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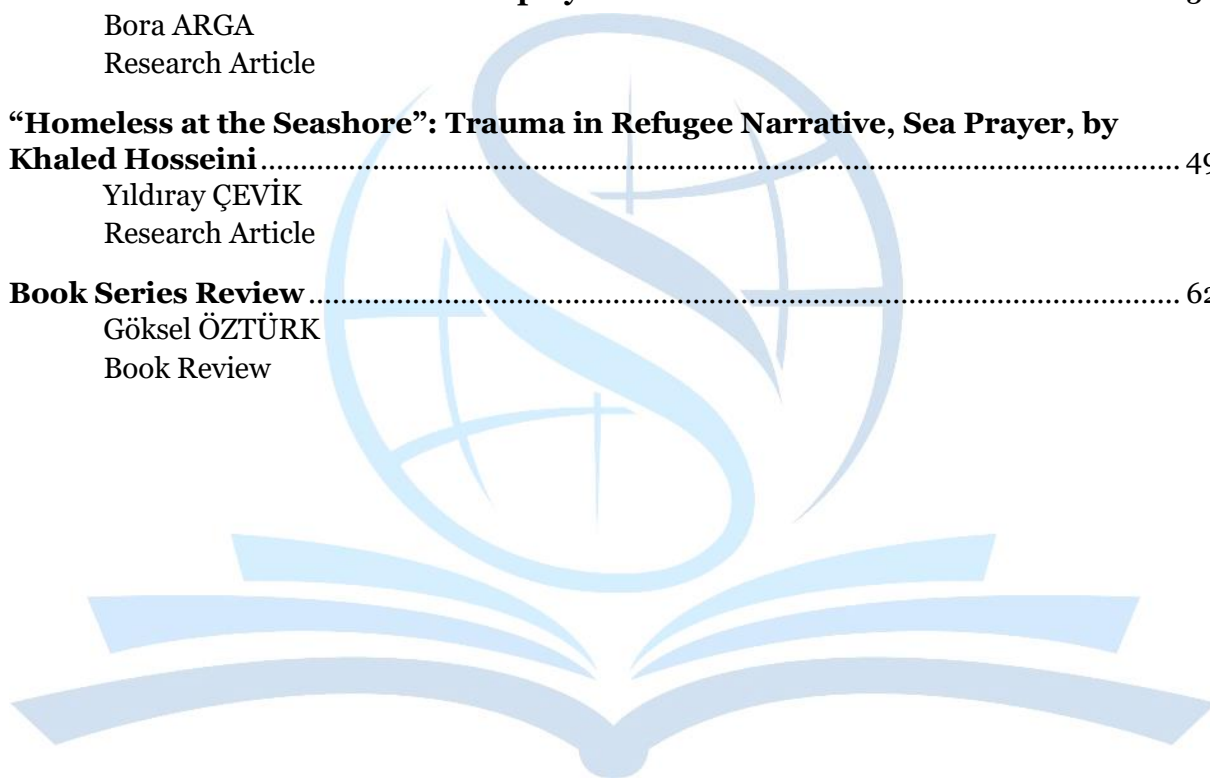


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## **The Impact of In-house Guidelines on Subtitle Quality: A Sample Study of TED Translators in the FAR Model\***

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### **Abstract**

Audiovisual Translation develops and expands around products with a multi-layered structure; nevertheless, the conclusions that the quality of subtitling is negatively affected by the existence of different practices and the adoption of heterogeneous approaches have paved the way for steps taken for standardization. In this direction, codes on subtitling norms have been produced, research has been conducted on different scales and homogeneity in subtitles has been tried to be achieved. Generalized subtitling standards, which failed to meet the requirements of each translation project, have resulted in the introduction of localized in-house translation guidelines prepared specifically for the translation task. Although in-house guidelines that address technical, linguistic and stylistic considerations of subtitling in the light of local norms are much more functional than generalized guidelines in ensuring quality, it has remained unclear to what extent these guidelines are able to fulfil this function. This study has examined whether the subtitling rules set by the in-house guidelines for TED's crowdsourced translation project are followed according to the FAR Model (2017) proposed by Jan Pedersen, focusing on volunteers' translations into Turkish. The audiovisual material sampled from the project have first been subjected to qualitative analysis under the Readability category of this Model, and then quantitative results have been evaluated in terms of subtitle quality. The results have revealed that the in-house guidelines are not able to bridge the gap between volunteers with different translation backgrounds, prevent in-group variation, and ensure a certain level of quality, suggesting insights for crowdsourcing projects as well.

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\* This article is a part of the MA thesis conducted by Aysu Uslu Korkmaz, in the Department of English Translation and Interpreting, Hacettepe University, under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Ayşe Şirin Okyayuz.

**Keywords:** subtitling, in-house guidelines, subtitle quality, crowdsourcing, the FAR Model

## **1. Introduction: Moving from Subtitling Standards to In-house Guidelines**

Gideon Toury (2012) emphasizes the importance of “negotiation, making agreements and establishing conventions-cum-routines” in the formation or continuity of a group (p. 62). Toury (2012), who also recognizes the function of norms in translation, defines them as “performance instructions” and states that these “instructions” provide information about “what is prescribed and forbidden, as well as what is tolerated and permitted in a certain behavioural dimension” (p. 63). Patrick Zabalbeascoa (1996), as mentioned by Toury (2012), argues that it is advantageous to adopt “priorities and restrictions” in translation, where priorities set out the goals within the framework of a translation project while restrictions are challenges that serve to explain the choices made and the solutions found (p. 243).

Translation norms, which can be determined by a party such as an individual, institution, or academia, can be considered as “translational constraints” (Bogucki, 2020, p. 26) that contribute to guiding translators’ preferences and thus improving the translation process and performance. Bearing in mind that the act of interlingual translation, which takes place in at least two languages and between two different cultures, and therefore has at least “two sets of norm-systems on each level” (Toury, 2021, p. 199), it is inevitable that there are more “translational constraints” to be taken into consideration when translating audiovisual texts with a multimodal dimension and a multi-layered structure.

Implying that even though there are many constraints to Audiovisual Translation, these constraints need to be overcome, Jorge Díaz-Cintas and Aline Remael (2021) suggest that heterogeneous approaches and the lack of a consensus have negative effects on quality (p. 91). As for subtitling, which is a particularly “intermodal” (Gottlieb, 1997, p. 95) form of Audiovisual Translation, the “Code of Good Subtitling Practice” (pp. 157-159) published as an appendix by Jan Ivarsson and Mary Carroll in 1998 can be regarded as an exemplary attempt at subtitling standards in this direction. This Code is an important step forward for both the translation industry and academia, and it has achieved widespread acceptance. On a more specific level, some translation scholars have also tried to standardize subtitle outputs by setting parameters based on region (see Karamitroglou, 1998) or language pair (see Díaz-Cintas, 2003). Jan Pedersen (2018), however, draws attention to the growing importance of in-house guidelines, observing that “[i]nitially prescribed norms, set out with the general requirements and in the various language versions, are currently being localised by adding local norms describing local practices” (p. 97).

Today, there are grounds to argue that subtitling does not have a set of fixed and well-accepted guidelines for use by different agents in different settings and for various audiovisual



material – instead, localized guidelines tailored to the purpose of the translation task and the language pair are now more functional. The extent to which these specially tailored in-house translation guidelines fulfil their function is, nevertheless, an issue that has not been addressed thoroughly enough. To this end, this study aims to find an answer to the question of whether in-house translation guidelines are effective to ensure “homogeneity” and achieve standardization of quality in subtitling practices, focusing on a crowdsourced translation project where volunteer translators with different translation experience collaborate under the guidance of in-house guidelines.

## **2. Theoretical Background: Technical Considerations of Subtitling**

Subtitling, as part of today’s “AVT proper” (Okyayuz, 2017, p. 115), can be defined as the conversion of information from the acoustic channel into a visual element and its superimposition on the image, usually in two lines at the bottom of the screen, but its characteristics transcend a simple definition.

Indeed, this type of audiovisual translation practice is distinguished by being “diasemiotic by nature” (Gottlieb, 2004, p. 86), having an “additive nature” (Bogucki, 2016, p. 35), and by the fact that the original soundtrack remains always accessible (Okyayuz, 2017, p. 127), thereby justifying the term “constrained translation” used by Christopher Titford (1982) in reference to subtitling. The shift from speech to writing, the text reduction that may be required due to the maximum number of characters, the position and alignment of subtitles, the number of characters per line, the style of subtitles, spotting and synchronization, the reading speed of the audience, and the duration of subtitles (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2021, p. 89-117) can all be recognized as technical specifications that subtitlers should consider in the decision-making process, which is deemed important in Audiovisual Translation according to Łukasz Bogucki (2020, p. 26). In addition to these specifications of subtitling, it should be noted that general expectations such as the adoption of a “target-oriented translation method” (Gottlieb, 2009) and the production of “subliminal subtitles” (Béhar, 2004) have also persisted.

Several translation scholars have examined the aspects that need to be considered in the subtitling process and typically emphasized similar constraints, as roughly listed above, in different categorizations. In his book on subtitling for TV programs, Jan Pedersen (2011) claims that subtitling decisions made without knowledge of “the semiotic switch from spoken to written language”, “the spatial and temporal constraints”, and “the condensation that these bring with them” would be meaningless (pp. 18-19). Zoé de Linde and Neil Kay (2014), on the other hand, indicate that “the integration of text, sound and image, the reading capabilities of target viewers, and the restrictions which these two factors place on space and time” are the

main challenges of subtitling, but they classify these challenges under the categories of “spatial restrictions”, “temporal restrictions”, and “synchronization” (pp. 5-7) and present a different approach than Pedersen (2011). Meanwhile, Marie-Noëlle Guillot (2019) puts stress on “spatial and temporal factors”, yet acknowledges that the aspects of “readability”, “the shift from speech to writing”, “multimodality”, and “cultural a-synchrony (Manhart, 2000)” also have an impact on these factors (pp. 34-36). Jorge Díaz-Cintas and Aline Remael (2021), both similar to and different from other scholars, focus first on “the semiotics of subtitling” and then on “spatial and temporal features” (pp. 64-117).

A close examination of the approaches of these important scholars reveals different considerations guiding the decision-making processes in subtitling, with varying recommendations and practices being covered. For example, de Linde and Kay (2014) report that subtitles usually have a maximum of 40 characters (p. 6), while Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021) declare that 42 characters per line (cpl) is no longer extra-regular (p. 97).

In the light of technological advancements, it can be reasonably maintained that many changing and evolving parameters, from screen sizes to distribution channels, affect the technical restrictions on subtitling. These dynamic conditions, therefore, not only explain the different approaches, but also point to the fact that there are still no conventional, established subtitling rules that can be adopted by everyone. This, again, points to the importance of preparing task-specific, customized guidelines.

### **3. Research Methodology**

#### **3.1. Data**

The previous sections have underscored that subtitles can be subject to technical constraints based on a number of parameters, and therefore it is not possible to talk about a standardized set of practices; instead, specially prepared translation guidelines need to be issued. It is known that this need has been recognized by both industry and academia, and steps have been taken along these lines. The aim of this study, however, is to examine the extent to which in-house guidelines, which are specifically designed for the translation task and deal extensively with the technical aspects of subtitling, are able to fulfil their role.

In order to serve the aim of the study, selected subtitles produced within the scope of a crowdsourcing practice will be evaluated for quality assessment and analysed in terms of their technical specifications. The study, which will be conducted as a mixed-methods research, will sample from the TED Translators program, one of the initiatives of *TED*, a non-profit organization. Operating since 2009, the TED Translators program is an example of a crowdsourced translation project launched to enable volunteer translators to translate audiovisual contents published on the organization’s official website from the original

language into other languages. It has a well-structured subtitling workflow, integrates with an online subtitle editor and provides translators with resources such as in-house guidelines and tutorials to ensure subtitle quality.

The audiovisual material to be analysed for quality have been selected according to a set of predetermined criteria. Following this, the TED Translators profiles of volunteers with at least 5 translations into Turkish have been reviewed. As a way to measure whether in-house translation guidelines blur the distinction between different groups, volunteer translators have been categorized into two groups: professional and non-professional translators, on the basis of shared and verified information, and have been evaluated according to their expertise. To further narrow down the data, translators who have translated in the “TED-Ed Original” category of animated lessons have been identified, 4 professional and 4 non-professional TED translators have randomly been selected, and their translation of one TED-Ed Lesson has been included in the corpus of this study.

## **3.2. Method**

### **3.2.1. The FAR Model (2017)**

Focusing on a crowdsourced translation project where professional and non-professional translators collaborate, the quality assessment of subtitles produced by volunteers will accordingly be carried out based on the FAR Model (2017) proposed by Jan Pedersen.

The FAR Model is a quality assessment framework that intends to examine subtitles in three different areas: “Functional Equivalence”, “Acceptability”, and “Readability”. Taking inspiration from the NER Model developed by Pablo Romero-Fresco and Juan Martínez Pérez (2015) for intralingual live subtitles and introduced for interlingual subtitles, this framework is applied to the end product with a “viewer-centred” (Pedersen, 2017, p. 215) approach. The most important reason why it has been adopted as the research method for this study is that it is “a general model that can be localised by feeding it parameters with data from in-house guidelines, best practice or national subtitling norms” (p. 215), and it provides researchers with flexibility as well as reliability for each material to be analysed. In this regard, Pedersen (2017) argues that evaluating materials with different characteristics within the framework of certain translation norms is not a correct practice (p. 224).

As a tripartite quality assessment framework, The FAR Model focuses on specific points in each category in which subtitles are investigated. Accordingly, the first category of the model, Functional Equivalence, assesses the extent to which the essence and intent of the original dialogue is accurately conveyed in the translation; the second category, Acceptability, assesses whether the translation is fluent and natural in the target language; and the last category, Readability, assesses the legibility and comprehensibility of the subtitles and whether

they comply with the technical constraints set in this regard (p. 217). The detected errors are penalized with recommended scores, and those labelled “minor”, “standard”, and “serious” are assigned scores of “0.25”, “0.5”, and “1” point respectively. These scores are doubled only for semantic errors identified under the Functional Equivalence category (p. 218). This tentative scoring system, just like the parameters included in the in-house guidelines, can be localized and customized as required by the researchers in their studies. The FAR Model measures an “approval rate” (p. 224), which is the sum of the error scores determined in the initial qualitative analysis divided by the total number of subtitles, so that audiovisual materials of different lengths can be evaluated at the same time. Briefly, the generalized structure of the model allows researchers as much freedom as possible to achieve a reliable result for all materials subjected to interlingual quality assessment.

This study will address the audiovisual materials in the corpus under the Readability category of the FAR Model, focusing on the extent to which the technical parameters of the in-house guidelines provided by the crowdsourcer are fulfilled by professional and non-professional volunteer translators. The overall approval rates obtained are expected to shed light on whether these guidelines are sufficient to ensure and standardize quality.

### **3.2.2. The In-house Guidelines of TED**

The subtitle quality assessment will be conducted in accordance with the subtitling rules laid down in the TED Translators program’s in-house translation guidelines. For this reason, it would be appropriate to have a brief overview of TED’s in-house guidelines and the framework they set out.

The TED Translators program has published different manuals and tutorials on various platforms for volunteer translators to consult in this project. These include their official website where all resources can be accessed, their YouTube channel, their portal in Wikipedia format, and various guides available online. Through these resources, considerations such as TED Style, subtitling tips, techniques, basics and good practices that should be taken into account in the crowdsourcing project are shared with translators and a specific framework is drawn for the project. In addition to these practices, certain technical requirements are defined in CaptionHub, which is currently used by the TED Translators program, with the effort to automate the subtitling process.

