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Nonlinguistic Presupposition in Literary Translation: A Trend towards Dehistoricising, Deideologising and Depoliticising the Original

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Abstract

This paper explores nonlinguistic (cultural) presupposition in Kilpatrick's English translation of Ghassan Kanafani's Arabic novel Men in the Sun. The goal is to see if the English translation (under the impact of global English) shifts the sociocultural knowledge presupposed in the original and thus alters its political and ideological messages. The analysis reveals a trend to lose nonlinguistic presupposition via translation, which is associated with the translator's tendency to re-contextualize, thus domesticate or neutralise the original message to the Western audience. However, this has come at the expense of dehistoricising, deideologising and depoliticising the original, leading to a more culturally/contextually universal translation that seems to be drifted into the more dominant and valued Anglo-American and European cultures. These changes could be related to Kilpatrick's lack of information, or interest, in the decades-long struggle between Israelis and Palestinians, so a neutral stance may have sounded a safer option to her. It could also be related to her belief that Kanafani's novel should not be politicised, instead focusing our attention more on its plot structure and characters. Personally, I am of the opinion that Kilpatrick has created a more contextually homogenised text only to maintain relevance to a widely diverse audience.

Keywords: Nonlinguistic presupposition; re-contextualisation, translation universals; translation ideology; postcolonial translation.

دراسة في الترجمة الغير لغوية حول المعتقدات والمسلّمات الثقافية ، ونزع الصبغة التاريخية والأيديولوجية والسياسية نص الترجمة الأدبية بعد الروائي

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ملخّص

تبحث هذه الدراسة في المعتقدات والمُسلّمات الثقافية في ترجمة كيلباترك الإنجليزية لرواية "رجال في الشمس" للروائي الفلسطيني عميد أدب المقاومة غسان كنفاني،؛ حيث تهدف الدراسة على وجه الخصوص إلى بيان أثر التوجه العالمي عند المترجمين نحو لغة إنجليزية عالمية غير منحازة لثقافة معينة في ترجمة المعتقدات والمُسلّمات الثقافية والرسائل السياسية التي تغلف النص الأصلي. نتائج التحليل النصية تتجه نحو ترجمة تُفقد النص الأصلي خصوصيته الثقافية والتاريخية ونحو إعادة صياغة ثقافية للنص ولكن بسياق ومعتقد سياسي محايد يناسب وعي القارئ الغربي. ولكن هذا التوجه في الترجمة أتى على حساب إخفاء رؤية النص الأصلي التاريخية والأيديولوجية والسياسية لصالح خلق نص إنجليزي يتسم بملائمته للإجاهات والقيم الفكرية العالمية وبالأخص القيم الأمريكية والأوروبية الأكثر شيوعًا وتأثيرًا في عالم اليوم. قد يعزى سلوك المترجمة إلى أسباب متعددة: منهاإلى الشخص المترجم كعدم درايته بأبعاد الصراع الفلسطيني الإسرائيلي الأزلي، أو عدم رغبته بالانخراط في تبعات ذلك الصراع الفكرية، مما دفعه إلى تبني نص أكثر حيادية، وقد يعزى سلوك المترجم أيضًا إلى إيمانه بوجوب التركيز فقط على القيم الجمالية والفنية للنص الأصلي وشخصياته، وعدم تطويع النص الأصلي لأي رسائل سياسية أو أيديولوجية للكاتب الأصلي. ولكن السبب الذي يميل إليه مؤلف الدراسة هو استماتة المترجم في خلق نص إنجليزي عالمي منسجم وملائم لأكبر عدد من القراء.

الكلمات الدالة: المُسلّمات الثقافية، إعادة صياغة ثقافية للنص، القواعد العالمية للترجمة، ترجمة اللأيديولوجيات، الترجمة في سياق ما بعد الاستعمار.

1. Introduction

The current paper studies how "*nonlinguistic presupposition*" (Fawcett 2014, p. 124) is approached in the English translation of Ghassan Kanafani's resistance literary work *Men in the Sun* (1962/2015). More particularly, it investigates how (i) the translator's approach (perspective/attitudes) to the source text and (ii) the translation context (as influenced by global English) have reshaped the *sociocultural context* of the original (Bassnett, 2011, p. 94). This investigation is hoped to elaborate on the ongoing conflict between the need for "cultural universalism" as necessitated by the different internationalisation and globalisation processes on the one hand and "culture specificity" serving a particular society on the other (House 2016, pp. 65-66), a conflict between, in Bassnett's words (2011, p. 94), "global and local systems". The findings of this investigation will give insights into the dynamic role of nonlinguistic presupposition in Arabic-English fiction translation and the shift it may undergo under the influence of such external constraining factors as a translation's *position* in the hosting culture (e.g., central and peripheral) (Toury 2012, p.33), audience expectations (Mason 2000; Saldanha 2008; Ying and Zhao 2018), the translator's *ideological perspective* (Munday 2008), globalisation and market demands (Bassnett 2011; House 2016) and *postcolonial* contexts (Tymoczko 2002; Kershaw 2018).

