantial difference is found between the terms in the ST and the translation.

Since *trancism*, a term coined by Abdi (2021) and used as an alternative to Translation Criticism, is a complex task that requires the use of a systematic model to minimize subjectivity in judgment, Pym's (2007) directional and natural equivalences are well-suited for analyzing translations at the macro level. This provides a framework to judge how closely the translated text aligns with the ST. Moreover, he advocates the use of taxonomies of translation strategies proposed by scholars like Vinay and Darbelnet (1958), Ayora (1975), and Malone (1988) to preserve natural equivalence in the translation process.

Following Pym's (2007) framework of directional and natural equivalences, this study critically examines the Persian translation of Melville's *Moby Dick* (2021). The analysis focuses on the translation strategy employed by Dariush (2008) at the macro level, investigating overarching approaches and their alignment with the novel's stylistic and thematic complexities. At the micro level, the study analyzes specific translation strategies based on Malone's (1988) taxonomy of translation techniques, offering a detailed examination of how individual SL items were addressed. Furthermore, the study evaluates the Persian translator's success in establishing effective communication with target readers, considering both the macro-level translation type and the micro-level solutions applied. By addressing these aspects, the research aims to fill the existing gap

in systematic evaluations of *Moby Dick* translations, shedding light on the interplay between translation strategies and reader reception. The study seeks to answer the following key questions:

1. Which of Malone's translation techniques did Dariush use at the micro-level to handle SL items from English to Persian?
2. What type of translation did Dariush produce: *Directional equivalence* or *natural equivalence*?
3. Did Dariush succeed in establishing effective communication with the target readers?

This study contributes to closing this gap by providing an in-depth analysis of Dariush's (2008) Persian translation using established theoretical frameworks like Pym's (2007) directional and natural equivalences and Malone's (1988) taxonomy of translation techniques. This research helps build a more comprehensive understanding of how these frameworks can be applied to assess complex literary translations.

By dissecting both macro- and micro-level strategies employed in the Persian translation, this study offers practical insights for translators. It highlights effective techniques for addressing the linguistic and cultural nuances of 19th-century Western literature, offering valuable lessons for translators working with similarly challenging texts. Moreover, the findings can inform the development of training materials and best practices for literary translation.

Moby Dick presents unique challenges due to its rich narrative style, dense symbolism, and culturally specific references. This study provides a detailed examination of how these challenges were addressed in the Persian translation, shedding light on the complexities of adapting such a text for a culturally distinct audience. By evaluating the success of these strategies in facilitating effective communication with the target readership, the research also offers insights into the broader dynamics of cross-cultural literary translation. The findings of this research are expected to be beneficial for translation students, practicing translators, and educators in the field of translation.

2. Review of the Related Literature

This section provides a brief review of structuralist perspectives on translation. Additionally, it describes Malone's (1988) taxonomy of translation techniques and explains the rationale behind selecting his classification. This is followed by a presentation of recent studies in the field that underscore the significance of the current research.

2.1. Structuralism Approach to Trancism

Trancism is the systematic judgment of translated texts. It involves evaluating the quality, fidelity, and effectiveness of a translation in communicating with the target readers. *Trancism* serves several purposes, including determining the translator's strategies, identifying areas of success or improvement, and contributing to broader discussions about the role of translation in intercultural communication.

Trancism operates at the intersection of linguistics, literature, and cultural studies, making it an interdisciplinary field. It connects translation theory with its practice (Newmark, 1988), allowing translators and scholars to engage in meaningful and constructive analysis of translated texts.

Trancism, similar to translation, has been significantly considered by structuralists, who have proposed several theoretical models to address its importance. From this structuralist perspective, the success of a translation is often assessed in terms of its faithfulness and equivalence to the ST. As Tezcan (2015) observes, these criteria serve as reliable indicators for determining the quality of a translation. This focus on fidelity and equivalence establishes a foundation for exploring the intricate relationship between the translator, the text, and the audience.

Popovic (1975) builds on these ideas by providing a valuable framework for understanding *trancism*, identifying three essential functions: the postulating function (oriented toward the translator), the analytical function (focused on the text), and the operative function (targeted at the reader). These functions encapsulate the multi-faceted nature of translation. For instance, the postulating function involves selecting a text for translation, which requires considering the socio-cultural context of both the original literature and the target literature (Popovic, 1975). This highlights the intersection of textual fidelity and the broader literary ecosystem into which a work is introduced.