The basic rules for volunteer translators producing interlingual subtitles under this program are that subtitles must be no longer than 2 lines, no longer than 42 characters and must not exceed the reading speed limit of 21 characters per second. Translators can employ the condensation strategy to meet these conditions, provided that linguistic units are not split, the beginning and end of different sentences are not combined in a single subtitle, line-length

balance is maintained and segmentation is avoided unless necessary. As one of the most important technical aspects of subtitling, spotting should be accomplished in accordance with the flow of the original dialog, and the text should appear on the screen in synchronization with the speech. TED's in-house translation guidelines additionally provide information on word choices and translation approaches, offering suggestions to volunteers on how to maintain project style and ensure quality. Furthermore, the Program also prepares specific guidelines for the languages translated in the program, and gives instructions to translators by citing official authorities.

To recapitulate the methodology of the study, the audiovisual materials collected from the TED Translators program according to certain criteria will be evaluated under the Readability category of the FAR Model (2017), the extent to which subtitling rules set by TED's in-house guidelines are applied will be examined, and an assessment will be conducted to explore the impact of the guidelines on the overall quality.

#### **4. Data Analysis**

This part of the study will analyse the interlingual subtitles in terms of quality, present examples of the identified errors in a mixed set with their rationale, explain essentially the process of collecting quantitative results, and then share the results obtained, i.e. overall approval rates, in the next section. As the samples have randomly been selected from the subtitles produced by both professional and non-professional translators, it has been deemed appropriate to assign a code to each material in order to refer to the relevant group and audiovisual material. The TED-Ed Lessons translated by the professional translators are accordingly abbreviated with "P", those translated by the non-professionals are abbreviated with "NP", and the videos are ordered from 1 to 4 (e.g. P1, P2, NP1, NP2, and so on).

The data analysis, to reiterate, will focus on the Readability category of the FAR Model (2017) developed by Jan Pedersen. This category examines whether subtitles are fluent, processable and readable in light of what Pedersen (2017) calls "technical norms and issues" (p. 221), and for this purpose, subtitles are evaluated under three headings: "segmentation and spotting", "punctuation and graphics" and "reading speed and line length". The errors will be investigated under the respective Readability topics, listed according to their severity, and justified by the parameters set out in TED's in-house translation guidelines.

##### **4.1. Segmentation and Spotting Errors**

Proper segmentation and synchronous spotting of subtitles with speech are important requirements for the TED Translators program, as they are for all translation projects. In the TED Translators Wiki, a comprehensive in-house guideline with language-specific guidelines, the organizers explicitly specify that subtitle lines should be synchronized with the video (see

How to transcribe TEDxTalks in 10 steps, 2017) and that text segmentation should be done only when necessary, and if necessary, while preserving linguistic units (see TED Translators Cheat-sheet, 2017).

In his article introducing the FAR Model, Jan Pedersen (2017) suggests that minor errors are detected within a sentence or segment, while instances that occur between subtitles can be categorized as standard errors (p. 222). This approach is known to be based on Henrik Gottlieb’s definitions of “macro segmentation” and “micro segmentation” (Gottlieb, 2012, p. 41). Pedersen (2017) also states that serious errors can only be assigned to spotting shifts found in multiple subtitles (p. 222).

Below is the first of the examples identified under this category, an example of a minor spotting error.

**Table 1**

*Minor spotting error example*

Segmentation and spotting error in Readability	
(NP3) 0:19	<b>Teflon Mafya babası ismini kazandırdı.</b>
0:22	Teflon aya inen Apollo mürettebatının üzerindeki uzay elbisesinde vardı,
Minor error → 0.25 point	

Produced by a non-professional translator, the subtitle excerpt coded NP3 is about Mafia boss John Gotti, who goes by the name “the Teflon Don”. At 0:19, the bold subtitle is incorrectly synchronized, which caused it to shift to the next visual that appears on the screen. However, as stated in TED’s in-house guidelines, subtitles should not stay on the screen longer than needed and the viewer should be given time to comprehend the video itself.

Figure 1 shows the corresponding visuals for this case.

**Figure 1**

*Screenshots of the minor spotting error*



Screenshots with a single subtitle on two different visuals demonstrate that there is a spotting error at timecode 0:22. Following the framework of the FAR model, this shift makes a difference of one second and is therefore considered a minor error.

**Table 2**

*Minor segmentation error example*

Segmentation and spotting error in Readability	
(P4) 2:44	<b>bu da onu başka bir kaybetme katı yapar.</b>
Minor error → 0.25 point	

The case presented in Table 2 gives an example where the subtitle highlighted in bold is produced in two lines. This subtitle, coded P4 and produced by a professional volunteer translator, contains a sentence of 40 characters which is below the line-length limit of 42 characters per line as specified in the in-house translation guidelines of the crowdsourcing project. TED’s official website warns volunteers not to “split sentences if not necessary for length/speed” (see Subtitling Tips, n.d.), so the selected example is categorized as a minor segmentation error and penalized with 0.25 points for violating the guidelines.

As recommended in the FAR Model, segmentation errors within a single subtitle entry are regarded as minor errors, while those between subsequent subtitles are considered standard errors. Table 3 provides examples of minor and standard segmentation excerpts together to illustrate the errors assigned a score in this context.

**Table 3***Minor and standard segmentation error example*

Segmentation and spotting error in Readability	
(P1) 1:10	bu yüzden beyin <b>diğer</b> <b>kaslardan</b> yardım ister.
Minor error → 0.25 point	
(NP1) 3:12	İç kanal, ışığın en ufak çarpışmalarını <b>ya da</b>
Standard error → 0.5 point	

In the table above, the bold phrases of both examples denote that they are placed in the wrong segment according to the available in-house translation guidelines. The segmentation error example coded P1 represents the unit “diğer kaslardan”, which is an equivalent of “other muscles” in the original TED-Ed Lesson. This unit, which should not be broken in accordance with the guidelines, can only be segmented correctly if the word “diğer” is placed in the bottom line so as to maintain the balance between the lines. Therefore, the incorrect line-breaking is categorized as a minor segmentation error because it is contained within a single subtitle entry. The NP1 example, on the other hand, constitutes a violation of the TED guideline for Turkish subtitles, which requires subtitles not to end with conjunctions and instead to add them to the next subtitle. The conjunction “ya da (or)” in bold is an error related to “macro segmentation” (Gottlieb, 2012, p. 41) and penalized with a standard error score, given that it should be in the next subtitle entry.

**Table 4***Serious spotting error example*

Segmentation and spotting error in Readability	
(NP4-en) 4:40	no matter how hard it sounds to your ears."
(NP4-tr) 4:43	ne denli zor gelse de."
Serious error → 1 point	



The exemplification above, taken from the TED-Ed Lesson coded NP4, illustrates that there is a shift in the timing of the subtitles, as evidenced by the timecodes. This subtitle entry, corresponding to the last sentence in the Lesson, appears 3 seconds later than the original transcript; however, it is worth noting that the verbal element in the audiovisual material ends at timecode 4:42. Thus, this example, which is not only an unacceptable synchronization error in terms of the rules stipulated by the project's in-house guidelines, but also significantly impairs the audience's comprehension, is evaluated as a serious error when taken into account together with the considerations of the FAR Model.

#### 4.2. Punctuation and Graphics Errors

The guidelines prepared by *TED* for its crowdsourced translation project also provide volunteer translators with specific instructions for the representation of auditory information, including rules on the use of punctuation marks so that subtitles can be easily read by the audience and reading speed is not affected. These guidelines are accordingly important for preserving the TED Style and standardizing the format of audiovisual materials.

The following are some examples of punctuation and graphics errors identified during the qualitative data analysis process. The FAR Model does not make any recommendation on the penalization of this error type and indicates that it should be decided based on the relevant guidelines (Pedersen, 2017, p. 222). In this study, therefore, the cases directly related to audiovisual content and preventing readability are classified as serious errors, while paratextual examples are classified as standard errors.

#### Table 5

##### *Standard graphics error example*

Punctuation and graphics error in Readability	
(NP4) Title	<b>Aristophanes'e neden "Komedinin Babası" denilmiştir?</b>
Standard error → 0.5 point	

The TED Open Translation Project Learning Series, published on the project's YouTube channel, has released a video on editing titles and descriptions, which details the formats for TED, TEDx, and TED-Ed talks (see OTP Öğrenme Dizileri 09: Başlıkları ve açıklamaları düzeltme, 2016). It appears that the titles of TED-Ed animations should include the name of the Lesson and the lecturer, separated by a dash. The example in Table 5 does not contain the lecturer's name, which is a case against the guidelines provided by *TED*, so the paratextual problem here is penalized with a standard error score.

**Table 6***Serious punctuation error example*

Punctuation and graphics error in Readability	
(P2) 4:00	politikanın tüm ulusta veya <b>–gezegende–</b> nasıl işleyeceği
Serious error → 1 point	

The use of punctuation marks in subtitling practices may differ from the standard language as well as among various projects. The TED Translators program sets out some directives and points that marks such as dashes, hyphens, dots, etc. should not unnecessarily be used and that standard text should be followed (see English Style Guide, 2020). Another set of guidelines prepared for the program also suggests that the accentuation in subtitles is not considered to be essential (see How to use sound representation, 2020). In the light of all these resources, the excerpt from the material coded P2 is found to be an improper practice and is scored as a serious punctuation error, which affects the values for reading speed and characters per line.

**Table 7***Serious punctuation error example*

Punctuation and graphics error in Readability	
(NP2) 2:44	Vivaldi, karmaşık füglerle <b>(Besteleme tekniği)</b> ilgilenmedi.
Serious error → 1 point	

This excerpt above is an example of the use of a translator's note in a subtitle. The phrase in bold and in brackets has been transcribed by the volunteer translator as an explanation of the preceding phrase, “karmaşık füglerle (complicated fugues)”. The TED Translators Wiki, nevertheless, suggests that translator's notes should not be employed and that paraphrasing is preferable if clarification is needed (see How to Tackle a Translation, 2015). As noted earlier in this section, this example, in which the terminological language is clarified using translator's notes, is categorized as a serious error because it has deviated from the guidelines and negatively affected both the reading speed and the audience experience.

### 4.3. Reading Speed and Line Length Errors

Jan Pedersen (2017) asserts that the issue of reading speed is “a varied and often contested” one (p. 223). The reading speed taken as a basis can indeed vary for different types of translation projects and different audiences. The TED Translators program has adopted the rule that the maximum reading speed can be 21 characters/second and, accordingly, subtitles can have a maximum of 42 characters (see Subtitling Tips, n.d.). Such rules have also been defined in CaptionHub, an online subtitling editor that manages the subtitling processes within the crowdsourcing project, providing a partial quality control mechanism for the translation process. In addition, further norms such as that the length of one line should not be shorter than 50% of the other, the balance between lines should be maintained (see How to break lines, 2020), compressing and simplifying can be done either to avoid breaking linguistic units or to facilitate reading (see How to Compress Subtitles, 2020) have also been shared with volunteer translators through TED’s in-house translation guidelines.

The qualitative quality analysis has not revealed any instances of exceeding the reading speed or violating the maximum line length rule, and this is attributed to the fact that the subtitling process is partially automated through an online editor. Nonetheless, different examples have been identified that fall into this category, and those that negatively impact at the level of meaning are considered serious errors, while those that remain at the structural level are considered standard errors.

**Table 8**

*Standard line length error example*

Reading speed and line length error in Readability	
(P4) 1:56	Bu da sıra sana geçtiğinde su seviyesinin <b>1, 3 veya 4'te</b>
Standard error → 0.5 point	

The TED Translators program, as already outlined, recommends that translators should adhere to line-length balance and that there should be no significant discrepancies between the lengths of lines. The example of P4 presented in Table 8 shows that a situation emphasized by the in-house guidelines has nevertheless resulted in a line length error being committed. The given subtitle entry consists of two lines, the first line with 41 characters and the second line with 14 characters. In light of this information, the bottom line, which is 65.8% shorter than the top line, is segmented in a way that disrupts the line balance in the subtitle and

negatively affects the viewers' experience of reading the subtitles. Since this is a technical error and does not change the content of the message, this example is scored as a standard error.

**Table 9**

*Serious reading speed error example*

Reading speed and line length error in Readability	
(NP3-en) 4:19	That prompted <b>the head of the FBI office</b> <b>in New York City</b> to announce,
(NP3-tr) 4:19	Bunun üzerinde <b>New York şehrindeki</b> <b>FBI bürosu başkanı</b> şu duyuruyu yaptı:
Serious error → 1 point	

Subtitling can be subjected to text reduction processes in order to optimize reading speed while preserving the core message in the speech in accordance with technical dimensions. This method can therefore be a necessity for audiovisual translation practices compared to other types of translation. TED's in-house translation guidelines inform volunteer translators on this issue, emphasizing that compression and simplification strategies are a way to overcome considerations such as line-breaking (see How to break lines, 2020) and reading-speed (see How to Compress Subtitles, 2020).

The bilingual excerpt from the TED-Ed Lesson abbreviated with the code NP3 represents an example of the translator adopting a verbatim translation strategy instead of compression. Looking at the linguistic units marked in bold in the excerpt, it can be argued that the audience's reading speed will slow down due to the excessive wording in the Turkish subtitles, and therefore they will not be able to focus on the visuals and their attention may be distracted. On the other hand, omitting “şehirdeki (city)” and “bürosu (office)” will not make any difference in meaning and will improve readability. This subtitle, which is an example of both semantic and technical error, is labelled as a serious error.

## 5. Results and Discussion

The previous part of the study has provided representative examples of the interlingual quality assessment focused on the Readability category, which is part of the FAR Model (2017), and explained how the error identification process has been quantified in the light of the subtitling rules set out in the in-house guidelines for the TED Translators program. This section aims to gain insight into the extent to which the in-house guidelines used in the crowdsourced

translation project are sufficient to standardize quality and the possible reasons for this, based on the quantitative results obtained.

The approval rates have been calculated for the Readability of subtitles across multiple datasets, and these results are tabulated in Table 10.