A number of previous studies on English-Arabic fiction translations (e.g., Abdulwahab 2012; Abualadas 2019a) have revealed a trend to *explicitate* (Blum-Kulka 2004) the non-linguistic presupposition of the original and to *contextualise* rather than *recontextualise* the original text (House 2016). The present study will try to test if these findings hold true for fiction translation in the opposite direction (from Arabic into English). It will further investigate the translator's *mediating presence* in translating non-linguistic presupposition (Munday 2008, p. 14) and the effects of any translational orientations (e.g., contextualisation or re-contextualisation) on the political messages and ideological assumptions of the original work/author. Finally, based on the textual data, the study will attempt to discuss the influence of some external conditional factors that could be at play.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Nonlinguistic Presupposition: Definition

Presupposition is known as the knowledge which is accommodated by the reader/hearer as part of the non-controversial assumptions necessary for speech to sound *sensible* or *appropriate* (Grundy 2013, p. 48). When those accommodations are triggered by a specific lexicon or syntactic construction (a linguistic form), such as an iterative word (e.g., "again" or "reread") or a wh-question, they are called *linguistic* or *semantic* presupposition (see Atlas 2006, pp. 29-30). For example, the hearer in a sentence like "Jane has reread the novel" has to accommodate, as non-controversial information, the idea that "Jane read the novel before". This type of information is called linguistic presupposition as it is clearly triggered by the use of the iterative verb "reread". This linguistic presupposition is argued to concern the logical relations needed for our utterances to sound sensible. Sometimes the accommodations we need to make concern nonlinguistic (contextual or cultural) information, such as the question "Where is my Shakespeare?" which will sound sensible only if we presume that "Shakespeare is a book". Such accommodations which are more concerned with the appropriateness conditions of our speech are often called nonlinguistic presuppositions (see Sandt 2012, pp. 329-330). Nonlinguistic presuppositions are called pragmatic because if they are not accommodated, our speech will not "make proper sense, appearing inconsistent with the context, not fully relevant and, therefore, inappropriate" (Grundy 2013, pp. 49-50).

One of the earliest and most influential accounts of nonlinguistic presupposition was given by the philosopher Robert Stalnaker (1999, pp. 47-62). He introduced the notion of "pragmatic presupposition" to discuss nonlinguistic presupposition. He defines pragmatic presupposition as *common ground* or *common background belief* between interlocutors (1999, p. 49). He argues that every communication happens on the background of particular assumptions believed or shared by the speaker and the hearer, the presumed background information. For example, when a person invites his friend to play chess, he normally assumes that his friend can play chess and also he is willing to do so. Because of these shared assumptions, British people can for example freely exchange messages using idiomatic expressions like "Bob's your uncle" (you have got it made) and "He popped his clogs" (he died). For Stalnaker, this type of presupposition is more related to the interlocutors' shared cognitive context, expectations, attitudes and communicative goals than to the semantic content or relations (see

Sandt 2012, p. 331).

According to Stalnaker (1999, pp. 49-53), the common ground is dynamic; it expands and changes as the communication proceeds. Each utterance contributes something to the interlocutors' presumed background. This common ground or presumed background allows for *conversational economy* (Grundy 2013, p. 50); we normally depend on the hearers to accommodate assumptions which otherwise need to be elaborated. This dependence on the hearer's ability or willingness to accommodate assumptions allows some items in our speech to be perceived as more *salient,* i.e., prominent or noticeable, than others (Grundy 2013, p. 50). Presupposed assumptions are always perceived as less salient than the information that is explicitly stated. When I say "Shakespeare was a true protestant", the presupposed information "Shakespeare was an English playwright" is less salient than the more explicit claim on his religious beliefs.

2.2 Nonlinguistic Presupposition in Translation Studies

The previous researches into the function of nonlinguistic presupposition in translation have indicated its vital importance in the interpretation and translation processes (see Ying and Zhao 2018, pp. 111-113). Fawcett (2014, pp. 124-126) points out that any language use will normally involve nonlinguistic (contextual or cultural) triggers of presupposition which translators must be aware of when translating between the different languages and cultures. The English literal translations "He dies without a sound like Alfred de Vigny's wolf" and "We need Mohacs" may not make any make sense to the English target reader who does not presuppose the cultural information which French people share about Alfred de Vigny's poem "*The Death of The Wolf*" and the cultural information which Hungarian people share about the Battle of Mohacs (Fawcett 2014, pp. 124-125). Because translation involves a shift in the text audience, literal translation in such cases may lead to a loss of the original nonlinguistic presupposition needed to comprehend the intended message. Since translation is argued to involve not only linguistic aspects, but also contextual, cultural, and even psychological aspects, translators may need to unpack the contextual and cultural knowledge assumed by the original speaker/writer to help retrieve the original implications (Ying and Zhao 2018, p. 112, see House 2016, pp. 59-62; Abualadas 2020c, p. 61).