The analytical function elaborates on the translator's methodological choices and competencies. Popovic (1975) argues that proficiency in both the source and target languages, stylistic interpretation, familiarity with literary traditions, and the ability to identify and address shifts in expression are central to this function. This aligns closely with Koller's (1974) emphasis on systematically analyzing the ST to assess its transferability to the TL and evaluate translation adequacy.

The operative function, as Popovic (1975) describes, addresses readers' expectations and the balance between domestic and foreign elements in the translation. It also guides readers on how to interpret and engage with the translated text. Popovic conceptualizes this as the third chain of communication, where *trancism* bridges the gap between the author, the translator, and the audience. This perspective underscores the dialogic nature of translation, which is further explored in Koller's (1989) hierarchical organization of equivalences. He proposes that equivalence should be structured around communicative context, considering factors such as language function, content, stylistic attributes, formal-aesthetic elements, and pragmatic features.

Adding another layer, Newmark (1988) introduces a comprehensive model for evaluating translations, integrating both the translator's intentions and the broader cultural reception of the translated work. His framework complements Koller's by emphasizing detailed textual analysis and evaluation. Newmark's model encompasses: (a) analyzing the SL text's intention and function, (b) interpreting the SL text's purpose and target readership, (c) conducting a detailed comparison of

the translation and the original, (d) evaluating the translation based on the translator's or critic's perspective, and (e) assessing the translation's place within the target culture or discipline.

These theoretical models collectively provide a holistic understanding of *trancism*, emphasizing the interplay between text, translator, and audience. While Tezcan (2015) and Popovic (1975) highlight foundational principles of faithfulness and function, Koller (1989) and Newmark (1988) expand these ideas into actionable methodologies for evaluating and enhancing translation quality. By integrating these perspectives, *trancism* emerges as a dynamic process that balances linguistic precision, cultural sensitivity, and communicative intent.

2.2. Malone's Trajections

Malone (1988) introduces a classification of translation techniques, which he refers to as *trajections*. These *trajections* define the main plerematic (semantic and syntactic) patterns that can be observed in both the ST and TT. Malone identifies a total of nine *trajections*, each consisting of a general term and, in most cases, two specific terms. This includes:

1. Matching:

a. Equation: serves as a simple method in translation, involving the direct replacement of the ST item with its corresponding TT counterpart. It is one of the simplest techniques for translators.

b. Substitution: another straightforward translation approach, entails replacing the ST item with the corresponding TT element. This method involves using the TT element instead of the original ST component.

2. Zigzagging:

a. Divergence becomes relevant when there are multiple options for the ST item in the TT, and the translator chooses one of them.

b. Convergence, the counterpart to divergence, is employed when there are multiple ST elements, but only one or the same TT item corresponds to each of them.

3. Recrescence:

a. Amplification, similar to the addition strategy, involves the translator adding a description to the ST item within the text or through footnotes and glossing.

b. Reduction: is applied when the ST item is replaced with the TT item. In this way, it is reduced to a single term in the TT, and most parts or whole of it are partially omitted. This trajection works like *omission* strategy.

4. Repackaging:

a. Diffusion: is useful when the translator wants to provide the same information to the target audience, but in a more detailed or elaborate way.

b. Condensation, on the other hand, is used when the goal is to present the same information to the target readers, but in a more concise or shortened form.

5. Reordering: is necessary when dealing with complex structures, especially when understanding is crucial due to differences in narrative and stylistic structures between the SL and TL, as suggested by Fawcett (1997).

The rationale for applying Malone's taxonomy lies in the fact that the translation techniques he proposes can serve as valuable tools not only for critics but also for translators. As Malone (1988) asserts, these techniques are beneficial "either as tools for the study of completed translations (the analytic mode) or as helpmates in the act of translation (operative mode)" (p. 2). Manfredi (2014) supports the utility of Malone's taxonomy, emphasizing its attention to both structural and, more importantly, functional choices in translation. Similarly, Arjomandi and Kafipour (2016) argue that these strategies assist translators in interpreting and modifying both the form and meaning of a text. Furthermore, Malone contends that his taxonomy is particularly well-suited to literary texts, as the artistic nature of translation is especially pronounced in such works.

2.3. Recent Studies in the Field

Research in this area is extensive. However, a significant limitation of existing studies is their primary focus on identifying the types of translation strategies employed to handle cultural elements, often without providing a comprehensive evaluation of the translation quality. For instance, Abdi (2019a) examined the translation strategies proposed by Aixela (1996) used by M.A. translation students—categorized by gender—for translating culture-specific items from English into Persian. The findings indicated that both male and female students employed similar strategies, including orthographic adaptation, absolute universalization, naturalization, linguistic translation, intratextual gloss, synonymy, and limited universalization. Orthographic adaptation was the most frequently used strategy by both groups, whereas adaptation was the least used by male students and orthographic adaptation the least used by female students.