**Table 10**

*Results of the interlingual subtitle quality assessment*

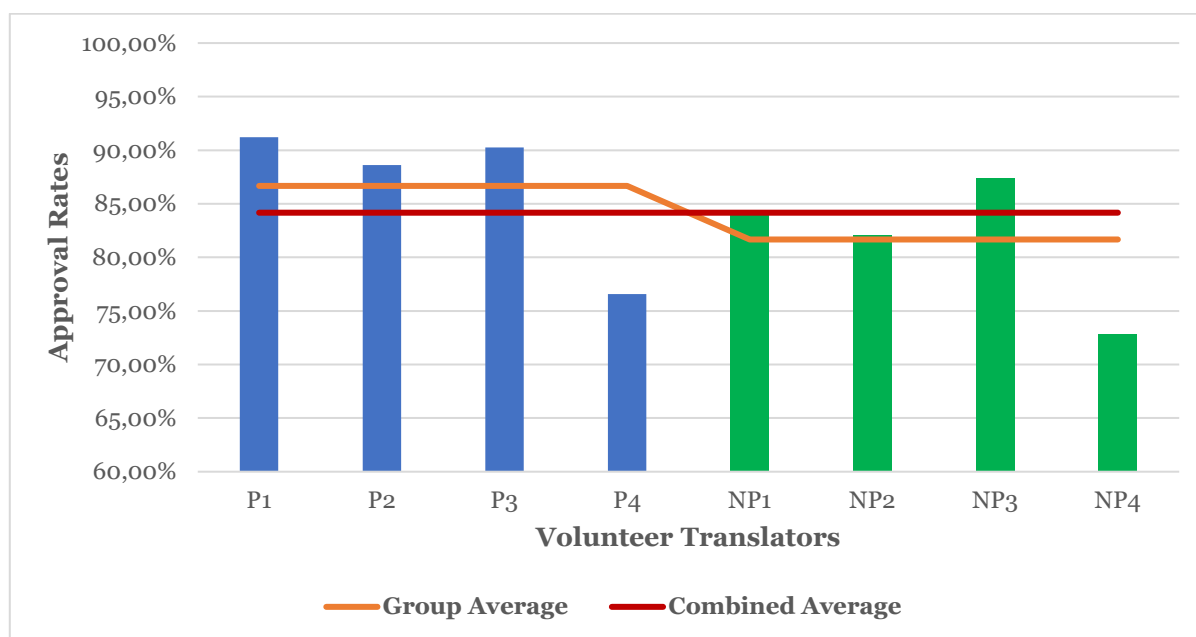
Audiovisual Material (Professional Subtitles)	Approval Rate	Audiovisual Material (Non-professional Subtitles)	Approval Rate
P1	91.22%	NP1	84.41%
P2	88.61%	NP2	82.03%
P3	90.26%	NP3	87.35%
P4	76.58%	NP4	72.87%
<b>Average of Professional Subtitles</b>	<b>86.67%</b>	<b>Average of Non-professional Subtitles</b>	<b>81.67%</b>
<b>Combined Average of Interlingual Subtitles → 84.17%</b>			

The quality of the subtitles produced by the volunteer translators forming different translator groups has first been analysed and their individual results have been recorded, the group averages have been calculated, and then the approval rates of these two translator groups have been combined to obtain a general conclusion about the crowdsourcing project based on the sampled group. As a result, it has been found that the professional translators have scored an approval rate between 91.22% and 76.58% in the Readability category, while the range of results for the non-professional translators is between 87.35% and 72.87%. Whereas the professional translators have achieved an average quality score of 86.67%, the non-professionals have an average score of 81.67%, a difference of 5 percentage points. Overall, the quality assessment of the sampled TED-Ed Lessons has showed that the subtitles produced by the volunteers according to the in-house translation guidelines have an approval rate of 84.17% in terms of technical considerations.

The quantitative results of the qualitative data analysis are also illustrated in Figure 2 to offer a more representative view of the quality assessment.

**Figure 2**

*Approval rates of the volunteer translators in the Readability category*



The present study reveals more than one finding. First of all, the fact that there is a score difference between the translators with different translation experience in this crowdsourcing project leads to the conclusion that attempts to standardize quality within the project are not fully effective. An argument could be made that this score difference arises from the fact that the professional translators have undergone a specialized training and are more familiar with subtitling norms as a group with more translation experience, including educational background, than the non-professional translators. This suggests that the use of in-house guidelines is insufficient to override specific parameters such as training and experience.

According to the results, there is a difference of 14.64 percentage points between the professional translators who have achieved the highest and the lowest approval rate in the Readability category, while this difference is 14.48 for the non-professionals. This quantitative data indicates that there are no significant variations between different groups; however, the subtitles produced by the volunteers belonging to the same group may also be of different technical quality, thus limiting the impact of guidelines even on a particular audience. The fact that some translators are below the average approval rate of their group (e.g. P4 in the Professionals and NP4 in the Non-professionals) stands as evidence of this conclusion.

The finding that all translators whose interlingual subtitles have been subjected to quality analysis have achieved a quality of 84.17% when segmentation, synchronization, reading speed and similar technical considerations are taken into account also points to the lack of steps taken to ensure quality in the context of crowdsourcing projects. In a translation

project sourced from a pool of volunteers with different backgrounds, initiatives such as a structured subtitling workflow, clear descriptions of volunteer roles, a set of criteria for participation, the use of an online subtitle editor integrated into the project, and the availability of comprehensive in-house translation guidelines that are written in plain language, explained with examples and also prepared in a language-specific format are still insufficient in terms of quality. In addition to these initiatives, it can be argued that new practices such as the organization and periodic delivery of trainings by crowdsourcers and the establishment or improvement of feedback mechanisms would have a positive impact on both the translation competencies of volunteer translators and the quality of project outputs. The current results demonstrate that the in-house guidelines are used at the initiative of the translators and the resources are not consulted sufficiently because the correct practices regarding the identified Readability errors have already been explained by the guidelines.

## **6. Conclusion**

Audiovisual Translation is a field that cannot adhere to a uniform standardization due to the existence of various products, the different requirements of these products and the fact that it is a practice that involves a great deal of creativity. This has paved the way for localized approaches, which are already being adopted, and has led to the production of in-house guidelines tailored to the translation project. In-house guidelines specify the parameters that translators and other members of the workflow should observe, and include technical specifications as well as linguistic, stylistic and other considerations. These guidelines are intended to bring the quality of translation projects to a certain level and to maintain this quality across all outputs.

This study has conducted a quality assessment of the interlingual subtitles sampled from a crowdsourced translation project in order to reveal the extent to which in-house guidelines fulfil their purpose and whether they alone are sufficient to ensure quality. For this purpose, within the framework of the Readability category under the FAR Model (2017), a quality assessment model that can be used by making use of any set of norms, selected TED-Ed Lessons translated into Turkish under the TED Translators program have been examined focusing mainly on the technical side of subtitles. Having both professional and non-professional translators in the data source and selecting the material accordingly have contributed to the evaluation of the results obtained from multiple perspectives.

The qualitative quality assessment in the light of TED's in-house guidelines has been carried out as suggested by the FAR Model and then quantified. The quantitative results have revealed that the in-house translation guidelines fail to blur the differences between the professional and non-professional translator groups, fail to prevent in-group discrepancies,

and in the overall picture, the Readability rate of subtitles remains around 84%. The approval rates do not have an acceptability threshold, but since the subtitles, which are the products of the crowdsourcing project, have been found to be contrary to the rules prescribed by the in-house guidelines, it has been argued that these resources are insufficient in maintaining these norms and should be supported by additional initiatives such as periodic training and feedback loops.

Having been conducted on a limited corpus in a specific context, this quality assessment does not provide any generalizable findings on the impact and adequacy of in-house translation guidelines, which is the starting point of this study, but it sheds light on the prevailing conditions and provides insights on various issues ranging from the quality rates of different groups in an organized project to the nature of the errors detected. Further studies in this field such as a closer examination of crowdsourcing practices, translators' reception of guidelines, and the evaluation of different categories of errors in the light of the relevant guidelines are expected to expand on the findings of this research.

### **Disclosures**

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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## **A Contemporary Analysis of *A Journal of the Plague Year* by D. Defoe after the Covid-19 Pandemic in Türkiye\***

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### **Abstract**

*A Journal of the Plague Year* (1722) is Defoe's fictitious and retrospective account of the plague which ravaged Britain in 1664-1665 after its break-out in Holland. The epidemic in 1664-1665 has many similarities with the pandemic COVID 19 which hit the world and Türkiye in 2020-2022 which is believed to have begun in China and quickly spread to other countries. In regard to the book's accuracy as a historical document, the aim of the paper is to explore *A Journal of the Plague Year* and to draw analogies between the 1664-1665 endemic in Britain and the COVID-19 outbreak in Türkiye through a comparative analysis of the reactions of the people and the measures taken by the authorities to curb the disease in two eras. The paper also attempts to set parallels between the economic, social, criminal, and administrative panorama of the contagions in 1664-1665 and 2020-2022 by comparing the narrative in the novel with similar issues in the pandemic. The paper concludes that in spite of the fact that the size of the affected areas are not equal, there is a 400-year gap between the diseases, and there are geographical, climatic, and cultural differences between the inflicted counties, Britain and Türkiye, the therapeutic measures applied, the preventive and curative methods the individuals and city officials resorted to in plague-afflicted communities in Britain of the 17th century and Türkiye of the 21st century indicate a lot of similarities with people taking the measures of quarantining, segregation, physical distance, curfews, escape from the crowded cities to rural areas, bans, and certificates.

**Keywords:** plague, COVID-19, Defoe, epidemic, pandemic

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\* This paper is a revised and extended version of the presentation delivered at the 16<sup>th</sup> IDEA Conference in 2024 in Cappadocia University, Nevşehir.

## 1. Introduction

Defoe's fictitious account of the plague which afflicted Britain in 1664-1665 has many similarities with the pandemic which knocked out the world in 2020-2022. In order to make a comparative analysis of the two contagions, the study attempts to show that a reading of *A Journal of the Plague Year* allows the readers to set parallels with the COVID-19 outbreak regarding onsets, symptomatic, diagnostic, therapeutic, economic, social and administrative measures, issues and concerns of the individuals and societies during the times of the diseases.

## 2. Discussion

In order to draw analogies between the epidemic in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the COVID-19 pandemic, the personal, communal, economic, legal, and medical measures are compared to such measures in Türkiye in the face of the pandemic with regard to the information about how the contagions started, the medical attempts to contain the diseases, particularly quarantines, the symptoms of the outbreaks, the painstaking efforts of the medical and administrative personnel, the administrative measures like passes, certificates, curfews and lockdowns and the ensuing isolation, economic and environmental repercussions, abuses by some in terms of violating the restrictions and promoting fake medications.

The first similarity is the onset of the outbreaks as they began somewhere else and were transported through travellers. COVID-19 is believed to have begun in China and quickly spread to other countries. The plague in Britain broke out in Holland in 1664 and spread to Britain. Although in 1665, the city was not ready or prepared for such a dreadful disease, thanks to rapid communication means, Türkiye had some time to make the necessary preparations before the pandemic hit. Although the number of afflicted people is not specified in the novel, total coronavirus deaths in Türkiye is more than 100,000 with more than 17m reported and identified cases until May 2024 ("List of COVID-19 Vaccination Groups", 2024).

In the COVID-19 outbreak in Türkiye, as elsewhere in the world, and the plague in London in 1664-1665, numerous measures were taken by the national and local authorities to mitigate the spread of the contagion. Collaboratively working, health officials and municipalities attempted to prevent large numbers of people coming together by issuing a number of orders. Despite the 400-year lapse between the two outbreaks, the measures taken by the authorities are similar to a great extent. The first measures taken by the Turkish authorities in the early days of the pandemic were stopping international flights with the countries where the pandemic had already started, and closure of the land borders with some of the neighbouring countries from which the news of the pandemic came. As Güner et al. (2020) underlined, "quarantine is one of the oldest and most effective tools of controlling communicable disease outbreaks" (p. 575). In 1664-1665 nobody was sure how long the disease

may lie dormant, and they were not sure about the length of quarantine. The physicians disagreed about the cause of the distemper, and they learned more about the causes and cure of the infection throughout the pandemic with experience. In order to minimise the spread of contagion, in London, the authorities people put some time limits in line with their experience of the previous epidemic. Whoever contacting the sick had to be quarantined for twenty days with their houses shut up for 4 weeks. The removal of the infected person from a house was not allowed and the coaches used for infected people were banned for five-six days after its use and had to be aired. Therefore, people had to suffer “the paralysis of complete isolation” (Nixon, 2014, p. 77) as they were “trapped within a plague-afflicted community” (Nixon, 2014, p. 78) until the epidemic abated. Although in the 2020s, the physicians and officers of the Ministry of Health agreed on the duration of quarantine for the infected people and with similar concerns, in Türkiye, 14-day quarantine for the infected or people who were likely to infected was put into practice.

In the 2019 pandemic and the 1664-1665 epidemic, several abuses by people who had to stay quarantined in their houses were observed. People who were not allowed to leave their houses when infected found many ways to escape and to deceive the watchmen in 1664-1665 in a similar manner to people in the 2020s who were spotted outside despite being ill. Because it was ineffectual and impossible to shut up every infected house, people could freely roam the streets until the lockdowns and curfews and spread the disease in the streets.

One of the measures which to be effective immediately in March 2020 was closing all the shopping malls, restaurants, pubs, cafes, movie theatres, and the like. Online/ distance education at schools and universities began and people of 65 and older, and people under 20 were banned from leaving their homes. There were heavy restrictions on funerals, wedding ceremonies, feastings of all kinds, sports games, concerts in the early months of the pandemic which were either prohibited or allowed with little participation in order to prevent crowds in Türkiye. Demirbilek et al. (2020) mentioned that venues and areas where the restrictions implemented in Türkiye were:

[...] theater, wedding hall, mosque, tea garden, local [...] hairdresser, barber, beauty salon [...] pavilion, discotheque, bar, night club, theater, cinema, show center, concert hall, engagement/wedding hall, musical/music restaurant/cafe, casino, pub, tavern, coffeehouse, café, cafeteria, country garden, hookah hall, hookah cafe, internet lounge, internet cafe, all kinds of game halls (arcade, playstation etc.), all kinds of indoor playgrounds (including shopping malls and restaurants), tea garden, association lounges, amusement park, swimming pool, Turkish bath, sauna, thermal pool, massage parlor, SPA, sports centers and condolence houses' activities. (p. 492)

In 1664-1665, the international trade of Britain stopped immediately after the onset of the plague. The magistrates took some measures to prevent the spread of the disease like

shutting up houses and burying the dead immediately with an Act of Parliament. All entertainment activities, games, and sports were stopped and all restaurants, bars, taverns, and the like were closed. In London, the city administrators decreed that:

all plays, bear-baitings, games, singing of ballads, buckler-play, or such-like causes of assemblies of people be utterly prohibited [...] all public feasting, and particularly by the companies of this city, and dinners at taverns, ale-houses, and other places of common entertainment, be forborne till further order and allowance. (Defoe, 1969, p. 51)

Both in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries, the physicians and the scientists were initially unsure about the way the diseases spread. Due to the global struggles, advanced technology, and combined efforts of the scientists, soon after it began the pandemic was found out to be spreading airborne and the relevant measures were taken worldwide. In the novel, even though the narrator concluded that it was not possible to discover the true nature of the disease, many people thought that the disease spread air-borne:

[...] by some certain steams or fumes, which the physicians call effluvia, by the breath, or by the sweat, or by the stench of the sores of the sick persons, or some other way, perhaps, beyond even the reach of the physicians themselves, which effluvia affected the sound who came within certain distances of the sick, immediately penetrating the vital parts of the said sound persons, putting their blood into an immediate ferment, and agitating their spirits to that degree which it was found they were agitated; and so those newly infected persons communicated it in the same manner to others. (Defoe, 1969, p. 84)

Some others believed that the infection spread by “insects and invisible creatures, who enter into the body with the breath, or even at the pores with the air, and there generate or emit most acute poisons, or poisonous ovae or eggs, which mingle themselves with the blood, and so infect the body” (Defoe, 1969, p. 85).

As for symptoms, COVID-19 and the plague affected people in different ways. People with COVID-19 showed some symptoms like fever, cough, tiredness, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, headache, aches and pains, diarrhoea, a rash on skin, or discolouration of fingers or toes, red or irritated eyes, difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, loss of speech or mobility, or confusion, and chest pain (Güner et al., 2020). The plague, on the other hand, was manifest with painful, sometimes tormenting swellings in the neck or groin which turned into gangrene. In 1665, people had different signs and symptoms like “violent fevers, vomitings, insufferable headaches, pains in the back, and so up to ravings and ragings with those pains; others with swellings and tumours in the neck or groin, or armpits” (Defoe, 1969, p. 226). Some people were in agony, delirious, mad, and raving because of their pain and they did the most horrible actions like shooting themselves, drowning themselves in the Thames, or killing their kin in desperation because it was violent and intolerable to suppress their pain with swellings under their arms and swellings. Another similarity between the contagions was that sometimes

affected people were asymptomatic and sometimes the symptoms came out a few days after laying dormant in the body for some days. The narrator realised that even the most-healthy looking people were able to transmit the disease because they did not show any symptoms for several days until it was too late for treatment. The disease was so insidious that sometimes it was impossible to take precautions against the disease. Sometimes people who seemed very healthy suffered the worst deaths so people were careful not to be “within the reach of their breath or of any smell from them; and when they were obliged to converse at a distance with strangers, they would always have preservatives in their mouths and about their clothes to repel and keep off the infection” (Defoe, 1969, p. 236).