Appiah (2012, p. 341) argues that in literary translation "a thick description of context" (*contextualisation*) is needed to reproduce the presupposed contextual information and thus to situate the translated work in its original context. This requires inserting exegeses (explanations) in the translated text. These exegeses/explanations which the translator adds, which are often intended to bridge or eliminate contextual and cultural gaps, are termed *optional pragmatic explicitations* (Klaudy and Károly 2005, p. 17). An example is when we translate "Tiberias" as "Lake Tiberias" or "He has met his Waterloo" as "He has suffered a crushing defeat", which both explicitate certain nonlinguistic (contextual) knowledge presupposed by the original speaker/writer and which may not be familiar to the target audience.

According to Blum-Kulka (2004, pp. 292-296), such explicitations of nonlinguistic presupposition, which often contribute to the *coherence* and *fluency* of the target text, can increase the target text's explicitness, a phenomenon known as *Explicitation Hypothesis*: translations tend to be more *explicit* than their originals due to the mediation/interpretation process inherent in translation. For Pápai (2004, pp. 144-145), the explicitation of presupposed contextual information is a universal translation strategy that often reflects the translator's (intentional or unintentional) attempts to eliminate the *ambiguity* of the original text and/or to create a text that meets the communicative expectations of the target audience (see Saldanha 2008). Becher (2010, pp. 22-23) argues that this explicitation tendency, which is typical of translated texts, is motivated by the translators' tendencies to "compensate for cultural distance and to avoid *risk*" (emphasis added). Translation, as an across-cultural communication act, involves transferring information into an environment or a context where the target audience shares less cultural information with original author/writer. In such a context, translators may tend to explicitate background assumptions shared by the original author in an attempt to avoid the risk of misunderstanding (Pym 2005).

According to Toury's laws of translation (2012, pp. 304-309), this greater explicitation of background assumptions is seen as an instance of *standardisation*, which often leads to translated texts that are, when compared to non-translated texts, less ambiguous, more plain, flatter and easier to process (see Pym 2014, pp. 78-79). In Toury's laws of translation, explicitation is however argued to be more related to the status/prestige of the translated text in the recipient culture; the

higher this status/prestige, the more the translated text will explicitate the original background assumptions; the lower this status/prestige, the less the translated text will explicitate these background assumptions. Given the fact that English literature, compared to Arabic literature, is more dominant and prestigious, we would expect to see a higher level of explicitation of original background assumptions in English-Arabic literary translations than in Arabic-English literary translations. As Toury puts it, "the decision to disguise a text as a translation always implies a deliberate act of *subordination*, namely, to a culture which is considered prestigious, important, or dominant" (Toury, 2012, p. 50, emphasis in the original).

For Juliana House (2016, p. 66), where translation is a *re-contextualisation* process, "taking a text out of its original frame and context and placing it within a new set of relationships and culturally conditioned expectations", translators need to take into account the reception by the target readers. In *covert* translation, this is achieved by reactivating the original presupposed assumptions in the target context, while in *convert* translation it is achieved through applying a *cultural filtering* to adjust the code according to the communicative principles assumed in the target context (see Bassnett, 2011). But for scholars like Jacques Derrida (2001) and Lawrence Venuti (2008), the whole process of re-contextualisation is not preferred, since a translation should always import the otherness/foreignness of the source text into the target language and culture (*foreignisation)*.

Translation process can be looked at as "a socially situated activity" and therefore can be approached from a *cultural/social* perspective (Mason 2014, p.36). This view entails consideration of such contextual or socio-political factors as globalisation, internationalisation, postcolonialism, power relations. House (2016, pp. 65-66; 2018, pp. 133-137) for example sees that due to the processes of globalisation and internationalisation in many life spheres, there is an increasing need for translated texts that are suitable for people from multiple linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Because of the international domination/influence of English language (especially for functioning as *lingua franca*) at social, political, academic and economic levels, much of re-contextualisation in translated texts has been performed under the impact of English as a global lingua franca, with an orientation towards *cultural universalism*, but with a general drift towards the Anglophone and west-European values.