Similarly, Junining and Kusuma (2020) investigated the strategies outlined by Baker (1992) that translation students used when translating a news article. Their study revealed a preference for strategies such as translation by using a more general word, paraphrasing using related words, cultural substitution, and omission. In another study, Zavareh (2021) utilized Vinay and Darbelnet's (1958) taxonomy to identify the most and least frequently employed translation strategies by three translators working with cultural items from English into Persian. The results showed that the equivalence strategy was most commonly used, while particularization and adaptation were the least frequently applied.

Only a limited number of recent studies have moved beyond listing strategies to consider broader linguistic and socio-cultural factors in their analyses, allowing for a more holistic evaluation of translated texts. For example, Abdi (2019b) not only examined the strategies used in translating political terms from English into Persian but also evaluated the effectiveness of these translations in fulfilling communicative goals. His study concluded that the translator achieved an

acceptable outcome through the use of target text (TT)-oriented strategies. Similarly, Abdi (2023) conducted an objective critique of the Persian translation of Nabokov's *Laughter in the Dark* (1989), employing Toury's (2012) target-oriented approach. The analysis focused on the roles of initial norms, preliminary norms, and operational norms in shaping the translation, concluding that the translator's preference for TT-oriented strategies resulted in a successful translation.

Despite these developments, critical studies that evaluate translations from multiple dimensions remain scarce. This gap highlights the significance of the present study, which distinguishes itself by adopting a comprehensive, critical approach to translation analysis. Rather than focusing solely on strategy identification, this study systematically evaluates the translator's performance, uncovering both strengths and weaknesses. As such, it not only offers a more nuanced understanding of translation quality but also serves as a call to action for the translation community to engage more deeply with trancism as a method for improving practice.

Among the studies conducted in the field, Abdi (2024a) critically analyzed the Persian translation of Dickens's *Hard Times* (1985) using van den Broeck's (1985) systematic model of translation. The findings indicated a noticeable degree of factual inequivalence between the source text (ST) and the target text (TT), revealing significant disparities. These results suggest that the translator's decisions and strategies were influenced by optional shifts, ultimately resulting in an acceptable translation.

In a related study, Abdi (2024b) systematically examined the Persian translation of Atwood's *The Blind Assassin* (2000), employing Berman's (2012) concept of deforming tendencies. The analysis showed that the translator incorporated all of Berman's identified tendencies, thereby shaping the translation in alignment with the TT. This reflects the translator's strong orientation toward the TT and an apparent intention to produce a version more closely aligned with the target language and culture, rather than strictly adhering to the ST.

Similarly, Desai (2020) devoted the final section of his paper to a holistic critique of an English translation of a Gujarati short story, using the translation quality assessment (TQA) models proposed by Hewson (2011) and House (2015). His analysis revealed that the translator successfully conveyed the ST's meaning to a considerable extent, and the overall impact of the original text was effectively reproduced in the translation.

The present study distinguishes itself from the existing body of literature by adopting a critical and holistic approach to translation evaluation, addressing key limitations in prior research that often centers on categorizing translation strategies without thoroughly examining their broader implications. While studies such as Abdi (2019a, 2019b, 2023) and Zavareh (2021) offer valuable insights into the types and frequencies of strategies employed, they tend to overlook a systematic analysis of how these strategies correspond with the translator's overarching goals, the socio-cultural context, and the reception by the target audience. By integrating macro-level translation analysis with micro-level strategy evaluation, and drawing on established frameworks such as Pym's (2007) concept of directional equivalence and Malone's (1988) taxonomy of

translation techniques, this study critically evaluates the translator's handling of the stylistic and thematic complexities of *Moby Dick*. Such a comprehensive assessment not only addresses the current gap in systematic critiques of literary translations but also underscores the intricate relationship between strategy selection and communicative efficacy, thereby contributing a more nuanced perspective to the field of translation studies.

3. Method

3.1. Corpus

This study focused on the English version of Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* (2021) and its Persian translation by Dariush (2008). Originally published in 1851 by Richard Bentley in the UK and Harper & Brothers in the US, *Moby Dick* remains a seminal work of American literature. For the purpose of this research, an electronic version of the English text was utilized. The selected Persian translation, comprising 442 pages, was published by Amirkabir Publishing Company. While Melville's literary stature and the novel's enduring popularity contribute to its relevance, the primary reason for selecting *Moby Dick* lies in its mythological characters and complex narrative structure, which present notable challenges for translators. Among the available Persian translations, Dariush's version was deemed the most suitable due to its completeness and relative quality. Other existing translations were either incomplete or exhibited substantial deficiencies, rendering them unsuitable for a critical evaluation.