It is noteworthy that during the first days of the COVID-19 outbreak, there were some televised scenes of Chinese people who allegedly died on the streets suddenly. In a similar manner, in London some people “died in a moment, as with a sudden fainting or an apoplectic fit [...] as if they had been touched by a stroke from heaven as men are killed by a flash of lightning” (Defoe, 1969, p. 190). However, neither the COVID-19 sudden deaths nor such deaths in the 1660s were proven to be genuine or linked to the outbreaks.

In both outbreaks, physical contact and distance were people’s concern and people were extra cautious when they had to share some items with other people and social distancing was particularly a matter of concern (Bostan et al., 2020, p.2). People tried to mitigate the disease by not directly giving money to the other people or taking merchandise directly from their hands. Instead, they used hooks, they soaked money in vinegar, they carried small money for not taking any change and they avoided contact as much as possible when shopping. A similar care was shown on the exchange of money with the sailors and tradesmen as they exchanged money after soaking it into vinegar and loading and unloading the corn was done without contact. This behaviour reminds of the precautious people who were rather hesitant to touch the banknotes and even to shake hands lest they would be infected and therefore they frequently used contactless cards to minimize the risks of infection in the 2020s. As a precaution, people “burnt a great variety of fumes and perfumes in all the rooms, and made a great many smokes of pitch, of gunpowder, and of sulphur, all separately shifted, and washed their clothes, and the like” (Defoe, 1969, p. 183). During the plague, people carried bottles of scents and perfumes in their hands in a similar manner to the ultimate care to use cologne de water and disinfectants after contact with people and shopping items during the pandemic.

The extent of the epidemic and pandemic were the main determinants of the rank of the authorities to take responsibility and control. In the 2020s, the Minister of Health and the Minister of Internal Affairs took the reins in controlling the pandemic in Türkiye whereas in London the Lord Mayor of London issued orders to relieve infected people and authorised justices of the peace, mayors, bailiffs, head officers to appoint examiners, searchers, watchmen,

keepers and buriers. The orders clarified the officials to be appointed, their responsibilities, and transfer, segregation, medical, and burial procedures and how to appoint examiners in every parish, the responsibilities of the examiners' office, two watchmen for every infected house, searchers to report on the dead, surgeons to assist searchers to deal only with the infected. The orders also clarified what the master of every house to do if anybody is infected, how to segregate the sick, how to air the stuff used by the infected, the shutting up of the houses, how to transfer the sick to the pest-house, how to bury the dead, not allowing anything to removed out of the infected houses, isolating the people. In 2020, too, a series of economic, social, financial, legal and law-enforcement measures were taken by the authorities including isolating sick people in their homes and separate wards in hospitals, the obligation of wearing masks over faces and keeping social distance. As Kayaalp and Isik (2020) posited:

Covid-19 has posed unique challenges to existing healthcare infrastructure. Its relatively low fatality rate (compared with, for example, Ebola, MERS, and SARS), high transmissibility, and long incubation period have allowed the virus to spread widely, leaving hospital wards swamped and without sufficient equipment and protective gear to care for patients effectively and safely. (para. 3)

Because of the immensely increasing burden on the hospitals and health-care services and in the face of steeply rising need of hospitalisation and intensive care for the infected, two new hospitals were constructed in İstanbul. With a similar concern, two new pest houses were built at Westminster and London in 1664-1665.

Among the restrictions imposed by the authorities, lockdowns, curfews, certification and passes came to the fore. A short while after the pandemic began on March 2020, common people were discouraged from going out of their houses particularly during the peak times of the pandemic and there were curfews a couple of times to protect the people from the contagion, people working in the security, law enforcement, communication, logistics, market, municipalities, health, house-care services and the like were at work to ensure that people could be secure and safe, and they could meet their needs without going out much (Demirbilek et al., 2020; Cakir, 2020). The citizens of Türkiye were issued 10-digit codes and vaccination certificates for filiation and contact tracing. When the number of the infected people rose there were curfews throughout the country and only the people with passes issued by the Ministry of Internal Affairs could go out and travel. In London of 1664-1665, too, people needed passes and certificates of health from the Lord Mayor to travel out of the city. People needed a certificate of passing to travel, for a free passage, and a full certificate of health from a justice of peace upon the application of a constable. When the numbers increased significantly, the rumour had it that there would "turnpikes and barriers on the road to prevent people travelling, and that the towns on the road would not suffer people from London to pass for fear of bringing the infection along with them" (Defoe, 1969, p.8).



When COVID-19 hit the world, some people locked themselves with sufficient provisions for months until the disease abated. People who had detached summer houses went to live there in order to minimise their contact with the infected. A similar tendency was observed in the 1660s in London when wealthy families of nobility and gentry as well as less fortunate people preferred isolating themselves in the summer houses, rural areas even to tents to escape from the crowd and congestion of the big cities and lessen the chances of catching the virus. Although people hated being imprisoned in their houses by the authorities, some wealthy people isolated themselves on board ships lying at anchor with little or no contact with people ashore (Defoe, 1969, p. 121). The narrator in the novel, too, decided to go out of London on foot because it was impossible to find horses. But when his servant deserted him, he changed his mind and stayed home. During his stay at home, they baked bread and brewed beer as he had sufficient provision stocked at home. However, meat was in short supply because the disaster plagued the butchers and the slaughterhouses.

As a result of the move of many people from London and fewer people in the streets because of obligatory or volunteer confinement in the houses, London streets, offices, and churches were empty and quiet. Because the roads were not trodden on, even the paved streets were covered with grass. In the Covid 2019 pandemic, particularly during the very first days and when there were lockdowns and curfews, it was the same in Türkiye with desolate streets and stray animals around.

The most remarkable economic result of the outbreaks came out to be unemployment because of the enforced prohibitions. When the pandemic and the plague hit the cities, people were afraid that it would inflict everybody, so people isolated themselves at their houses and most trades came to a stop, but for the ones for immediate needs. Both the employers and employees of the businesses which were closed suffered economic problems as they were deprived of the means to make a living. Exportation stopped and stagnation began. People working in textile manufacturing, accessories, merchants, construction workers, carpenters, plumbers, smiths, seamen and boatbuilders were dismissed. The countrymen were obliged to sell their goods immediately and at the very first available spot and on the fields.

Nevertheless, a reverse effect of the pandemic on the economy of the countries was the creation and boosting of some businesses. In Türkiye, although many businesses suffered during the pandemic as they were not allowed to open, particularly mobile vendors, shipping and cargo companies, and online market shopping employed many people during the pandemic. In London, however, an unexpected need allowed a great number of people who were laid out to find employment. As Knowles (2019) indicated, although the plague new employment opportunities for the poor emerged as examiners, watchmen, buriers, and nurses were needed (p. 645).

The poor were in a more pitiful situation. They were vulnerable as they had to do the most dangerous jobs like “tending the sick, watching houses shut up, carrying infected persons to the pest-house, and which was still worse, carrying the dead away to their graves” (Defoe, 1969, p. 100). The poor were getting more and more desperate and difficult to control. The Turkish authorities in the 2020s asked people to donate in the efforts to help supply the basics for the needy and the poor. In Britain, in the 1640s, too, charitable and pious people in different parts of England collected, and donated money to the Lord Mayor to help the needy and the poor on a voluntary basis. The king also gave money on a weekly schedule to be distributed to people because a great number of people lived on charity. Besides, the people who were living in the neighbouring towns showed charity and assistance to the poor people of London when they were assured that there was no danger to themselves because most other close towns were also infected.

In both contagions, physicians and authorities were in search of cheap medicines, remedies and inoculation which could be available for everybody. In the COVID-19 outbreak, in addition to the preventive measures, some therapies and medications were prescribed to the infected in light of the experience of the previous outbreaks and research. However, some of the medications were ineffectual and some had adverse side effects. It took months to develop and supply vaccines to ensure immunity and protection of people from the contagion and to devise protocols to cure the infected (Öncü et al., 2020). The percentage of population over 18 years old with at least two doses of vaccination surpassed 85% with more than 150m doses of vaccines administered to almost 58 m people (“[covid19asi.saglik.gov.tr](https://covid19asi.saglik.gov.tr)”). In the 21st Century, thanks to advanced technologies, how the disease spread and inflamed the body was detected but in 1664-1665, the mechanics of the plague were not clarified so the narrator wished there had been microscopes at that time so that they could be spotted. In the 17th and 18th centuries, preventive treatments were “vinegar, garlic and brandy [...] tar, sulfur in fumigation, tarred water in wash, camphor, plants (as: mint, chamomile, yellow rattle) for tea, juices and balms) [...] gun powder, arsenic, pitch, money were washed in vinegar and brine” (Jeican et al., 2014, p.127). Trying some of these items and/or methods may have helped the people in those years, but it is certain that they were just based on the limited research of the time as well as traditional cures, superstitions and experiences of the previous outbreaks.

Both in Türkiye and Britain, the city authorities and medical staff risked their own lives for making the life go on without much change and with few risks for the common people. Inevitably, the people who were compelled the fight the outbreaks suffered great numbers of casualties as they were in contact with the sick. The medical personnel like physicians and surgeons, undertakers, bearers of the dead, churchwardens, constables, justices of Hamlet had high mortality rates. Because the midwives died the number of still born, abortive, chrisoms

and infants and dead mothers increased too. In 1664-1665, there were several drugs, preparations, perfumes, prescriptions for the infection which the physicians tried. Some people became so desperate that they sought remedies in the most illogical cures and fraud medicine “weak, foolish, and wicked things” and so-called physicians in market tried to deceive people “as if the plague was not the hand of God, but a kind of possession of an evil spirit, and that it was to be kept off with crossings, signs of the zodiac, papers tied up with so many knots, and certain words or figures written on them, as particularly the word Abracadabra, formed in triangle or pyramid” (Defoe, 1969, p. 36). Naturally they were no good. Some people tried to learn about their future from fortune-tellers, cunning-men, and fake astrologers. People were encouraged to make confession, fast and to visit churches more and many people devoted themselves to repentance and humiliation (Defoe, 1969, p. 32). Londoners saw the availability of some medicine and cure in market like “‘Infallible preventive pills against the plague.’ ‘Neverfailing preservatives against the infection.’ ‘Sovereign cordials against the corruption of the air.’ ‘Exact regulations for the conduct of the body in case of an infection.’ ‘Anti-pestilential pills.’ ‘Incomparable drink against the plague, never found out before.’ ‘An universal remedy for the plague.’ ‘The only true plague water.’ ‘The royal antidote against all kinds of infection’” (Defoe, 1969, p.33) due to “the susceptibility to superstition in the face of contrary evidence” (Flanders, 1972, p. 335). There were some illogical cures and fraud medications promoted all over the world in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century but in comparison to the 17<sup>th</sup> Century they were met with suspicion, reserve, and hesitation.

The climatic conditions and its effect on the outbreaks was a matter of debate in both cases. During the COVID 19 Pandemic, some argued that the virus would not survive the hot weather, which proved to be false in the long run (Selcuk, 2021; Meo, 2020, Şahin, 2020). Conversely, in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, some were hopeful that “the cold weather would check the infection, or at least the violence of it would have spent itself, and would abate, if it were only for want of people left alive to be infected” (Defoe, 1969, p. 151). During the raging plague of 1664-1665, some believed hot rooms also helped spread the infection in different ways and “the contagion was nourished and gained strength in hot weather” (Defoe, 1969, p. 247); however, such people also maintained the idea that coal fires in the houses kept the contagion away (Defoe, 1969, p. 247).

In 1664-1665, the narrator says there was discrepancy between the real toll and the declared concerning the dead. It was almost impossible to calculate the exact number because people died on the roads, fields, secret places so they were not recorded in the bills of mortality (Defoe, 1969, p. 113). In the novel, “[s]uch scepticism is revealed by his attention to statistical inaccuracy [...] of the Bills of Mortality, where self-interest, fear and inexact observational procedures lead to fewer deaths being reported” (Payne, 2014, p. 626). This situation brings

into mind a similar concern and suspicion during the pandemic in Türkiye because some people never believed that the declared number of the sick and dead was not reflecting the truth and the administrators were concealing the real alarming numbers from the people.

## Conclusion

Obviously, the reactions of the common people and state and city officials in the wake of a contagious disease which affected masses, preventive and curative methods they resorted to show great similarities despite the four centuries between the epidemic in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century and the pandemic in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Defoe's novel which portrayed and reflected the 1660s epidemic realistically showed that even four centuries ago people's first reaction was to protect themselves and the other people by means of preventive measures. Segregation, isolation, lockdowns, curfews were administered in both cases personally and communally. However, the most significant difference of the pandemic from the 17<sup>th</sup> Century epidemic was the improved technology which enabled to mitigate the worldwide disease which claimed the lives of millions of people although the epidemic hit a limited space and less population.

## Disclosures

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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## ***Cars 2* Film and Its Translation into Turkish: A Relevance-Theoretical Approach to Translations of Puns and Wordplays\***

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to examine the translations of expressions containing humour or wordplay in the Turkish dubbing of the film *Cars 2* through a relevance-theoretical approach. Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986/1995) was developed in the mid-eighties by Dan Sperber and Deidre Wilson to examine cognitively how people carry out their meaning-making processes during their interactions with the outside world. Within the scope of this theory, the relationship between the source text and the target text is based on 'interpretive resemblance' rather than 'equivalence' (Gutt, 1998, 2004). According to the principle of relevance and its principles, the translator must first identify the humour or wordplay in the source text. Then, by coming up with various strategies, the translator should try to evoke similar effects in the target text as much as possible. The strategies used by the translator in the film *Cars 2* are classified under four headings and comparatively analysed through 17 randomly selected examples. As a result, it is concluded that the translator prioritizes maintaining cognitive effects, therefore the puns and wordplays, rather than equivalence (i.e. semantic content) in most cases, avoiding any increase in the cognitive cost in the process.

**Keywords:** translation studies, relevance theory, puns, wordplays, pragmatics

### **1. Introduction**

In translation processes, the presence of puns and wordplay or is often considered a difficulty or problem due to the inability to carry out translations with pre-determined strategies (Delabastita, 1994; Díaz-Pérez, 2014). As González Davies and Scott-Tennent (2005) express, such situations constitute exceptional cases beyond the usual and require creativity (p. 164). Therefore, it can be said that the translator's primary task is to identify and understand the function of wordplay or humour in the source text (ST) from the perspective of the text's recipient. In the next stage, the translator must determine a strategy to ensure that similar

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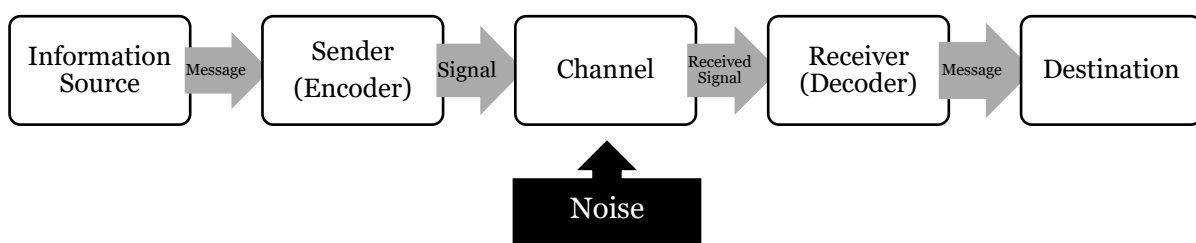
\*The abstract of this study was presented at 37. Ulusal Dilbilim Kurultayı, Kocaeli, Türkiye on May 31, 2024.

effects come alive in the target text (TT) reader and therefore employ creativity during the translation process. Because, as Gutt (2004) suggests, for translated texts to be considered successful, these ST effects need to be preserved as much as possible or re-created in TT when necessary. Arguably, due to the open-ended nature of puns and wordplay, an investigation into the depth and origin of this necessity can only be conducted through a competence-oriented approach. This approach, since competence has more to do with human cognition, should be grounded with a theory that relies on cognitive science, central hypothesis of which is built upon mental representations and procedures, i.e. how mind operates with propositions and images (Gutt, 2004, p. 77; Thagard, 2023).