From a postcolonial perspective, Tymoczko (2002) questions whether the translator wants to take the text to the target reader or take the target reader to the text (see Bassnett and Trivedi 2002, p. 13). In the latter case, the translator may need to reproduce the historical and socio-political context of the original work through "paratextual framing", such as prefaces, glossaries and footnotes (Munday 2008, p. 172). Taking the asymmetrical power relations into account, translations are sometimes re-contextualised in a way that naturalises or neutralises colonisation (Niranjana 1992). Sometimes, they reveal a move towards more *universalisied interpretations* (Kershaw 2018, p. 205), where "post-colonial works are appropriated or swallowed whole into hegemonic canons of world literature" (Tymoczko 2002, p. 35).

3. Corpus and Methodology

The source text in the present study is the Arabic novel *Men in the Sun* by Ghassan Kanafani (1962/2015). Ghassan Kanafani (1963-1972) is a Palestinian social activist, novelist and dramatist. He is an active member of the revolutionary movement "The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine" (PELP), and is one of the most pioneer writers of Palestinian resistance literature. He studied Arabic literature in Damascus and wrote about 14 literary works that include short stories, novels and plays. He received several awards for his great contribution to modern Arabic literature. Kanafani's literary works often rely on the themes of resistance and liberation and are highly influenced by his personal story as a refugee who escaped war and violence and sought safety and freedom.

> His close involvement in the struggle for the recognition and restitution of Palestinian rights might lead us to expect that Kanafani's novels and short stories would be no more than vehicles for the preaching of those principles, albeit in an indirect form. (Kilpatrick 1999, p. 11)

Kanafani's novel *Men in the Sun* was adapted into a movie. It has reached a wider audience as it was also translated into many languages including English, Italian, Dutch, German, Hungarian, French, Spanish and Czech. The novel portrays the

suffering of Palestinians during their conflict with Israelis. It narrates the story of three Palestinian refugees (Abu Qais, Marwan and Assad) who flee the war and plot to be smuggled to Kuwait, but their journey to a safe and better life ends with their death. The story depicts the challenges which Palestinian people faced in their search for identity and also the pain which they went through during immigration, which all resulted from violent circumstances, bad leadership and false hopes (Magrath, 1979, p. 95). Therefore, the study suggests that translating *Men in the Sun* (as a postcolonial text) into any foreign cultures requires a contextualisation process that situates the text in its historical and sociocultural context to enable the target audience to see the image that Kanafani tries to draw about the daily struggle of Palestinian refugees (Neimneh, 2017; Shraideh, 2018, see also Tymoczko 2002; Munday 2008).

The importance of Kanafani's novel stems from its literary features as well as its implicit political messages (Audebert 1984, p. 76; Neimneh, 2017, pp. 483-484). The symbolism used in the story operates upon multiple political, ethical and social levels (Audebert 1984, p. 76). Kanafani's writing style in *Men in* the *Sun* exhibits honesty, frankness, purity, poignancy and pathos. He uses a third-person omniscient point of view, where he skillfully blends past and present in the consciousness of the characters, allowing the audience to perceive their individual motives for undertaking their dangerous journey (Kilpatrick 1999, p. 12).

The target text is Dr. Hilary Kilpatrick's English translation of the novel, *Men in the Sun* (1999). Dr. Hilary Kilpatrick is currently an independent researcher in Lausanne. She studied Arabic language literature at the University of Oxford, and she taught Arabic prose literature in a number of universities in Europe. She published some books and research papers on both classical and modern classical Arabic literature and also translated a number of works from modern Arabic prose literature.

The present study adopts a descriptive and product-oriented research approach that enables us to test, refute and then amend the results/views of the theoretical models of translation (Toury 2012). The study will compare target text with the original and identify the variation/shift in the use of nonlinguistic presupposition. The study will compare here the way(s) in which background assumptions operate in the two texts or the way(s) they are utilized by both the original author and the translator. Based on *textual* evidence (Mason 2000, p. 18), the study will attempt to describe the different ways in which the shift in nonlinguistic presupposition may impact the dynamic communicative aspects of the story. Given that a translation is normally an outcome of certain motivated choices and therefore works as a means to trace the pathways of the translator's mental processes (Hatim and Mason 2013, p. 4), the study will also use the textual analysis results to unearth the translator's *black box* containing the internal (mental/psychological) translational processes underlying the shift (House 2016, p. 90).

4. Analysis of Nonlinguistic Presupposition

The study has compared the source text with the target text and traced any variation in the translation of nonlinguistic presupposition. The study has found 112 cases of variation. These variations are shown in Table (1) below. This section will categorize the types of these variations and show how each type occurs in context of translation, while the subsequent section will discuss in greater detail the general translational trends and mental processes underlying these trends.