3.2. Data Collection and Analysis

The present study adopts a qualitative descriptive approach, supported by quantitative methods to ensure a comprehensive analysis. While the primary focus is on collecting and analyzing non-numerical data to offer a systematic account of the translation strategies, quantitative analysis was also incorporated where relevant. Specifically, a nonparametric chi-square (χ^2) test was employed to determine whether significant differences exist in the types and frequencies of translation strategies used by Dariush (2008) at the micro-level. The χ^2 test was selected for its ability to provide a robust statistical framework for evaluating, interpreting, and validating categorical data, thereby enhancing the reliability and objectivity of the findings. Furthermore, the distribution of translation strategies was calculated in percentages and presented in tabular form for greater clarity.

For data collection, the English version of Melville's *Moby Dick* (2021) and its Persian translation were systematically analyzed to evaluate the translator's performance through the lens of Pym's (2007) translation model. This process entailed a comparative examination of each source language item and its corresponding translation, with specific attention to the micro-level techniques employed by the translator. Malone's (1988) taxonomy—comprising matching,

zigzagging, recrescence, repackaging, and reordering—served as the analytical framework for identifying translation techniques. The resulting analysis facilitated an understanding of Dariush's overarching strategy at the macro-level and assessed whether directional or natural equivalence was achieved in the transfer from English to Persian.

4. Results

Table 1 presents the frequency distribution of translation techniques (N=393) employed by Dariush (2008) at the micro-level. The data indicate that *matching* was the most frequently applied trajection (n=159), suggesting a preference for direct semantic and syntactic alignment between source and target texts. In contrast, *recrescence* was the least utilized technique (n=25), reflecting its relatively limited applicability or necessity in the corpus under investigation.
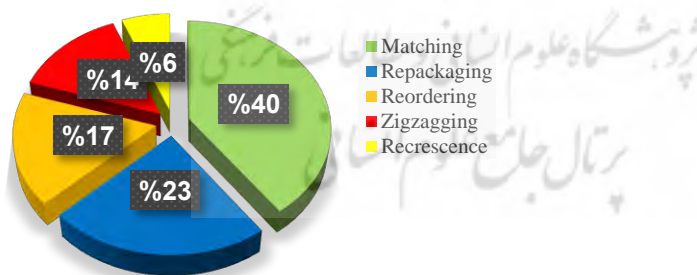
Table 1

Frequencies and Percentages of Translation Techniques Used by Dariush at the Micro-Level

Strategies	f	%
Matching	159	40.0
Repackaging	89	23.0
Reordering	65	17.0
Zigzagging	55	14.0
Recrescence	25	6.0
Total	393	100.0

Figure1

Percentages of Translation Techniques Used by Dariush at the Micro-Level

4.1. Reliability Test

To ensure the reliability of the results, three evaluators independently assessed the translation data based on Malone's (1988) taxonomy of translation techniques—*matching*, *zigzagging*, *recrescence*, *repackaging*, and *reordering*. Their ratings aimed to verify the accuracy and consistency of the identified techniques. The evaluators' scores were cross-checked, and an interrater reliability analysis was conducted to calculate the correlation coefficients among them. As shown in Table 2, there was a high level of agreement among all raters, indicating an acceptable

degree of correlation. The strongest agreement was observed between the second and third evaluators, while the weakest agreement emerged between the first and third. This relatively weaker correlation may affect the study's reliability by suggesting possible subjectivity or inconsistency in the application of Malone's taxonomy. Such discrepancies could lead to divergent interpretations of the translator's performance, thus potentially compromising the generalizability of the findings. To mitigate these limitations, future studies may benefit from clarifying the evaluative criteria, conducting rater training or calibration sessions, or incorporating additional evaluators to enhance interrater consistency. Furthermore, an intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) was calculated to assess the overall reliability of the ratings. The ICC value of .739 indicates a good level of agreement among the three raters, thereby affirming the consistency in applying the evaluative framework and supporting the credibility of the study's results.

Table 2

Summary of Intercorrelations of the Three Raters

Raters		1	2	3
1. Rater 1	r	1	.735	.611
2. Rater 2	r	.735	1	.809
3. Rater 3	r	.611	.809	1

In addition to the interrater reliability test, an intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) was calculated to determine the consistency of ratings across the three evaluators. The resulting ICC value of .791 indicates a good level of reliability, suggesting that the items were rated consistently and that the evaluators demonstrated substantial agreement in applying Malone's (1988) taxonomy.