One such theory, according to Gutt (1998; 2004), is Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986/1995), which has been selected as the theoretical framework of this study, in an attempt to examine the American animated film *Cars 2* (Lasseter and Lewis, 2011) and its Turkish translation in terms of humour and wordplay. Briefly defined, Relevance Theory examines the cognitive processes by which individuals make sense of the external world through their interactions. Therefore, it may not be viable to narrow the theory down to a mere theory of pragmatics, since it is also widely accepted as a theory of cognitive sciences and communication (Doğan, 2022). In addition to its principles and sub-principles, one of the most prominent features of the theory is its presupposition that language and communication are not at all inseparable. In other words, there is not necessarily a need for a model that involves ‘coding’ and ‘encoding’ of linguistic structures, as seen in Shannon and Weaver’s (1949) communication model. Thus, Relevance Theory significantly diverges from traditional theories that assume communication processes will always result in ‘correct’ understanding under appropriate conditions, and that any negativity arises mostly from errors during encoding and decoding processes. (Wilson and Sperber, 2004, p. 607).

### Figure 1

*Shannon and Weaver’s communication model*



(Shannon & Weaver, 1949, as cited in Sperber & Wilson, 1995, p. 4)

As emphasized by Hatim and Mason (1997), any translation should be classified as an act of verbal communication. Since the scope of translation extends far beyond merely substituting words to conveyance of meaning (shaped by intent, culture, nuances, and many other

contextual factors), Relevance Theory seem to be offering a uniform account of translation processes, giving an in-depth account of how intra- and interlingual structures operate.

On the other hand, in Türkiye, due to potential biases against the term ‘theory’ in translation circles (Bengi-Öner, 1999, p. 111), and in the world, because of the relative novelty of Relevance Theory, it can be proposed that only a limited number of studies taking a relevance-theoretical stance on the translation of puns and wordplays can be found in literature, some of which are as follows:

Delabastita (1994), in their *Focus on the Pun*, underscores the complexity of translating wordplay and the need for creative solutions to achieve relevance and interpretive resemblance in the target language (Delabastita, 1994, p. 227), yet without any direct reference to Relevance Theory. They highlight the fact that it seems not viable to adopt a strictly taxonomic approach to analyse puns, due to the infinite number of descriptive categories that can be used in the process (Delabastita, 1994, pp. 236-237).

Subscribing to Delabastita’s (1994; 1996, as cited in Xiaoi, 2022) views and approach, Xiaoi (2022) explores the same issue by analysing English translations of the Chinese novel *Jinpingmei*, employing a cognitive-pragmatic view within a relevance-theoretic framework. The study reveals that most puns and wordplays are either lost or misconstrued in translation, highlighting the translators’ varied approaches and the impact of translational skopos and sociocultural contexts on their choices (Xiaoi, 2022, p. 17).

Díaz-Pérez (2014), on the other hand, in their study titled *Relevance Theory and translation: Translating puns in Spanish film titles into English*, examines the translation of puns in film titles from Spanish to English, through the lens of Relevance Theory. The study analyses 190 Spanish and Latin American film titles, concluding that translators use various strategies to render puns: When the linguistic phenomena of the puns coincide in both languages, translators tend to opt for literal translation. Otherwise, they are forced to make a decision between maintaining the semantic content or the effects created by the pun (Díaz-Pérez, 2014, p. 123).

Considering the focus of this study, the following section will be devoted to Relevance Theory (1986/1995), before delving into the methodology and the analysis of the texts in question.

## **2. Relevance Theory**

In contrast to Shannon and Weaver’s (1949) above-mentioned communication model, Relevance Theory (1986/1995) emphasizes the inferential dimension of communication. In



this sense, the tasks of encoding and decoding function only as a supportive 'element', while the completion of the process of interpretation is essentially dependent on the inferential enrichment carried out by the hearer (Sperber and Wilson, 1995, pp. 172-176). In other words, the decoded utterances by the hearer remain merely as incomplete propositions on their own; while the gap between the intended meaning by the speaker and the sentence meaning corresponds to the area that the hearer has to fill by making inferences. In this sense, the hearer initially identifies the logical form within the utterance of the speaker in context-free manner. Subsequently, the enrichment process that begins beyond the scope of linguistic context proceeds through explicatures and implicatures (either weak or strong) until it takes the form of a 'complete propositional form'. In other words, according to Relevance Theory, it is not precisely possible for the speaker to present everything to the hearer in a full explicit and semantically-complete manner; therefore, during communication, the hearer always has varying degrees of inferential tasks. In this sense, Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986/1995) gained prominence as a consequence of the cognitive research that had built up since the 1970s, on the basis of the view that humans can perceive the inputs from their environment and process them as pieces of information. While the theory is quite comprehensive, this section will not delve into all the details, but rather focus on the relevant aspects related to the discussion in the following sections.

Relevance Theory is built around the principle of relevance to explain the role of relevance in communication and meaning-making processes (Sperber and Wilson, 1995, p. 158). The 'cognitive principle of relevance', according to which human cognition tends to maximize or maintain relevance, consists of two fundamental sub-principles: The first, known as the principle of 'communicative relevance', posits that every explicit communicative act (the communicative input presented to the hearer's attention) carries a presumption of its own (optimal) relevance. According to the second sub-principle, the principle of 'optimal relevance', an input can be considered 'optimally relevant' when it is relevant enough to a degree that justifies the cognitive effort expended by the hearer to process it (Sperber and Wilson, 1995, p. 158).

At this point, it may be viable to briefly touch upon the concept of 'contextual effect' in order to better understand the aforementioned principles of relevance; especially within the scope of optimal relevance. According to Relevance Theory, in order for an assumption to be relevant, it must have a 'contextual effect' in the context from where it originates. On the other hand, the magnitude of the contextual effect, and therefore the relevance, is inversely proportional to the amount of cognitive effort the receiver must expend during utterance interpretation. In other words, the less cognitive effort an assumption requires to be

understood, the greater its contextual effect and relevance (Sperber and Wilson, 1987, pp. 702-703).

As can be expressed based on the above-mentioned views put forward by the theory, there is always a gap that needs to be completed by the hearer, even in expressions that are descriptively used (as opposed to ‘interpretive’ uses such as puns and wordplays) in ordinary language and can therefore be classified as ‘complete propositions’ or ‘explicatures’ (Sperber and Wilson, 1995, p. 224; Doğan, 1992, 2011). This gap is greater in the expressions containing puns and wordplay which this study focuses on, because the speaker does not directly mean (or stand behind) the semantic content of their utterance, leaving a room for other likely interpretations (via exophoric uses and so forth). The conditions for the effects intended to be evoked in the audience with such expressions primarily lies within the possibility of the screenwriter/translator and the audience to meet each other in the same cognitive environment, and the compliance of such expressions, which will pave the way for richness of meaning, with the ‘principle of optimal relevance’ (Sperber and Wilson, 1995, pp. 38-158). The hearer (audience of the film), who instinctively ‘calculates’ the cognitive ‘cost’, will terminate their inferential processes when they are unable to identify the referents of the puns and/or wordplays in the film, or when they realize that they need to spend far too much cognitive effort to do so. This is because the instinctive tendency governing the above-mentioned processes is geared towards achieving the highest level of efficiency at the expense of the least cost (Sperber and Wilson, 1995, p. 116). If rephrased with the same analogy, this tendency of the audience can be compared to a shopper’s expectation of buying a lot of products (preferably of high quality) for as little money as they can.

If it is to be emphasized again in the light of Gutt’s (2004) views mentioned earlier, one might hold the view that the translator carries out these processes, both as an audience—that is, as a receiver of the source text—and in a sense, as a script writer, with their preferences and determined strategies when creating the target text. Therefore, it is expected that the translator should be able to identify the effects intended to be created by puns or wordplays in the source text and then transfer similar effects to (or if needed, recreate in) the target text.

### **3. Methodology**

The official English subtitles of the film *Cars 2* on the *Disney+* platform is used as the source text, and the official Turkish dubbing of the film on the same platform, which is the same as the cinema version, is used as the target text. Examples of puns and wordplays are first scanned through the target text, and their equivalents are matched with the examples in the source text. A total of randomly selected 17 matching results are qualitatively analysed within the

framework of the principles and sub-principles of the Relevance Theory, without relying on any data analysis software.

In the film, Francesco Bernoulli, the main rival of the hero of the story Lightning McQueen, is voiced by Turkish comedian Cem Yılmaz. As a target text, it is deemed more viable to focus on Turkish dubbing rather than the subtitles, with the expectation that additions/alterations Yılmaz makes with his own interpretations in the dubbing could be important in terms of enrichment.

In this vein, the first aim of the study is to determine the strategies followed by the translator when transferring expressions containing puns and wordplays to the target language, which arguably make translation processes difficult or problematic due to the creativity they require (Delabastita, 1994). The secondary goal is to seek an answer to the question of whether the translator primarily prioritizes equivalence in the translation of expressions containing puns and wordplay in the source text, or to preserve the cognitive effects intended/constructed by the screenwriter —and in cases where the priority is on the preservation of the cognitive effects, to determine if the ‘cognitive cost’ of the utterances, or the ‘cognitive environment’ of the audience are taken into consideration. The last question that the study seeks to answer is whether the translator is able to identify all the puns or wordplays in the source text, and if so, whether the puns or wordplays that are present in the source text but not transferred to the target text are consciously left out.

#### **4. Analysis of the Target Text**

The examples selected from the film, the translation strategies followed by the translator as well as their decisions are classified under four main headings and evaluated through the lens of Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986/1995; Gutt, 1998, 2004).

##### **4.1. Cases where puns and/or wordplays are not identified**

As mentioned in the introduction of the study and explained in the previous section, the primary job of the translator is to identify the puns and wordplays in the source text with their possible connotations, from the perspective of the target reader or audience. However, this first step, the success of which Gutt (1998; 2004) directly associates with translation competence, is not always successfully achieved. The first of the few examples of this situation meets the audience in the fourth minute of the film, in the scene where the ‘baddies’ talk about agent Finn McMissile:

- (1) ST: This one we caught sticking his bumper where it didn't belong.  
TT: *Bunu tamponunu girmemesi gereken yerlere uzatırken buldum.*

As can be seen in the example, the pun in the source text is based on the English idiom ‘to stick your nose into something’. Based on the definition of the idiom in the dictionary (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.), while its Turkish equivalent is ‘*bir şeye burnunu sokmak*’, the translator changed the verb with the word ‘*uzatmak*’ [stick something out], thus interfering with the integrity of the idiom. Since the word ‘nose’ was replaced with ‘bumper’ by the source text writer as part of the car analogy seen throughout the film, it has become almost impossible for the Turkish audience to understand the idiom in the target text, and the expression no longer concurs with the principle of relevance. It can be argued that this choice is not a conscious omission strategy, since the idiom that forms the basis of the joke in the source text has an exact equivalent (*burun* and nose) in common use in Turkish.

Another similar example can be given from the sixty-eighth minute of the film. After the ‘baddies’ play Finn McMissile a trick, their boss Kingpin encourages them with the following words:

(2) ST: And they will finally respect us! So hold your hoods high!

TT: *Ve bize saygı duyacaklar! O yüzden kaputlarınızı dik tutun!*

Based on the source text example above, it can be proposed that the cognitive cost of the expression is increased both by using an idiom and creating a wordplay: The ST joke is built on the idiom ‘keep your hopes high’; based on the phonetic similarity between ‘hopes’ and ‘hoods’, through which a car analogy is constructed and a semantic depth is achieved. When the target text is put under spotlight, however, it can be claimed that this complex-looking structure poses a difficulty for the translator in terms of both identification and conveyance of similar effects: The translator probably prefers to change (or attempts to blend) the Turkish equivalent of the idiom which serves as the stepping stone for the pun in the source text, ‘*umutlarını yüksek tutmak*’ [keeping your hopes high], with (and) another idiom ‘*başını dik tutmak*’ [holding your head up]. However, they seem unable to achieve the phonetic similarity that could perfectly be achieved through the Turkish words ‘*umut*’ [hope] and ‘*kaput*’ [hood], just like in the target text. It can be argued that this choice too is not conscious, based on the fact that no expression similar to the phrase ‘keep your heads (hoods) up’ is used in the target text.

On the other hand, while it is possible to hold that there are some wordplays and external references in the character names in the source text, it is seen that some of the names are translated into Turkish (e.g. Darrell ‘*Bintur*’ [Cartrip in ST]) and some are directly transferred (e.g. Brent Mustangburger) to the target text, arguably without any consistent strategy. Thus, it seems safe to take the stance (for either translation decision) that the translator fails to identify the puns or wordplays in some of the names. For example:

(3) ST: David Hobbscap

TT: *David Kaporta*

As one might argue, the surname of the character in the ST example contains a reference to both the word ‘hubcap’, and ‘Hobbs’, a common English surname (clothing brand *Hobbs*, electronic goods brand *Russell Hobbs*, etc.). The translator attempts to replace this word with another automotive term, ‘*kaporta*’ [bodywork]. The fact that the translator prefers the non-equivalent word ‘*Kaporta*’ instead a Turkish word related to wheels or tires (as is the case in ST), however, leads the audience to think that the reason for the change in question is the relatively difficult pronunciation of the word ‘Hobbscap’ for the Turkish audience, rather than the aim to identify the ST pun and evoke similar effects in the target text. On the other hand, through this change, the translator reduced the cognitive cost of the pun, which is relatively high in the source text, but withdraws from the weak implicatures and effects created in the ST pun: While ‘Hobbscap’ is phonetically similar to a common surname in English and operates on two levels (both as a pun and a wordplay), the TT surname ‘*Kaporta*’ neither has any similar connotations nor a use as a surname in the target culture. Moreover, it is difficult to draw any parallels between the ST and TT uses, other than the fact that the Turkish word ‘*kaporta*’ lends itself to the car analogy of the film.

Another name that gives the impression that the translator fails to identify the pun belongs to Siddeley, the British Intelligence agent plane who comes to rescue Finn McMissile and Sir Tow Mater from the airport. The surname ‘Siddeley’, to someone familiar with the source culture, is clearly a reference to the former British aircraft manufacturer Hawker Siddeley. However, from the point of consistency, ‘Siddeley’ differs from the other surnames which are similarly transferred from the source text to the target text as they are, such as ‘Mustangburger’, in terms of the weakness of the implicature it contains: Preservation of the surname ‘Mustangburger’ as it can easily be justified by the familiarity of the target audience to the American sports car Ford Mustang and the universal food name hamburger. However, it is almost impossible to similarly draw parallels between ‘Siddeley’ and ‘Hawker Siddeley’ in the target culture. Therefore, in a case where it is assumed that the pun is identified, one would expect the translator to opt to translate (and find equivalents for) the names which have relatively higher cognitive cost in ST and are not available in the cognitive environment of the target audience; to maintain optimal relevance and if possible, to preserve the ST pun. On that basis, since the translator does not choose to follow this strategy, it can be deduced that they fail to identify the puns at least in the above-given examples.