Table 1. Variations in the translation of nonlinguistic presupposition

	Type of variation	Occurrences
1	Losing the original nonlinguistic presupposition due to literal translation	9
2	Preserving the original nonlinguistic presupposition via explicitation	14
3	Losing the original nonlinguistic presupposition due to translating source-culture specific-items by a functional equivalent	68
4	Losing the original nonlinguistic presupposition due to omitting source-culture specific-items without compensation	21
	Total	112

Firstly, as the data in Table (1) show, in the first type of shift there are 9 cases of translation that run the risk of losing nonlinguistic presuppositions because of translating the original text literally, without any consideration on the part of the

translator whether the presupposed cultural knowledge in the original is familiar or not to the target audience. In the subsequent 14 cases, the translator however provides a pragmatic explicitation to preserve the presupposed knowledge of the original (see Klaudy and Károly 2005; Abualadas 2020a, p. 642). See the following examples:

1. **ST:** ...صحيح أن الرجال كانوا في شغل عن دفنك وعن إكرام موتك.. ولكنك على أي حال بقيت هناك.. بقيت هناك! وفرت على نفسك الذل (Kanafani, 2015, p. 11)

TT: It is true that the men were too busy to bury you and honor you in your death. But all the same you stayed there. You stayed there. You saved yourself humiliation... (Kilpatrick 1999, pp. 23-24)

2. **ST:** وماذا تحسب أنه حدث حين شاهدوا خيام البدو؟ لقد اشتروا جرعة الماء، بكل ما يملكون من نقود أو خواتم زواج أو ساعات ... يقولون إن حاتم كان بدوياً.. (Kanafani, 2015, p.70)

TT: What do you think happened when they saw bedouin encampments? They bought a mouthful of water in exchange for all the money or wedding rings or watches they owned. People say Hatim* was a bedouin.

Footnote: Hatim, of the bedouin tribe of Taiy, is proverbial among the Arabs for his limitless generosity and hospitality. (Kilpatrick 1999, p. 55)

In Example (1), Abu Qais is jealous of teacher "Selim" who passed away just one day before the invasion of his town. Selim was not honored in his death (in Islam, honoring someone's death means burying him/her immediately after death), but Abu Qais believes that Selim has spared himself humiliation. This indicates that Abu Qais is devastated and traumatized to the extent that he prefers death over life. The Arabic expression "إكرام موتك" (honoring your death) is translated literally, without any explicitation, running the risk of losing the cultural knowledge assumed in the original as well as the implied message if the target reader is not familiar with this presupposed knowledge.

In (2), Abul Khaizuran, (a ruthless trafficker who convinces Abu Qais, Marwan and Assad that he can smuggle them into Kuwait in his empty water-tanker for a cheap price) tells the three men about the struggle that many Palestinians had to go through while crossing the borders. He says that a group of Palestinians once had to give some Bedouins all the money they have for a mouthful of water. Abul Khaizuran mentions the figure "Hatim", who is famous for his chivalry and hospitality among Arabs, so his utterance "يقولون إن حاتم كان بدوياً" (People say Hatim was a Bedouin) is ironical, as the Bedouins' behaviour in the story is the opposite of what Arabs think of Bedouins: being generous like Hatim. Unlike (1), the translator here explicitates in a footnote the presupposed cultural knowledge, which can help transfer the nonlinguistic presupposition needed to achieve the intended irony in the translated narrative.

The data in Table (1) also show that there are 68 cases of translation involving a loss of the original nonlinguistic presupposition due to translating an expression specific to the source-language culture by a *dynamic/functional equivalent* in the target-language culture (Nida 2003, pp. 159-161). These cases most often involve translations that naturalize the original message; by replacing the source-language items which may not be appropriate or common in the target-language culture with more appropriate or common ones in the target-language culture. In these cases, the message of the original seems to be "tailored to the receptor's linguistic needs and cultural expectation" (Munday 2016, p. 68, see Pym 2014, pp. 11-14). This however comes at the expense of the presupposition of the original, which is lost in the translated text. See the following examples:

3. **ST:** حرام! ابنك قيس، متى سيعود للمدرسة (Kanafani, 2015, p. 17)

TT: "It's *disgraceful*. Your son, Qais, when will he go back to school?" (Kilpatrick 1999, p. 26)

4. **ST:** وحين ترك الجيش وانضم إلى فرق المجاهدين كان معروفاً بأنه أحسن سائق للسيارات الكبيرة يمكن ان يعثر عليه، ولذلك استدعاه مجاهدو الطيرة ليقود مصفحة عتيقة.. (Kanafani, 2015, p. 55)

TT: When he left the army and joined the *Freedom Fighters*, he had the reputation of being the best lorry driver one could find. That was why the *commandos* in Al-Tira invited him to drive an old armored car... (Kilpatrick 1999, p. 47)

5. **ST:** لقد تعبت في حياتي بشكل أكثر من كاف! إي والله، أكثر من كاف. (Kanafani, 2015, p. 73)