4.2. Chi-Square (X^2) Test

The chi-square test (X^2) was employed to assess whether there was a significant difference in the types and frequency of translation techniques utilized by Dariush. As shown in Table 3, the p-value obtained from the X^2 test is .779, which exceeds the significance threshold of .05 (p>.05). This result indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in either the number or the types of translation techniques employed by Dariush (2008) in his translation of Melville's (2021) Moby Dick.

Table 3

Summary of the Chi-Square Test for the Type of Translation Techniques and the Total Number of Them Used by Dariush

Translation Techniques	N	X^2	df	p
n				
5	393	1.764	4	.779

4.3. Discussion

The findings reveal that Dariush (2008) utilized all of Malone's (1988) translation techniques, including matching, zigzagging, recrescence, repackaging, and reordering. Among these, the most frequently employed technique was matching, which Malone (1988) identifies as a practical option for translators. Within matching, the equation technique—akin to literal translation—was prevalent, although its directionality sometimes led to less natural translations. For example, the SL phrase "at this hour of the night, of the last day of the week" was translated into the TL as "دراین ساعت از شب، درآخرین روز هفته," yielding a straightforward yet less natural outcome due to the constraints of direct equivalence. In contrast, substitution, another facet of matching, resulted in more natural renderings, such as the translation of "gable-ended Spouter-Inn" into "مسافرخانه مثلثی شکل منگل," which effectively conveyed the cultural and contextual nuances for TL readers. Similarly, "but wait a bit, Skrimshander" was translated as "آقاجان کمی صبرکن," substituting "Skrimshander" with "آقاجان" to introduce a more familiar and relatable term for the TL audience.

Dariush's (2008) translation exhibited instances of directionality, largely due to the challenges of utilizing sub-trajections within the matching category. For example, the terms "امپراطوری," "امپراطور" and "پارلمان" were translated as "Emperor," "Imperial," and "Parliament" in the TT, respectively. In such cases, Dariush had no choice but to apply the borrowing strategy, which Malone refers to as "carry-over matching." Additionally, the translator sometimes employed the calque strategy, as seen in the transformation of "gable-ended old house" into "خانه کهنه مثلثی," or a mixed strategy combining borrowing and calque, such as in the translation of "Great Washington" as "واشنگتن بزرگ." However, the absence of equation and substitution trajections in these examples resulted in a lack of naturalness, as Fawcett (1997) describes these strategies as "a one-way street from source to target language" (p. 42).

The implications of these translation techniques underscore the tension between directionality and naturalness. Directionality, which reflects the translator's adherence to the SL structure, often resulted in translations that were less adaptable to the TL. For instance, the SL phrase "the inscrutable tides of God" was rendered as "جزرومد غریب الغور خدا," which, while preserving the stylistic essence of the SL, risks alienating some TL readers due to its limited accessibility. Alternatives such as "عجیب وغریب" or "غیرمنتظره," or even a more literal rendering of "inscrutable" as "غیرقابل درک," could have enhanced the translation's universality and naturalness.

Dariush's (2008) use of zigzagging, encompassing both divergence and convergence, revealed his linguistic proficiency and sensitivity to the cultural context. For instance, the SL term *a chap* was translated as آدم in one context and جوان in another, demonstrating a nuanced interpretation based on context. Similarly, *whales* were translated as والگیران and کشتی‌های والگیری, showcasing divergence, while the convergence technique resulted in the same TL equivalent (بررسی) for both *examining* and *investigating*. A similar strategy was employed with the SL terms *Lord* and *God*, both translated as خدا, illustrating the application of convergence. These examples highlight

the dual influences of linguistic expertise and contextual awareness in shaping effective translation strategies.

However, limitations became evident, particularly in handling cultural and religious references. Dariush often avoided amplification, opting for direct borrowing instead. Biblical and mythological names, such as *Edmund Burke*, *Cowper*, *Pascal*, *Rousseau*, *Solomon*, and *Perseus*, were translated as پرسه ئوس and سولومون ,روسو ,پاسکال ,کاوپر ,ادموند برک, respectively, without additional glossing. While this approach preserved the SL's textual fidelity, it diminished the accessibility and cultural resonance for TL readers unfamiliar with these references. Amplification could have bridged this gap, enhancing the translation's general applicability.

In contrast to the limited use of amplification, Dariush appropriately utilized the reduction technique when necessary. For example, the phrase *I fear the Lord, the God of Heaven* was translated into من از خداوند آسمان می‌ترسم, with the underlined part omitted. By doing so, Dariush used a single equivalent (خداوند) for both SL elements, thus capturing the meaning of "God." According to Malone (1988), reduction is employed when certain SL elements are either unusual or of lesser importance in the TL, making them nonsensical to the target audience. These reduction techniques are text-oriented strategies that enable the translator to adhere to TT structure and TL norms, thereby enhancing the naturalness of the translation.