#### **4.2. Changes and recreations in expressions with puns and/or wordplays**

Since *Cars 2* is marketed as an animated comedy film, and the age range of its target audience is excessively wide, conveying the puns and wordplays as easily noticeable and understandable as possible is of crucial importance in achieving the goal of the work. Therefore, from a relevance-theoretical perspective (Sperber and Wilson, 1986/1995), the translator is expected to preserve or recreate similar inferential effects in the target text, even if it requires a complete change of the expression that contains the pun and/or wordplay.

In this vein, the translator demonstrates high levels of creativity in *Cars 2*, based on the examples provided in this section. In line with this strategy (of changing or recreation of the ST puns), the first example where the translator unleashes their creativity meets the audience at the end of the seventh minute of the film, in the scene where Sir Tow Mater comes to rescue Otis, who seem to be a ‘rotbox’ that frequently breaks down:

(4) ST: Smooth like pudding, huh? Ah, who am I kidding? I’ll always be a lemon.

TT: *Turp gibiyim, değil mi? Kimi kandırıyorum, benden cacık bile olmaz.*<sup>†</sup>

Arguably, when Otis says ‘smooth like pudding’, he resorts to irony through some of the most relevant connotations of pudding dessert, such as ‘smooth, in shape, problem-free’ and ‘shiny, eye-catching’, despite the fact that his bodywork is full of rust and his paint is faded. Since the expression in question has no equivalent in the target language that would create the same effect operating on two levels (except for words in local dialects in target language, such as ‘*cıncık gibi*’ [(shiny) like a glassware/porcelain] in Adana dialect), the translator goes for the expression ‘*turp gibi*’ [meaning ‘as fit as a fiddle’ or ‘as fresh as a daisy’ in TL]. Although this choice does not involve any visual references in TL unlike the ST pun, it is a simile used for people in TL, so it reinforces the analogy established throughout the film between cars and humans, and allows the pun to operate on the basis of ‘being problem-free and healthy’ similarly for the target audience. The fact that the expression the translator opts to use in TT is in the cognitive environment of almost all Turkish speakers preserves or even reduces<sup>‡</sup> the cognitive cost of the expression in the source text. The expression ‘lemon’ in the second part of the pun appears frequently throughout the film and is consistently used as ‘*hurda*’ [scrap, rotbox] in the target text. In the above-given example (4), the translator, probably by considering the sentence as a whole, chose the expression ‘*bir cacık olmaz*’, meaning ‘the worst of the worst’, which is commonly used by adults in the target culture. Although this choice enriches the ST expression in terms of puns, however, one might propose that it increases the

<sup>†</sup> In the Turkish subtitle, the sentence reads as “*Kimi kandırıyorum? Ben hep külüstür kalacağım.*” [Who am I kidding? I will always be a rotbox.]

<sup>‡</sup> What Otis means by this expression has been a subject of discussion on a forum website, creating the impression that the pun in question is not easy to understand in the ST either: [https://forum.wordreference.com/threads/smooth-like-pudding.2304466/]

cognitive cost of the pun for children, considering the fact that the film appeals to a wide age range.

Another case of changing of a pun, therefore creativity, appears in the scene where Sir Tow Mater takes up the role of a waiter so that he can stay close to Lightning McQueen:

(5) ST: My name is Mater and I'll be your waiter. Mater the waiter. That's funny right there.

TT: *Mater benim adım, yakınınzdayım bir adım<sup>s</sup>. Garson Mater. Bence çok komik ya.*

As seen in the ST example, the character's name 'Mater' rhymes with the word 'waiter'. Yet, it does not seem possible to achieve a similar wordplay in Turkish while preserving the semantic content, since it is not possible to change the name of the character only for this purpose. Therefore, the translator chose to preserve the cognitive effects and cost created by rhyme, at the expense of changing the semantic content of the sentence. Apparently, the appreciation of waiters in the target culture depends on their close attention to their customers' table and their availability when they are needed. Therefore, when Mater says '*Yakınınzdayım bir adım*' [I am just a step away from you] rather than explicitly declaring that he is a waiter does not increase the cognitive cost of the TT statement when compared to ST example, especially thanks to the visual clues such as the waiter napkin he carries and the statement '*Garson* [Waiter] *Mater*' he makes immediately after the expression containing the wordplay.

Another example (6), in which the same strategy as the previous example (5) is followed, draws the audience's attention in the scene where Mater is looking for something to eat. This time, however, the pun goes in favour of the translator:

(6) ST:

- (Mater) Hey, what you got here that's free? How about that pistachio ice cream?

- (Sushi Chef) No. No. Wasabi.

- (Mater) Oh, same ol', same ol'. What's up with you? That looks delicious.

TT:

- (*Mater*) *Buralarda beleş neler var? Şu çam fıstıklı dondurma nasıl?*

- (*Suşi Şefi*) *No. No. Wasabi.*

- (*Mater*) *Geçmiş olsun abi, neden asabisin ki? Çok leziz görünüyor.*

As seen in the above-given example (6), the wordplay in the ST is constructed through the (rather far-fetched) phonetic similarity between word 'wasabi' and the question 'what's up?'. However, the fact that a true rhyme cannot be achieved due to the ending of the word 'wasabi' is, arguably, 'unmusical' in the ST. In the target text, the translator keeps the word 'wasabi' as

it appears in the ST and goes for the fully rhyming word ‘*asabi*’ [angry] in TT at the expense of a change in the semantic content, which does not have a key function in the storyline of the film. In this way, the translator achieves both an optimal relevance and an equivalent (arguably better) wordplay in the target text. On the other hand, in other cases where the translator resorts to a direct transfer rather than making the change in (6), it can be argued that the cognitive cost would inevitably increase, due to the fact that the expressions ‘wasabi’ and, for example, ‘*senden ne haber?*’ [what about you?] are not relevant at all.

The scene where Finn McMissile and Sir Tow Mater meets at the airport, reminding the audience of *James Bond* films, can be provided as another example of creativity:

(7) ST:

- (Finn McMissile) I never properly introduced myself. Finn McMissile. British Intelligence.

- (Mater) Tow Mater. Average intelligence.

TT:

- (*Finn McRoket*) *Affedersiniz, kendimi tam olarak tanıtamadım. Finn McRoket. İngiliz Haber Alma.*

- (*Mater*) *Çekici Mater. Pek haber almam zaten.*

It can be observed that the pun above is constructed on the synonyms of the word ‘intelligence’ in the source text: While Finn McMissile means that he is an intelligence agent, Mater uses the same word to openly express, both verbally and through his misunderstanding, that he is of ‘average intelligence.’ However, in the target language, there is no synonym for the word in question, or a phrase that carries the same meaning that would construct the pun in the same way. Therefore, the translator opts for a phrase that could easily be associated with the idiom ‘*dünyadan haberi olmamak*’ [to be out of touch with the world], which is in common use in the target language to describe naïve people. Thus, it can be argued that both the pun and the semantic content are preserved as much as possible in the TT. However, from the perspective of Relevance Theory, the cognitive cost has arguably increased in the target language; because the directness of the pun constructed with the synonyms of the word ‘intelligence’ in the ST is lost in the TT.

Another example that is similar, but resulting in a different case due to the dynamics of the target language, is found in the scene where Sir Tow Mater first encounters the word ‘agent’:

(8) ST:

- (Holley) “A good agent gets what he can, then gets out before he’s killed.” Sorry.



- (Mater) Agent? You mean like insurance agent, like [...]

TT:

- (Holley) *İyi bir ajan son hızla alabildiğini alır ve oradan çıkıp gider.*

- (Mater) *Ajans mı? Yani reklam ajansı gibi bir şey mi? [...]*

As is the case for the word ‘intelligence’ in example (7), the pun in (8) is constructed through the synonyms of the word ‘agent’. Although Turkish allows for a similar parallel to be drawn with a small nuance (*ajan* [agent] – *ajans* [agency]), the word ‘ajans’ is not used together with the word ‘sigorta’ [insurance], despite some common uses such as ‘news agency’ and ‘advertising agency’ in TL. That may explain why the translator chooses to replace the expression of Sir Tow Mater with ‘advertising agency’ so as to preserve the pun, rather than going for the direct transfer of the expression ‘*sigorta acentesi*’ [insurance agency], which would eliminate the wordplay. Thus, the translator manages to preserve the cognitive cost of the pun as well as the semantic content; in other words, it is made possible for the TT audience to similarly identify the wordplay at the expense of a reasonable cognitive effort.

One other example where effects similar to the wordplay in the ST are created by following a substitution strategy appears in the airplane scene. McMissile instructs Siddeley to change course, yet Tow Mater completely misunderstands the command:

(9) ST:

- (Finn) Paris. Tout de suite.

- (Mater) Yeah, two of them sweets for me too, Sid!

TT:

- (Finn) *Paris. Tout de suite.*

- (Mater) *Evet, lütfen bana da bir suit tut!*

In (9), rather than choosing to use an expression along the lines of ‘*bana da o şekerlerden iki tane lütfen*’ [please give me two of those candies], within which the semantic content is preserved but the wordplay is lost, the translator opts for conveying the pun by changing the semantic content of the line (appearing as ‘book me a suite too’ in TT), which is of no crucial importance in the storyline of the film. In the source text, the pun relies on the phonetic similarity between the words ‘tout’ – ‘two’ and ‘suite’ – ‘sweet’. The translator, however, focuses their efforts on the word ‘suit’, which is widely used in Turkish while etymologically belonging to French, and thus creates similar effects in the target text. In this case, despite the fact that the word ‘suit’ is of foreign origin for TT audience, the cognitive cost is preserved without any increase due to its widespread use in TL.

One final example for the substitution strategy can be given from Sir Tow Mater’s lines in the same scene:

- (10) ST:  
- (Finn) You obviously have plenty of experience in the field.  
- (Mater) Well yeah I live right next to one.  
TT:  
- (Finn) *Sahada çok büyük bir tecrüben olduğu ortada.*  
- (Mater) *Evet, evimin yanında halı saha var.*

In (10), the translator chooses to play with the word ‘field’, although it has an exact equivalent in Turkish (‘*saha*’) and is frequently used in professional language, by turning it into the phrase ‘*halı saha*’ [lit. football field with synthetic pitch]. The reason for this is that the word ‘field’ within the context of Finn’s line means ‘*saha*’ in Turkish, whereas the Turkish equivalent for the word in a way that Mater (mis)understands it is ‘*tarla*’ [an area of land where crops are grown]. Thanks to this minor addition and change in the semantic content, the pun is preserved, and the cognitive cost is reduced compared to the ST, since no indefinite noun is used in TT.

#### **4.3. Additions and subtractions to the expressions containing puns and/or wordplays**

In some of the expressions containing puns or wordplays, it can be observed that the translator resorts to addition and subtraction strategies. The reason for this may be to ensure that the pun can be ‘optimally’ understood in the target language. In this vein, redundant parts of speech that increase the cognitive cost are generally removed, and phrases that makes the pun more understandable or funnier are added. This strategy is often seen in the lines of the character Francesco Bernoulli, voiced by Cem Yılmaz with a so-called ‘Italian accent’:

- (11) ST:  
- (Francesco) Yes, you will see Francesco, but not like this. You will see him like-a this as he drives away from you.  
- (McQueen) So you had one of those made up for all the racers?  
- (Francesco) No.  
- (McQueen) Okay.  
TT:  
- (Francesco): *Francesco’yu göreceksin tabi. Ama böyle görmeyeceksin. Sen beni hep böyle göreceksin. Ciao McQueen!*  
- (McQueen) *Bütün yarışçılar için bunlardan bir tane yaptırın mı?*  
- (Francesco) *Sana özel!*  
- (McQueen) *Peki.*  
- (Francesco) *Kızarante bozarante!*

The first noticeable change in the example above is the subtraction of the phrase ‘as he drives away from you’ in Francesco’s first line. Although the phrase ‘drive away’ does not have an exact equivalent in the target language, equivalents that could capture similar semantic effects such as ‘*sana fark atarken*’ [as I leave you in the dust] or ‘*seninle arayı açarken*’ [as you get ‘gapped’ by me] are not preferred in the target text. This may be because of the fact that Francesco is already showing McQueen his back (his taillights in colloquial terms) as he is talking. The phrase ‘Ciao McQueen’, which is added to the end of the line in the TT (and written at the back of Francesco), is not found in the source text. The reason for the addition may be to reinforce the character’s ‘Italian accent’. It can be argued that the same applies for the phrase added at the end of (11), ‘*kızarante bozarante!*’ (not grammatically correct in TL (should read ‘*kızarıp bozar*’), suffixes are made up so that the words sound ‘Italian’ – meaning ‘to go beetroot red’).

Another addition can be seen in Francesco’s line at the beginning of the race in Japan, where he speaks of himself in the third person out of arrogance:

- (12) ST: It’s really getting him into the zone!  
 TT: *Beni havaya sokare, asfaltları yakare!*

In example (12), the translator creates a pun that is not in the source text by adding the expression ‘*asfalt yakmak*’ [to tear up the tarmac] to the part of the line after the comma, which he also reinforces with fake ‘Italian accent’ (again by making up rhyming suffixes). The effects of this addition are reflected and reinforced (through the repetition of the word ‘*asfalt*’ [tarmac]) in a later scene, where a changing strategy is followed: ‘Onu bugün asfaltta ağlatacağım!’ [I will make him cry on the asphalt today! – which appears in ST as ‘I will beat his cry-baby bottom today!’. In addition, the words ‘*asfalt*’ and ‘*ağlatmak*’ [to make somebody cry] serve as implicit references (weak implicatures) to a highly popular Turkish oil company advertisement from roughly a decade ago in the target culture, which is also voiced by Cem Yılmaz.

One more case where the strategy of addition is followed, with a similar ‘Italian’ flavour, is to be seen in the scene where Francesco takes over McQueen in the Japan race:

- (13) ST: [Subtitle] (*SPEAKS ITALIAN*)  
 [English dubbing] [*Grazie and arrivederci!*]  
 TT: *Canımın içi, arrivederci!*

In (13), despite the lack of a ST equivalent, a Turkish expression (‘*canımın içi*’ [my sweetheart]) is added to the TT by making use of the rhyme of the Italian word ‘*arrivederci*’ and the Turkish word ‘*ichi*’. Although ‘*arrivederci*’ is a foreign word, it can be argued that it is preserved and used to derive a pun by the translator as it is widely used in target culture (like some other

words such as ‘*ciao*’ and ‘*tshüss*’). Thus, a partially understandable foreign expression in ST is localized with the addition strategy in the TT and made more understandable, therefore cognitively less costly.

#### 4.4. Direct transfers of puns and/or wordplays

According to Gutt, in contrast to the ‘indirect’ translation that involves interpretive uses, a translation is ‘direct’ when the SL utterance is translated directly into TL in cases where the TL utterance aims to achieve uniformity with the SL utterance (Gutt, 1990, as cited in Bengi-Öner, 2004, p. 167). As established by this study so far, a translator may safely resort to a direct or indirect translation when necessary. As Bengi-Öner (2004) holds, the choice the translator makes between the two above-mentioned alternatives when adopting a translation strategy directly affects the success of the end product. On the other hand, it becomes increasingly viable to argue that the sharp boundaries between direct and indirect translation disappears when it comes to puns and wordplays; because identifying the pun/wordplay in the source text and finding the exact equivalent for it in the target language involves varying degrees of interpretation, even in cases of direct translation. Therefore, the term ‘interpretive’, which Gutt (1990, as cited in Bengi-Öner, 2004) considers as more integrated, seems to be better suited for examining the strategies followed by the translator within the scope of this study. The first of the examples where the translator follows a direct translation strategy but enters the boundaries of interpretive use meets the audience in the fifteenth minute of the film, in the scene where Sir Tow Mater makes a live TV appearance and addresses Francesco:

- (14) ST: McQueen could drive circles around you.  
TT: *McQueen senin etrafında daireler çizer.*

Arguably, the translator bases the pun in example (14) on the similarity with the English idiom ‘to run rings around somebody’. Italian racer Francesco fails to understand this statement and replies by claiming that all McQueen can do is to draw circles. At this point, the translator might be opting to preserve the ‘incomprehensibility’ of the expression for Francesco and therefore to adopt a direct translation strategy.