TT: "I've had more than enough exhaustion in my life. *Yes indeed*, more than enough." (Kilpatrick 1999, p. 56)

In these three examples, some expressions rooted in the Arab-Islamic culture have been replaced by more *natural* or *neutral* target expressions, resulting in a loss of the nonlinguistic presupposition of the original. In (3), Abu Qais' wife

complains that they live in extreme poverty; they even cannot afford their son Qais to go back to school, so she advises her husband to venture out to relieve their suffering. She says that not sending their son Qais to school is something "حرام" (haram/forbidden). In most Arab-Islamic culture, the word "haram" tends to be associated with what is proscribed or sinful according to the Islamic rules, but this word is substituted in the translation with "disgraceful", which is less specific to the source culture but more neutral to the Western audience.

In (4), the narrator explains that Abul Khaizuran served as a driver in the British army but later decided to join the groups of "المجاهدين" (Mujahideen/jihadists) to fight against the Israeli occupation. The expression "المجاهدين", from the Arabic word "jihad" which, most Muslims define as a struggle against Islam's enemies, is replaced by the expressions "Freedom Fighters" and "commandos", which are less negative and threatening to the West. In (5), Abul Khaizuran complains to Assad that he is tired of working as a smuggler. He uses the expression "أي والله", which literally means "yes, I swear to Allah", but conventionally has an emphatic function; it is equivalent to saying "I confirm". Similarly, the translator substituted this Arabic expression with "Yes indeed", which is functionally equivalent to the original and at the same time keeps the massage neutral or natural to non-Muslims.

Some translation cases show that some source culture-specific items are abandoned in favor of options that are more *common* or *familiar* in the target-language culture, resulting, in all cases, in a loss of the original nonlinguistic presupposition. Observe the following examples:

6. ST: الشباب يملأون الأرض *كالفقع*.. لو أشار بيده لتهاووا فوقه كالذباب. (Kanafani, 2015, p. 79)

TT: "the world's as full of young men as it is of *mushrooms*. If he made one gesture, they would be all over him like flies." (Kilpatrick 1999, p. 60)

7. ST: لماذا لا تنهض من فوق تلك الوسادة وتضرب في بلاد الله بحثا عن *الخبز*؟ (Kanafani, 2015, p. 88)

TT: Why don't you get up off that cushion and set out through God's world in search of a *living*? (Kilpatrick 1999, p. 63)

8. ST: *ليكسر الفخار بعضه*. أنا لست أريد الآن إلا مزيداً من النقود. (Kanafani, 2015, p. 89)

TT: "*Let the dead bury their dead*. I only want more money now…" (Kilpatrick 1999, p. 64)

9. ST: أي كوكب وأي *بطيخ*! دعني أمض قبل أن يطردني الحاج (Kanafani, 2015, p. 97)

TT: "What's all this *rubbish* about Kawkab? Let me go before Haj Rida gives me the sack." (Kilpatrick 1999, p. 68)

In (6), Abul Khaizuran thinks that if he does not work hard, his boss, Haj Rida, will sack him and can easily find a substitute as there are many desperate job seekers who exist everywhere like "الفقع" (a kind of desert truffles that grows widely in the Arabian Peninsula). The Arabic word "الفقع", which is highly likely not presupposed by the English audience, is replaced by "mushrooms", which is more common in the English culture. In (7), Abu Qais' wife is asking him to travel abroad to search for "خبز" (literally means "bread", but conventionally implicates "provision for family"). Similarly, the word "خبز" (bread), which Westerns may not often associate with provision, is substituted in English with a more familiar idiomatic phrase, "making a living". The Arabic word "الله" (Allah) in this example, which is more specifically used by Arabic speakers (both Muslims and Christians, with certain differences in what the term refers to), is also replaced by the English word "God", which is more general and common in most Western and English-speaking communities.

In (8), Abul Khaizuran uses the Arabic idiom "ليكسر الفخار بعضة" (literally, "let potteries break themselves", but conventionally equivalent to the English "Don't cry over spilt milk) to express his apathy towards the occupation of his home country. This Arabic idiom is translated by a Biblical Christian phrase which may be more acceptable in the Western cultures, "Let the dead bury their dead" (from the Bible, Matthew 8:22). In (9), during signing the papers while crossing the boarders into Kuwait, officers ask Abul Khaizuran if he is in a relationship with an Iraqi dancer named Kawakeb, which causes a delay that tragically kills Abu Qais, Marwan and Assad who were waiting in the truck's metal tank in the extreme heat. Abul Khaizuran uses the word "بطيخ" (literally means "watermelon", but is conventionally assumed to convey irritation or annoyance) to express his anger at the officers' question. The word "watermelon", which may not be used in Western cultures for this situation, is replaced by the word "rubbish", which is more commonly used for this situation.