Repackaging is another generic trajectory that serves a function similar to the recrescence technique. The distinction lies in the fact that the SL item is not presented alongside its description in the TT. Instead, the translator provides the SL information in a longer or shorter form, adjusting it to fit the target language's context. Dariush (2008) demonstrated a strong command of this technique in translating several SL expressions. For instance, in translating the SL sentences *tucked it under my arm* and *he must show that he's converted*, he effectively utilized contextual information instead of directly translating the third-person pronoun *it* and the verb *convert*. This approach clarified the implied meaning and improved the accessibility for the target audience. Consequently, these two sentences were rendered into و خورجین را زیربغل زدم and باید نشان دهد که به دین حضرت عیسی گرویده, respectively, through the diffusion trajectory.

Condensation, a specific technique within the repackaging category, is infrequently employed by translators, as noted by Malone (1988). Fawcett (1997) logically argues that translations often tend to be longer than the original texts, "because of the need precisely for amplification and diffusion" (p. 49). This observation holds true to some extent in the analysis of Dariush's (2008) translation of Melville's (2021) *Moby Dick*. For example, the SL expressions *the small of my back* and *the vast white headless phantom* were rendered in the TT in shorter forms: پشتمand آن شبه عظیم بیسر, respectively. By opting for shorter structures, the translator aimed to simplify potentially confusing sentence constructions for the target readers. The application of the condensation technique in these instances largely proved successful in achieving this goal.

The final generic trajectory, reordering, which involves no specific sub-technique, was applied moderately when Dariush (2008) faced complex structures that required clear

comprehension. For example, the SL phrases *my hypos get such an upper hand of me* and *oh! perry dood seat, my country way* would have become difficult to manage through the other techniques included in Malone's taxonomy. The most effective tool for addressing such intricate structures is the reordering technique. Dariush adeptly utilized this technique, translating these challenging expressions into the TT as خونم چنان به قلیان بیاید and رسم ما همین است. اوه، خوب نشیمنی است، respectively.

The results of this study demonstrate how Malone's (1988) taxonomy identifies specific trajections that range from directionality to naturalness. Dariush (2008) predominantly employed techniques that emphasized directionality in his translation, which led to a reduction in naturalness but an increase in adherence to the source text. For instance, the translator amplified and borrowed terms instead of glossing most biblical references. According to Pym (2007), such translations can be considered non-natural, as the translator moves directly from the source text to the target text. In contrast, Dariush also frequently used techniques such as diffusion and substitution, which contributed to more natural translations. These techniques enabled the translator to move from the source text to a *tertium comparationis*—a third element of comparison outside both languages—before arriving at the corresponding target text, as described by Pym.

The findings of this study are consistent with Bahremand's (2020) research, which highlights Dariush's (2008) strong preference for the substitution strategy, a specific technique within the matching trajectory. Additionally, the results show similarities with parts of Suzani and Khoub's (2019) study, where one translator produced a dynamic translation that was clear and comprehensive for the target readers. However, some aspects of their findings contrast with the present study, as two other translators in their research preferred formal equivalence, which led to the retention of the original form and content.

5. Conclusion

Trancism serves as a valid framework for evaluating and enhancing a translator's performance. To ensure a thorough critique, critics must base their analysis on a systematic model. In this regard, Zabalbeascoa (1996) emphasizes that any serious attempt to evaluate performance objectively requires clear criteria. Therefore, the present study critiques Dariush's (2008) Persian translation of Melville's (2021) *Moby Dick*, aiming to assess the type of translation produced by Dariush, drawing on Pym's (2007) concepts of directional equivalence and natural equivalence.

The findings of the study reveal that Dariush (2008) adopts a moderate adaptation of both target text (TT)- and source text (ST)-oriented techniques. While the translator demonstrates a clear inclination toward employing strategies that align the translation with the target language (TL) values, there is a balanced use of both TT- and ST-oriented techniques.

For example, both equation and substitution techniques fall under the matching trajectory; however, Dariush (2008) favored substitution over equation. This choice was likely made to reduce the influence of directionality and enhance the translation's naturalness. While Dariush effectively

employed Malone's (1988) trajectories, certain challenges arose, particularly in dealing with unfamiliar elements such as mythology and biblical references, which posed difficulties for the target audience's comprehension.