In some examples where the translator follows a direct translation strategy, it can be observed that the exact equivalent of the SL idiom is used in the TL. In this way, it becomes possible to convey the inferential richness of the expressions while maintaining optimal relevance. For example:

- (15) ST: You had it [race] in the bag.  
TT: *Yarış çantada keklikti.*
- (16) ST: Lemons is a tow truck's bread and butter.

TT: *Külüstürler çekicilerin ekmek teknesidir.*

(17) ST: You can't do a three-point turn around here without bumping into some celebrity!

TT: *Elinizi sallasanız ünlü bir kişiye kesin denk gelirsiniz!*

Finally, it is observed that direct translation is also adopted for puns based on car brands and model names that are widely known in the target language. As is the case with the Mustangburger example mentioned in 3.1, the name of the Big Ben clock tower is changed to 'Big Bentley' in the seventy-fifth minute of the film in the source text; and due to the global recognition of the Bentley brand, it is directly transferred to the target text.

## 5. Conclusion

In the case of the Turkish dubbing of the film *Cars 2*, one might propose the view that the translator heavily adopts the strategy of changing the expressions containing puns and wordplays. As seen in most of the examples in the study, semantic content is not prioritized unless otherwise necessary, and the weight is given to preserving the pun or wordplay, therefore evoking similar cognitive effects in the target language, rather than achieving equivalence. All of the examples analysed in the above sections concur with Delabastita's (1994) view that the presence of puns and wordplays requires creativity in that they cannot be translated by adopting pre-determined strategies. When the translation strategies followed in the TT are reconsidered through the lens of Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986/1995), it can be argued that the translator pays attention to the cognitive environment of the target audience, thus manages to maintain optimal relevance while keeping cognitive costs at minimum. Although the principle of relevance in general proves to be useful in providing an account for the strategies adopted by the translator, one might hold that there are other factors are at play that mostly have to do with competence, such as translator's sense of humour, language abilities and level of attention to details. Speaking of competence, finally, it can be argued that the translator fails to identify some of the puns and wordplays in the ST, since there are sufficient clues indicating that ST expressions of this sort are not consciously/deliberately left out in the TT.

## Disclosures

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**“Homeless at the Seashore”: Trauma in Refugee Narrative, *Sea Prayer*,  
by Khaled Hosseini\***

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**Abstract**

Trauma theory provides an insight into modern literary works particularly to those, which are written upon prevailing chaos in the world. As Cathy Caruth underlines in her *Unclaimed Experience* (1996), trauma theory discusses the disturbed psyche and the factors lie beneath. Caruth has introduced literary trauma theory and three aspects of personal trauma that are “repetitious, timeless and unspeakable” (p. 8), which are found interwoven in Khaled Hosseini’s refugee narrative, his illustrated novella *Sea Prayer* (2018). The novella depicts the perennial problems faced through war, violence and refugee life. Hosseini urges the readers to reflect on the personal and collective plight that refugees suffered when they set out for better life opportunities. The novella is about a traumatic experience, and Caruth’s concepts on literary trauma theory provide a useful frame to deal with traumatic memory and its repercussions. Thus, the study seeks to display the glimpses of personal and collective trauma and traumatic memory in the related theory. The article designed in the descriptive methodology draws reader’s attention to displacement and nostalgia since the novella unfolds the dire dimension of human civilization sided with inhumane occurrences particularly in the Mediterranean region. It intends to reach at the conclusion that Hosseini’s refugee narrative highlights the traumatic existence and the plight of the refugees who are torn between nostalgia and traumatic memory.

**Key words:** Trauma, nostalgia, displacement, refugee narrative, *Sea Prayer*

“I am tired of humanizing myself” (Baha’ Ebdeir, cited in Bakara, 2020, p. 289)

**Introduction**

Recent developments in global sociopolitical perspectives have resulted in newer forms of troubles. Nations, which have formerly enjoyed relative security within their borders, are now dragged in multilayered hardships and compelled with working out solutions against new

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scenarios of diversified ends. In this respect, Büyükgözü (2023) states that “[t]he global policies and conflicts that arose at the start of the 20th century have provoked global refugee crises for more than a century and made the belonging crisis and adaptation issues controversial” (p. 16). The worldwide crisis worsened the conditions that led to the displacement of oppressed masses of crowds who became undefended against heart-breaking conditions. Recent transnational developments increase the frequency of enforced migrations to take up sea and land journeys.

Global societies have witnessed the prevailing refugee crisis in the Middle East in Syria on an unprecedented scale. Syria has gone through a drastic economic situation together with the regime's hostile attitude, mainly focusing on the urban region's protestations. Through a sectarian civil war with the inclusion of radical religious groups, Syria experienced a large wave of displacements in modern history, affecting 13 million people in total and 6.6 million refugees (Kadavan, 2021, p. 3), the most significant portion of which headed towards Turkish borders, land, and sea. Hence, the representation of refugees in literary texts has triggered a literary urgency, leading to abundant literary works depicting refugee lives.

The dominant term, refugee, uses refugee narrative/literature to verbalize refugee experiences. Kadavan states that “[t]here is no clear and official definition of the term refugee literature” (2021, p. 4). Yet, it can be moderately defined as texts of refugees, economic migrants, and stateless individuals. In this definition, we encounter creative diversity of refugee narrative as a subgenre of novel that has grown over the recent decades through chaotic internationalism and forced migration in parallel with global politics.

The association of refugee literature and postcolonial studies can be cited as a natural outcome in literary history (Gallien, 2018, p. 722). The representation of the forcibly displaced masses sparks off a new subaltern who goes beyond postcolonial discourse, which utilizes terms like asylum seekers, unprivileged, uninvited, unwelcome, and discriminated migrants from home states in massive civilian protests accompanied by state oppression. In the definition of the genre Bağlama states:

Literary works, which can be classified as part of refugee literature, mostly provide realistic snapshots of the nature of the refugee crisis and thematise the process of victimization and dehumanization experienced by internally displaced persons, refugees and asylum seekers fleeing the civil war in Syria or elsewhere in the world. (2020, p. 632)

Refugee narratives strikingly illustrate hazardous journeys launched by such displaced people in search of shelter in lands with xenophobic attitudes. Further, they also criticize the unstable policies of the nations that give rise to testimonial literature of traumatic experiences. As has been observed in numerous incidents, refugees undergo large-scale medical, psychological, and traumatic disasters even after they manage to reach their



destinations. Some examples of refugee literature can be cited as: *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay* (2000) by Michael Chabon, *Call Me American* (2018) by Abdi Nor Iftin, *Sweetness in the Belly* (2005) by Camilla Gibb, *Exist West* (2017) by Mohsin Hamid, *Enrique's Journey* (2006) by Sonia Nazario and *A Land of Permanent Goodbyes* (2018) by Atia Abawi.

Refugees are compelled to launch horrendous journeys from their homeland to various destinations, which are reported to include around 130 different nations so far. The land and sea journeys of refugees across mainly European destinations, labeled as "journeys of nonarrivals," make up the core content of the genre. The destinations of "[n]onarrivals depict the uncertainty, hopelessness, and insecurity" (Kadavan, 2021, p. 6) the journey of which realized in primitive vehicles and boats.

With its epistolary style, *Sea Prayer* (henceforth this edition will be referred to as SP) (2018) by Khaled Hosseini, the acclaimed Afghan-American author, recounts the tale of a Syrian father obliged to take a sea voyage in the Mediterranean for a safe port away from the homeland. The narrator-father attends to his sleeping son, Marvan, recollecting the 'good old days' memories and particular sceneries of the Syrian city of Homs, the hometown, and the forthcoming hazards of sailing in a small boat. He refers to the bright and joyful summer days when he was a child by recalling the grandparents' house in Syria in the line "[t]he stirring of olive trees in the breeze, the bleating of his grandmother's goat, the clanking of her cooking pots" (SP, p. 5). Hosseini designed the novella as a tribute to the large masses of immigrants with families who have been forcibly separated from home due to civil war and destitution. As a goodwill ambassador to the United Nations since 2006, Hosseini hopes to raise awareness in large masses regarding refugees "from a perspective of humanitarianism" (He, 2021, p.74).

The novella, *Sea Prayer*, is classified as a refugee narrative, handling the issue of home, displacement, and the doomed travels of the displaced people from the Syrian territory. Hosseini makes use of the wide scope of the pictorial illustrations of the renowned artist Dan Williams (Babu, 2021, p. 46). The novella is in epistolary form "[f]rom a father to his son on their journey to find a safe shelter" (Babu, 2021, p. 46), the first part of which is composed of retrospective narrations of the city of Homs in the prewar period. In the further pages, we are drawn into traumatic sufferings and the laments of the city inhabitants. It depicts the emotional and tragic experiences of the inhabitants of the city of Homs in Syria in the aftermath of the Syrian Civil War in the region (Kadavan, 2021, p. 8). Bringing out the heart-breaking demise of Alan Kurdi, who "[w]as washed away dead" (Kadavan, 2021, p. 7) onto the shores of Turkish southern land in September 2015, Hosseini strikingly depicts in drawings the multifaceted interpretations of the Syrian refugee crisis, their homelessness, and hazardous journeys to escape the oppression, grimness, traumatic and xenophobic demeanor against them (Kadavan, 2021, p. 1). The refugee narrative illustrates both traumatic memories confined in nostalgia and the hope aligned with futuristic prayer for the war-torn refugees.

## Trauma

Trauma studies incorporate versatile fields of science such as psychology, sociology, and relevant sciences. It is defined as the “emotional response” someone develops for a pressing and “terrible event” (Oulwan, 2021, p. 31). Such emotional reaction does not only contain the repercussions in relation to a hurt personality but also the reaction that pertains the background of a wound, which proclaims a genuine and individual traumatic event. It is also defined as a menace and danger to life or corporal composure and a hazardous confrontation with violence and death. Basing the main concepts on Freudian psychoanalysis and as the forerunner of literary trauma Cathy Caruth (1996) introduces three significant traits of personal trauma: “repetitious, timeless, and unspeakable” (p. 8). She underlines that trauma is recurring since it is in flashbacks and reoccurs in the mind of a person. It is timeless because it makes a person dependent on his past. Regardless of the location, personal trauma reappears to dwell in the mind and occurs repeatedly in the form of flashbacks mingled with both past and present. The next notion encloses linguistics capital and consciousness that renders the trauma unspeakable impairing both language and consciousness (Caruth, 1996, p. 11).

Caruth contends that “[a] traumatic event could lead to the disclosure of a human voice crying out from the wound: a voice that witnesses a truth” (1996, p. 3). In other words, “[a]n incident in the perimeter of a trauma is likely to occur in the nightmares and repetitive actions of the survivor” (1996, p. 4). Such an event remains at the heart of the cognitive process of “repetitive seeing of the story of the accident” (Caruth, 1996, p. 92). Hence, in this occasion, the traumatic event “[e]xemplifies an infraction in mind instigating inciting an awareness of the threat to life” that consequently composes post-traumatic symptoms (Caruth, 1996, p. 62). Thus, from this perspective, the traumatic incident manufactures potent impressions of the past that the person cannot get rid of. Such impact cannot be restricted to past traumatic events but recurs in the aftermath. It is not limited to an incident of the past; it is a daily-experienced reality. Caruth stipulates that such a chaotic condition is a display of a dominant experience of immediate or disastrous incidents in which the repercussions come to the surface in an uncontrolled appearance of hallucinations (1996, p. 11).

Traumatic memory haunts the minds on two levels: personal and collective. Chaotic events expose specific individuals or exclusive groups of people to certain results with haunting dimensions. On a collective level, such events as wars, civil wars, natural disasters, or enforced displacements affect the whole social structure. Traumatic disorders come about in the form of panic attacks, flashbacks, and nightmares triggered by the past incidents. Hence, Syrians suffer from collective post-war syndromes that occur in traumatic aftermaths collectively and individually.

## **Displacement and Nostalgia**

The plight of the refugees is composed of displacement, the definition of which contains the cases and incidents in which the affected people are obligated to depart from the original location, homes, and towns to get exposed to ensuing results in distressing dimensions to attain possible safety. As can be seen from the definition, displacement is in-betweenness and multiple experiences that compel the victim to be tied to history, collective and individual memory; as it is imbued with nostalgia, one cannot help remembering. In this perspective, the displaced person is dominated by the burden of absence in life and memory.

Edward Said underlines geographical displacement as an enforced departure and being exiled from the place in a “continuous state of unwilling dislocation” (1999, p. 34). According to Homi Bhabha (1994), displacement could be seen as a social experience that connects the discourse of past and present. Yet, such an experience remains at the rim of an in-between reality (p. 19); through the social-cultural lens, the refugee is rated as a figure in the limbo of a significant historical and postcolonial migration that is both transitional and transnational. In this global and transnational world, the refugee is left at the epicenter of a border problem. Bhabha contends that a future life of ambivalence threatens experience in target destinations as nostalgia about the homeland continues under all conditions (1994, p. 21).

The term nostalgia has been broadly defined beyond the borders and inclusion of homesickness, which may create a dichotomy in the mind as it is designated in the perspectives of returning to the long-yearned locations. Hence, definitions include “wistful longing for something one has known in the past” (Hornby, 1978, p. 582). Nostalgia is associated with a yearning to return to one's home, family and friends. Therefore, it encapsulates a sentimental yearning for the happiness of a former place or time (Sedikidies et al. 2002, p. 305) and a bittersweet longing for past things, persons, or situations. Nostalgia has been deemed to include the mixture of ever-present heartache for the past and, at the same time, somehow sufferance for sentimental pain as well as enhanced self-continuity maintained by remembering an occurrence triggered through prototypic traits of nostalgia. Maintenance of the self is also designed with the influence of alerted nostalgia on meaning in life, sustained spirituality, and, in turn, existentially empowered meaning in life. In this broad definition lies the agent of suppressing the undesired effect of disappointment and enhanced well-being by decreasing the negative repercussions of limited time horizons and strengthening authenticity. That is to say, nostalgia is sided with pleasant, reflective, and bittersweet memories.

As an essential element of traumatic memory, nostalgia is affiliated with old times and prevalent childhood in addition to yearning for pleasurable memories. From this perspective, it is necessary to distinguish between nostalgia and homesickness, as both are handled in literary texts imbued with trauma. Homesickness is related to one's place of origin whereas nostalgia carries an effect on a wide array of belongings and objects and on diversified

individuals, events, and locations. Homesickness studies are based on the psychological problems that can surface in times of oppression and anxiety, especially when a person is in transition. Nostalgia passes over social groups and periods and at this moment is attained over and beyond the cultures and amidst proper adults, children, and senior individuals. In this way, Sedikides et al. (2008) define nostalgia as “a sentimental longing for one's past” (p. 305) whether “a negative, ambivalent, or positive emotion” (p. 305). Nostalgia takes place due to undesired and low moods, and, in some cases, it is evaluated as sentimental, desired, positive, and relevant. Its emotional key passes through primary psychological functions, which manufacture “[r]elaxing effects, increase self-esteem, foster social connectedness, and alleviate existential threats” (Sedikides et al., 2008, p. 305).

Said (1999) adds, “[n]ostalgia, homesickness, and belonging are trapped in the base of memories by places” (p. 35) where the person lives and writes about. In Said's statements, we observe the discourses and dichotomy of past and present, which further reiterates that nostalgia both allures physical detachment and generates the causes that tie a person to the homeland, which is rated as transformative, positivistic through “[t]he dialectics of memory and displacement” (1999, p. 35).