The last type of variation in the translation of the nonlinguistic presupposition as Table (1) shows is the loss of

presupposition because of omitting some source-culture specific-items without any compensation. Out of 21, 18 cases of omission involve *social deictics* that encode the assumed social relationship between characters in the story; more particularly kinship terms like "uncle" and "brother" (see Levinson 2006, pp. 119-120). Omitting these items results in concealing the presupposed level of social distance or intimacy between characters in the original story. See the following examples:

10. ST: قال أبو قيس:/الأخ أسعد يحكي الحق يجب أن نكون على بينة من الأمر. (Kanafani, 2015, p. 53)

TT: Abu Qais remarked: "Assad's quite right. We must be quite dear about things." (Kilpatrick 1999, p. 46)

11. ST: ما رأي عم/الحاج رضا أن يصعد إلى سيارتي؟ (Kanafani, 2015, p. 56)

TT: "How would Haj Rida like to get into my lorry?" (Kilpatrick 1999, p. 47)

In (10), while Abu Qais, Marwan and Assad are negotiating the terms of the smuggling deal, Assad asks Abul Khaizuran to explain every step to them, and Abu Qais says that "الأخ أسعد يحكي الحق" (literally, brother Assad says the right). Conventionally, the use of the kinship term "brother" presupposes a level of respect (or probably unfamiliarity) between Abu Qais and Assad. In (11), after their lorry gets stuck in the mud, Abul Khaizuran invites his boss, Haj Rida, to get back into the lorry while he will handle the issue on his own. Abul Khaizuran uses the kinship term "uncle" to address Haj Rida, which similarly reflects an assumed level of respect on the part of Abul Khaizuran to Haj Rida. However, the two kinship terms "brother" and "uncle" are dropped from the translated text, suggesting a more neutralised/impersonalised social relationship between characters in the translated text.

5. The Main Findings

According to the data in Table (1), there is a very strong tendency in the translated narrative to *lose* rather than preserve the nonlinguistic presupposition associated with the expressions specific to the source-langue culture. While the nonlinguistic presupposition is preserved (through explicitation) in only 14 translational cases (about 13% of total cases), it is totally lost in all the other cases. As Table (1) shows, the loss of the presupposition is caused by three processes: (i) translating a culture-specific item literally or (ii) by a functional equivalent, or (iii) completely dropping it from the translated text. But as the numerical data show, opting for a functional equivalent is the most significant among these three processes; out of 112 cases of presupposition loss, 68 cases (about 61% of total loss cases) occur as a result of opting for a target-language expression with a function similar to that of the original (e.g., "mushrooms" for "الفقع" (desert truffles)). This suggests that this tendency in translation to lose the original nonlinguistic presupposition is more related to the translator's preference for forms that are more common, natural or appropriate to the target audience. In other words, the loss of nonlinguistic presupposition is more related to a *standardisation* pattern, ignoring the source-text options, "in favour of [more] habitual options offered by a target repertoire" (Toury 2012, p. 304). Another evidence that standardisation pattern is in operation is the tendency to remove social deixis from the translated text (see Abualadas 2019b), which expresses a pull towards neutralising/formalising the presupposed social relationships between characters.

The analysis suggests that the target reader can have an access to the original nonlinguistic presupposition if it is explicitated (e.g., when explicitating the word "Hatim" as "an Arab man known for his limitless generosity and hospitality"). But when the nonlinguistic presupposition is translated by a functional equivalent (e.g., when translating "Let potteries break themselves" by "Let the dead bury their dead"), it will not only be lost, but also substituted with another one common in the target culture. The data show that in only 14 cases the original presupposition is explicitated, while in 68 cases it is omitted and replaced by a new one from the target culture. This points to a tendency in translation to replace rather than explicitate the presupposition of the original (which can constitute a counter-evidence against Blum-Kulka's hypothesis of explicitation as a translation universal). In other words, the translator tends to use, or relay on, the target reader's rather than the source reader's common knowledge to communicate messages (see Grundy 2013, pp. 49-50). The translator here seems to *design* her text to confirm the target audience's communicative expectations and to meet the appropriateness/felicity conditions in their culture (Mason 2000, p. 18, see Abualadas 2020b, p. 138).