Overall, the translation by Dariush (2008) leans slightly toward the TT structure, prioritizing naturalness over strict adherence to directionality. This orientation reflects the translator's ability to foster effective communication with the target readers, thereby facilitating their understanding of the original text. Despite occasional challenges, Dariush's approach contributes to a translation that enables a solid understanding of Melville's work among Persian-speaking audiences.

It is essential to acknowledge the limitations of this study. Specifically, the research focused exclusively on the Persian translation of Melville's (2021) *Moby Dick*, utilizing the most comprehensive version available at the time. The analysis concentrated on the challenges of translating source language (SL) items from English into Persian and examined the translator's strategies at both micro and macro levels, within the cultural context of Iran. Given these constraints, future research could expand the scope by investigating how these translation techniques function across different texts and languages, offering deeper insights into the interaction between translation strategies, naturalness, and cultural adaptation.

The findings of this study hold significant pedagogical implications for translation students, emerging critics, and translation educators. To enhance their understanding and critique of translated works, students and critics should begin by strengthening their knowledge of various translation models. This foundational step will enable them to systematically evaluate and analyze translations with greater rigor. Subsequently, applying this knowledge in real-world scenarios is crucial to refining skills and gaining practical experience in *trancism*.

Seeking guidance from expert educators is particularly beneficial in this process. Translation teachers play a vital role in ensuring that their knowledge remains current with modern pedagogical approaches and diverse translation models. This equips them to design practical assignments that foster the development of competent translators and critics. The dynamic relationship between theoretical understanding and practical application is fundamental for effective training in the translation field.

References

Abdi, H. (2019a). Employing translation strategies as a dilemma for Iranian translators: The case of M.A. translation students with the special attention to their gender. *International Journal of Sciences & Applied Research, 6*(7), 1-17. https://www.ijsar.in/archiveslist.aspx?id=5055

Abdi, H. (2019b). A skopos-theoretical analysis of political texts from English into Persian: The case of Donald Trump's executive orders. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 9*(7), 884-890. http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0907.20

Abdi, H. (2021a). Examining the appropriateness of Reiss's functionalist-oriented approach to trancism. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 11*(5), 561-567. http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1105.15

Abdi, H. (2021b). Application of polysystem theory to English to Persian translations of Rowling's Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets. *Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Translation Studies, 6*(1), 1-20. https://doi.org/10.22034/EFL.2021.252983.1060

Abdi, H. (2022). Delving into the translator's achievement in the translation of humor from English into Persian: The case of Teule's the Suicide Shop, *International Journal of Research in English Education, 7*(4), 14-24. https://ijreeonline.com/article-1-672-en.html

Abdi, H. (2023). Criticizing the Persian translation of Nabokov's laughter in the Dark based on Toury's target-oriented approach to trancism. *International Journal of Language, Linguistics, Literature and Culture, 2*(1), 1-10. https://doi.org/10.59009/ijlllc.2023.0011

Abdi, H. (2024a). An objective criticism of the Persian translation of Dickens' Hard times according to Broeck's systemic model of trancism. *Social Sciences & Humanities Open, 9*, 1-6. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2023.100764

Abdi, H. (2024b). Negative analytic of the Persian translation of Atwood's The Blind Assassin using Berman's model of trancism. *International Journal of Philology and Translation Studies, 6*(1), 27-40. https://doi.org/10.55036/ufced.1434250

Aixela, J. F. (1996). Culture-specific items in translation. In. R. Alvarez & M. C. Vidal (Ed.), *Translation, power, subversion* (pp. 52-77). Multilingual Matters.

Albir, H. A., & Soler, O. C. (2016). Procedures for assessing the acquisition of cultural competence in translator training. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer, 10* (3), 318-342. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1750399X.2016.1236561

Arjomandi, S., & Kafipour, R. (2016). A review on translation strategies of Little Prince by Ahmad Shamlou and Abolhasan Najafi. *International Journal of English Language & Translation Studies, 4*(3), 60-68. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/308953234

Atwood, M. (2000). *The blind assassin*. McClelland and Stewart.

Ayora, V. G. (1977). *Introducción a la traductología*. Georgetown University Press.

Bahremand, A. (2020). Translation strategies in English to Persian translation of children's literature based on Klingberg's model. *Journal of Language and Translation, 10*(3), 145-155. https://dx.doi.org/10.30495/TTLT.2020.678758

Baker, M. (1992). *In other words: A course book on translation*. Routledge.

Berman, A. (2012). Translation and the trials of the foreign. In L. Venuti (Ed.), *The translation studies reader* (3rd ed., pp. 240-253). Routledge.