The translator's tendency to adapt her discourse to the assumed knowledge of her readers reflects that she adopts *domestication* rather than *foreignisation* strategy (Venuti 2008). But this domestication strategy can result in the loss of the

sociocultural and *political* context needed to understand the implied political messages of Kanafani's novel. The novel, as a work of resistance literature in postcolonial context, needs to be situated/interpreted in its historical and sociocultural context to grasp the picture that Kanafani tries to draw about the hardship that Palestinians go through under occupation (Audebert 1984; Neimneh, 2017; Shraideh, 2018). In other words, it needs a *cultural* translation which not only involves an explicit linguistic exchange, but also, and more importantly, a cultural and historical understanding (Bassnett, 2011). The word "bread" which Abu Qais' wife uses basically implicates "provision for family", but it has always been used in most Arab cultures to symbolize "the food of the poor and the hungry" and "their daily strive to get food". A *re-contextualising* translation like "making a living" may not fully reflect these presupposed meanings and therefore may leave the target reader with no clue to perceive the mental picture that Kanafani is drawing for the daily struggle of Palestinian refugees. Opting for a more *contextualising* (explicitating) translation could have preserved the political values of the original work.

This move towards more *re-contextualisation* in translation (House 2016, p. 66) points to the translator's (deliberate or non-deliberate) efforts to take the story out of its sociocultural context and place it in a context that is more natural/appropriate to a broader audience in the English-speaking world. This reflects a pull towards a less politicised/ideologised and historicised translated text. Abul Khaizuran joined the groups of "mujahideen/jihadists" to fight against the Israeli occupation. Historically, most of these groups are often referred to as Islamic jihad (or resistance) movements whose objective is to end the Jewish occupation and establish an independent Islamic Palestinian state. But translating "mujahideen/jihadists" into "Freedom Fighters" or "commandos" will not only naturalise the text, but also dehistoricise and depoliticise it. Such systematic attempts to dehistoricise and depoliticise the original may point to a move towards "*universalising interpretation*" in the translated resistance literature (Kershaw 2018, p.205). The outcome of such a move is an English translated text that is more relatable and accessible to the Western readers (see Tymoczko 2002).

The pull towards re-contextualising the text reflects, in addition to a standardisation tendency, a higher degree of intolerance of *interference* from foreign cultures on the part of the translator (Toury 2012, p. 310). This lower degree of tolerance of interference can be linked, according to Toury (2012, pp. 314-315), to the higher prestige and dominance of English language in relation to Arabic. This actually supports House's (2016, pp.65-66) argument that, because of the international economic, political and cultural influence of English language and its function as lingua franca, there is a growing *cultural universalism/neutralism* that is largely oriented towards the Anglo-American values.

The avoidance of contextualisation could however be related to translator's disinterest in, or indifference to, politics, more particularly the decades-long struggle between Israelis and Palestinians. It could also be simply related to her lack of the sufficient background information on the war between the two sides or her lack of awareness of the political and ideological aspects of this war. Assuming that "the style of a text is conditioned by the *perspective* of the translator" (Munday 2008, p.155, emphasis added), the re-contextualisation trend could be related to the translator's attitudes towards the source text and her belief that it is not a political work. In her introduction to the translation, Kilpatrick says that "Kanafani was not so concerned with politics that all his writing was invaded by it" (Kilpatrick 1999, p. 13). She also believes that although his novels show a sort of commitment to the Palestinian cause, Kanafani "refused to impose an ideological scheme on his fiction", so his works have "a universal appeal" or "a universal quality" (Kilpatrick 1999, pp. 11-15).

6. Conclusion

This study has explored the variation in nonlinguistic presupposition (Stalnaker, 1999; Fawcett, 2014) in Kilpatrick's English translation of Kanafani's *Men in the Sun*. The findings point to a tendency to lose the nonlinguistic presupposition of the original, which is associated with a tendency on the translator's part to *standardise* (Toury 2012), *domesticate* (Venuti 2008) or *re-contextualise* (House 2016) the original code. The study suggests that this type of shift can affect the original message in particular ways. While the shift for example points to a trend to neutralise/naturalise the message to the Western or international audience, it suggests a pull towards dehistoricising, deideologising and depoliticising the original, and thus towards *universalising interpretation* (Tymoczko 2002; Kershaw 2018). This confirms House's (2016, pp.65-66) proposition of the growing *cultural universalism* that gradually moves towards the more dominant and valued Anglo-American culture.

There could be more than possible underlying reason for the trend towards re-contextualising translation and universalising interpretation. Firstly, it could be that Kilpatrick's was not confident about English readers' ability or willingness to accommodate the otherness/foreignness of the Arab-Islamic culture. It could also be related to Kilpatrick's lack of background information, or interest, in the complicated politics/conflicts of the Middle East, so adopting a neutral stance towards ideologies may have sounded a safer option to her. It could also have to do with her assumption that Kanafani's novel should not be ideologised or politicised, instead focusing our attention more on the story dramatic structure, characters, plot and denouement, giving the story a "more profound, universal meaning" (Kilpatrick 1999, p. 11). Personally, I would like to go for the last option that Kilpatrick has opted for a more "culturally universal" and "contextually homogenised" text that maintains relevance to a widely diverse audience (House 2016, p.65).

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