Desai, V. (2020). Translation and translation criticism: Probing a reciprocal interrelation. *Translation Today, 4*(2), 21-36. https://doi.org/10.46623/tt/2020.14.2.ar2

Dickens, C. (1985). *Hard times*. Bradbury & Evans Printing Company.

Eco, U. (2001). *Experiences in translation*. (A. McEwen, Trans.). University of Toronto Press.

Fawcett, P. (1997). *Translation and language: Linguistic theories explained*. St. Jerome Publishing.

Frawley, W. (1984). Prolegomenon to a theory of translation. In L. Venuti (ed.), *Translation studies reader* (pp. 250-264). Routledge.

Hewson, L. (2011). *An approach to translation criticism: Emma and Madame Bovary in translation*. John Benjamins Publishing Company. https://doi.org/10.1075/btl.95

House, J. (2015). *Translation quality assessment: Past and present*. Routledge.

Junining, E., & Kusuma, V. A. M. C. (2020). Translation strategies for translating a new article. *LiNGUA, 15*(1), 79-80. https://doi.org/10.18860/ling.v15i1.9562

Koller, W. (1989). Equivalence in translation theory (A. Chesterman, Trans.). In A. Chesterman (Ed.), *Reading in translation theories* (pp. 99–104). Oy Finn Lectura Ab.

Korkuz, A. R. (2023). Revisiting the concepts of translation studies: Equivalence in linguistic translation from the point of view of Peircean universal categories. *De Gruyter, 9*(1), 33-53. https://doi.org/10.1515/lass-2022-0008

Levy, J. (1967). Translation as a decision process. In L. Venuti (ed.), *Translation studies reader* (pp. 148-159). Routledge.

Malone, J. L. (1988). *The science of linguistics in the art of translation*. State University of New York Press.

Manfredi, M. (2014). *Translating text and context: Translation studies and systemic functional linguistics* (ebook). Asterisco. https://doi.org/10.6092/unibo/amsacta/4142

Melville, H. (2021). *Moby Dick* (ebook). Global Grey. https://www.globalgreyebooks.com/moby-dick-ebook.html

Melville, H. (2008). *Moby Dick* (P. Dariush, Trans.). Amirkabir Publication. (Original work published 1851).

Molina, L., & Albir, H. (2002). Translation techniques revisited: A dynamic and functionalist Approach. *Meta, 47*(4), 498-512. https://doi.org/10.7202/008033ar

Newmark, P. (1988). *A textbook of translation*. Prentice Hall International.

Nida, E., & Taber, C. (1969). *The theory and practice of translation*. E. J. Brill.

Nida, E. A. (1964). *Toward a science of translation*. E. J. Brill.

Nabokov, V. (1989). *Laughter in the Dark*. Vintage International.

Pedersen, J. (2005, May 2-6). *How is culture rendered in subtitles?* [Conference session]. Marie Curie Euro conferences MuTra: Challenges of Multidimensional Translation, Saarbrucken, Germany. https://urn:nbn:se:su:diva-17661

Popovic, A. (1975). The activities of Slovak translators and Slovak translation studies. *Neohelicon 3*, 107–112. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02093097

Pym, A. (2014). *Exploring translation theories* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Pym, A. (2007). *Natural and directional equivalence in theories of translation. Target, 19*(2), 273-286. https://doi.org/10.1075/target.19.2.07pym

Suzani, S. M., & Khoub, V. M. (2019). A study of Nida's (1964) types of equivalence in three English translations of letters 40 to 60 of Nahj-al-balagha. *Journal of Language Studies and Literature, 3*(4), 34-43.

Tezcan, T. (2015). *Applicability of translation criticism approach to different text types.* (Master's thesis, Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences). Hacettepe University Archive. https://openaccess.hacettepe.edu.tr/xmlui/handle/11655/1288

Toury, G. (2012). *Descriptive translation studies – and beyond.* John Benjamins Publishing Company.

van den Broeck, R. (1985). Second thoughts on translation criticism: A model of its analytic function. In T. Hermans (Ed.), *The manipulation of literature: Studies in literary translation* (pp. 54–64). Routledge.

Vinay, J., & Darbelnet, J. (1958). *Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais: méthode de traduction.* Didier.

Zabalbeascoa, P. (1996). Translating jokes for dubbed television situation comedies. *The Translator, 2*(2), 235-257. https://doi.org/10.1080/13556509.1996.10798976

Zavareh, N. K. (2021). Translation of culture-specific items from English into Persian: A case study of the Secret Garden. *International Journal of Language and Translation Research, 1*(3), 15-38. https://dx.doi.org/10.12906/978389966737_002