Salmose (2018) suggests that “[n]ostalgia fluctuates between two opposing clusters of happiness and sadness, with either sphere dominant in different cases; inconsistent with a uniformly positive view” (p. 336), he advocates that it encompasses the everlasting sadness and melancholy of life and can be profound and deep-rooted in the conflicts of clashing desires (p. 337). Thus, in the definition of dichotomy, duality and hybridity are the standard terms to denote the conflicts and their repercussions between old and new and conflicting wants originating from loss and change. Svetlana Boym states that “[n]ostalgia is a longing for a home that no longer exists or has never existed” (2001, p. 45). Thus, the impact of nostalgia is double the exposure between home and abroad, past and present, dream, and reality.

### **Trauma and Nostalgia in *Sea Prayer***

Influenced by the heart-piercing image of the demised Syrian refugee boy Alan Kurdi, Hosseini is self-tasked to verbalize the pathos and tragedy of the international refugees, who have been exposed to pathetic conditions. Khaled Hosseini shapes the body of such tragedies in the pages of the refugee novella *Sea Prayer*. The cruelty of the Syrian war is seen as a manufacturer of refugees who had to escape into neighboring regions from sea and land. As an expectant outcome, such a big-scale displacement and plight has an ever-lasting blow upon the psyche and their abilities to deal with the trauma aftermath. Seen from this angle, Alan Kurdi has an unforgettable effect on the minds globally of the Middle Easterners fleeing war-torn territories and trying to find a haven somewhere away from home. Hosseini demonstrates the imprinted image of the Syrian war in the form of a letter by a displaced “[S]yrian father to his sleeping son, Marwan, during their painful waiting for dawn to break and a boat to arrive” (SP, p. 37).

The novella showcases refugee's traumatic present, and their potential fears of the future. Syrian refugees are described as individuals burdened with traumatic experiences beset with profundity of obligatory separation and destitution. To disseminate the pain and inhumanity of displacement to all corners of the world, Hosseini utilizes the novella as an embodiment of fear and uncertainty in a striking picture of the Marvan family. In this connection Oulwan states that “[t]he brutality of the Syrian war has a significant impact on Syrians’ present and future as scarring their psyche and their abilities to cope with or assimilate in their host countries” (2021, p. 40). It is seen that Syrian war acts as the impact of traumatic experience upon the individual psyche that is also applied to the collective emotional experience of cultural and ethnic groups. The uprooted refugees are exposed to “[d]isruptive traumatic experiences that impede their ability to organize in the external world and to perceive the psychological, sociological and cultural significance of new locations” (Balaev, 2018, p. 360). Such traumatic experience is reflected in the novella in the characterization of a displaced Syrian father who narrates the fear and uncertainty I their potential voyage in the Mediterranean.

*Sea Prayer* is a manifestation of compassion and emotions organically inherent in the family. The narrator-father, who is pathetically traumatized, is, thus, the embodiment of solid attachment and selfless devotion in the displaced family. He addresses his sleeping son in the deepness of love as his “precious cargo, Marwan, the most precious there ever was” and “pray[s] the sea knows this” (SP. p. 39). Marwan’s father is suppressed by the fears of taking him on a potentially deadly sea journey in the treacherous Mediterranean, the trauma of which impedes his narration and language skills. In connection with the feature of communicating the tragedy, Çameli (2023) states that “[t]he unpredictable way in which the reenactment of a traumatic moment in the past puts a traumatized person in a challenging situation to find the right words to explain the suffering” (p. 48). So, a traumatized person gets into a hardship to construct an effective way of narrating the traumatic memory in the already dire straits of the sea journey. The father is unable to verbalize the escape, having nothing to do but pray. All he can do is pray: “Pray God steers the vessel true when the shores slip out of eyesight and we are a flyspeck in the heaving waters, pitching and tilting, easily swallowed. I pray the sea knows this. Inshallah. How I pray the sea knows this” (SP, p. 39). The displaced Syrian father is defined,

... as an example of the Syrian refugees who are trapped in a loop of psychological impact created by traumatic conditions of enforced displacement. In this risky voyage, the narrator embodies the Syrian refugees' totality who have to flee their homes and take to the sea, delineating the collective experience. (Oulwan, 2021, p.41)

The collective experience includes another phase of trauma that is, being unwanted and unwelcome in one's country of destination. The universality of the “unwelcome” refugees is very effective when Hosseini includes other nationals such as Afghans, Somalis, Iraqis, and Syrians who are equally disillusioned out of fear and stress in the face of being rejected at the borders. In this case, as Hosseini underlines, refugees have no option but to “[t]ake misfortune elsewhere” (SP, p. 30). Hosseini emphatically illustrates that dispelled as refugees in the different yet similar risky voyages; they are confined in the vicious circle of continuous “search of home” on a night “on the cold and moonlit beach” where “crying babies” and worrying women’s “[t]ongues we don't speak” (SP, p. 30). Because of the picturizing traumatic slavery of the frustrated people, these people intend to unite in the trauma to alleviate its dehumanizing effects. This is why, as we see in *Sea Prayer*, they wait in silence with their eyes on the sea for the boat to arrive (SP, p. 30). They seem to be motionless in the face of traumatic blow to their life and honor.

The boat journey into the sea throws the refugees into a traumatic future that is based on the potential failure to be admitted in the target nations, if they can manage to land on. Yet, before arrival at the target countries’ gates, the refugees’ destination on the inflatable boats is not definite nor secure in the middle of the Mediterranean. There are many reports about the uninvited refugees who lost their lives being drowned or collected by the concerned nations into the refugee camps. Hosseini describes the traumatic condition of the refugees in the boats as being “in dread of” and “[i]mpatient for sunrise” (SP, p. 30) when the narrator addresses his sleeping son while waiting for the boats to arrive before dawn. Even though “the sunrise” is supposed to denote a hopeful turn of their fate and the nostalgic connotation to the prewar times, the narrator is certain that “the sunrise” would not cherish the “bittersweet” memories in this non-human atmosphere, as it is painted colored gray/dark in the illustrations of the pages. The illustrator makes a parallel perception between the resulting trauma and the memory that breeds trauma. The metaphor of “[t]he sunrise” (SP, p. 30) highlights the commonality of the plight and miseries of the refugees who are focused on the reconstitution of their broken lives in their destination as referred to as non-arrivals.

Traumatic nostalgia makes up a great portion of the novella, in which the narrator begins with the days in the form of nostalgia as if to increase the awareness of the good old days before the war. The narrator, who still has a national solid attachment to the hometown, sounds proud of the nostalgic past that could be rated equal to a proper country in the region. His melancholic nostalgic ties to Syria are underlined by Hosseini’s plot structure that is oriented into epistolary form, a very viable method in that it carries the notion of a trustable narrator. Father’s statements of nostalgic tone create the impression on the reader that prewar bittersweet life in Homs worsen his psyche since the impossibility of recapturing nostalgic life dominates in his thoughts and dreams no matter how much he tries to conceal this fact from

his son. Nostalgia is composed and blended with trauma since it has led to exilic displacement in the chronology of the story, ranging from protests to the bombs in the city square. In the formation of nostalgia, Hosseini pays attention to including the community spirit before the war, as is seen in the mention of the uncles and relatives in the narrator's recounting. The narrator mentions his brother and the villages' location where both "[s]pread the mattress on the roof of grandfathers' farmhouse outside of Homs" (SP, p. 2). This showcases bittersweet days in which city inhabitants, relatives, and beloveds lived in a community of relative peace. The narrator recalls that "[w]e woke in the mornings to the stirring of olive trees in the breeze, to the bleating of your grandmother's goats, the clanking of her cooking pots, the air cool, and the sun a pale rim of persimmon to the east" (SP, p. 5). In this sense, the narrator, who is on one hand fragmented in the wait for the boast, on the other hand sounds to preserve and transfer heritage of the former communal peace and prewar unity in the city to give bittersweet motivation to Marvan. By doing so, the father describes the prevalent societal and demographic structure of Homs in nostalgic tone. Yet, his trauma resonates in his words when he wishes his son also would have the same feeling mixed with nostalgia and peace in the prewar period:

I wish you remembered Homs as I do, Marvan. In its bustling Old City, a mosque for us Muslims, a church for our Christian neighbors, and a souk for us all to haggle over gold pendants and fresh produce and bridal dresses, I wish you remembered the crowded lanes smelling of fried kibbeh and the evening walks we took your mother around Clock Tower Square. (SP, pp. 11-13)

So, Marvan "[w]ouldn't have forgotten the farmhouse, the soot of its stonewalls, the creek where uncles and [his father] built a thousand boyhood dams" (SP, p. 9). The father-narrator deals with the diversity of the local population in Homs who lived in harmony and compliance with expected social norms until the civil war. He feels grief in that Marvan, by the age, is uninformed about the common ground of social content and mutuality. Further, the narrator describes the familial harmony and love to Marvan that "[I] have a sharply etched memory of your mother from that trip, showing you a herd of cows grazing in a field blown through with wildflowers" (SP, p. 8). In line with the definition of nostalgia in literature, the good-old days tend to turn into traumatic recollections as hybridity of feelings is authentically inherent in nostalgia.

Yet, nostalgia mingles with the present realities, and the tone turns into a darker description of the civil war, forming trauma that occurs in repeated forms in flashbacks whose weight can be seen in the lines that describe "[t]he skies spitting bombs" (SP, p. 19). We observe that his mind travels back and forth, where he remembers past Syria in a civil war with bombings and burials.

The novella is split into two halves between pre and post-war homeland, Homs, depicting the “[f]amilies walking in squares and stars in the sky, while the illustrations about the present are significantly darker with” (Oulwan, 2021, p. 45) the absence of gatherings as the dominant features. The line from the novella “[f]irst came the protest, then the Siege” (SP, p.17) contains flashbacks, not only located in the severity of the war but also mingling of the past and present that trigger traumatic memories as he grieves over the lost peace, destroyed markets and the city arena. In trauma, it is possible to witness sudden shifts of memories moving from bright to dark times, a technique also utilized in the color illustrations of the pages. The narrator’s flashbacks give the readers a picture of his past when he relayed the days in familial and collective well-being as in the lines “My dear Marvan, in the long summers of childhood ... farmhouse outside of Homs” (SP, p. 2). The formation of nostalgia in *Sea Prayer* is imbued with bittersweet memories of the past and the stark, deadening realities of the present. Therefore, Caruth’s notion of “[l]onging for the lost time protesting the sadism of the present” (1996, p. 83) is evident to the reader in the juxtaposing the contrast between pre-war and current Syria.

In the middle part of the novella, where Hosseini handles the days of oppression and the decision process to flee the country, we see the change in the colorization of the illustrations from bright to darker colors. The author makes use of the striking sadness of the father for his son in the emphasis on the traumatic references to the present-day brutality and destruction in the city. Such an effective technique is expected to raise awareness on a global scale about the catastrophic aftermath of the war. The plight of inhabitants in war-torn Homs shows the timelessness of the traumatic memory. The father speaks to Marvan, “You know a bomb crater ... A swimming hole” (SP, p. 24), in a statement that sets up the core of the refugee narrative since it indicates the enforcement of the people to reside in missiles and bombs. Hosseini employs the narrator’s “repetitive seeing” (Caruth, 1996, p. 83) remembrances of peaceful vs. brutal, pre vs. post-war Syria to expose the reader to the fear of living in a permanent state of “in-betweenness”: past and present. The description of collective trauma by way of personal traumatic memory can be a viable approach to imprint acceptable universalism in the awareness of what is experienced. In this regard, Hosseini’s technique of forming a transition from past to present seems to deepen the influence of the tragedy in the refugee narrative. Having said this, the father’s failure to keep the promise to his son for a better future and to sustain the trust resonates with the personal trauma that the father is exposed to:

Hold my hand. Nothing bad will happen. These are only words. A father’s tricks. It slays your father, your faith in him. Because all I can think tonight is how deep the sea, and how vast, how indifferent. How powerless I am to protect you from it. (SP, pp. 33-35)



So, in the quotation Hosseini refers to and utilizes the so-called family's solidarity in the face of impending dangers for stressing how hopelessly the refugees are trying to survive in traumatic conditions.

We encounter traces of collective trauma in *Sea Prayer*, which leads to the damage to the communal ties. Such ties set up the rules, morals, values, and virtues that sustain societies through creating feelings for each other. Yet, in the face of collective trauma, communal bonds are endangered, the examples of which are proven in the post-war Syrian condition, the bare fiber of society deteriorated at the level of trauma. Forced migration is known as the main result of the breakage of this bond turned into a case of “[t]he skies spitting bombs” (SP, p. 18). The collapse of the social bonds is further reinforced in the lines: “Your mother is here tonight, Marvan, with us, on this cold and moonlit beach ... All of us in search of home” (SP, p. 30), a statement that displays both social collapse and war-torn populace in tight spots in the middle of the Mediterranean. The narrator uses the pronouns “us” and “we” to denote the collective sufferings in the journeys that potentially end up in nonarrivals (Shoukat et al., 2021, p. 129). Hosseini pertains to the collective suffering saying “[w]e should take our misfortunes elsewhere” (SP, p. 30), and refers to the potential refusals of the refugees at the sea and land borders. Caruth notes that repetitive rejects deepen the trauma in the memories, resulting in distrust in the future and a mood of fear and regression. The narrator comes up with the only solution, and that is, “Pray God steers the vessel true when the shores slip out of eyeshot” (SP, p. 39), a wish full of fear and depression. Yet, in an attempt to save the lives, asylum seekers take the risks to travel across the sea and during the journey many lose their lives, turning the Mediterranean into a cemetery.

## **Conclusion**

Literary trauma studies underlie refugee narratives, an example of which is seen in Khaled Hosseini's novella *Sea Prayer*, which reflects the ruthless war and its aftermath in personal and collective sufferings. Theoretical basis in the perspective of Caruth incorporates timeless past, flashbacks, nostalgia, and hope for future. The illustrated pages of the text delve into the sad past, destruction, and collapse of society that eventually compel the refugees to travel in search of safe havens potentially defined as “nonarrival spots”. Thus, Hosseini discloses distrust and fear when the refugees are not admitted to secure territories and accordingly verbalizes the impediments that await in their journeys. For this purpose, literary trauma theory provides insight into refugee narratives under the prevailing transnational policies. Thus, examining *Sea Prayer* in the context of literary trauma theory sheds light on the war-torn societies' personal and collective plight of the affected populations. Hosseini acts as the mouthpiece for the predicament of refugees. His intention of raising the refugee issue proves that literature must be tasked to disseminate its responsibility to help construct an international community of a shared future for humanity. The causes of refugee problems may

be wide-arrayed, diverse, and challenging to manage; yet, the future of humanity is seen to be reflected as an issue of global concern in international organizations (He, 2021, p. 82) and refugee narratives are expected to render prevailing efficacy in the formation transnational policies.

### Disclosures

No potential conflict or interest was reported by the author.

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## Book Series Review

**Süverdem, F., B., & Tekalp, S. (2022). *Linguistics: Cross-cultural perspectives* (Vol. 1). Peter Lang Verlag. 10.3726/b20598**

**Sancaktaroğlu Bozkurt, S., Taşdan Doğan, T., E. (2022). *Translation Studies: Translating in the 21st century – Multiple identities* (Vol. 2). Peter Lang Verlag. 10.3726/b20596**

**Karaduman, A., & Öztürk, G. (2022). *Literature: Different perspectives and approaches in postcolonial studies* (Vol. 3). Peter Lang Verlag. 10.3726/b20597**

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*Synergy: Translation Studies, Literature, Linguistics* is a series of books that appears in three volumes. The series editors are Aslı Özlem Tarakcioğlu, A.Nejat Töngür, and Ayşe Selmin Söylemez. The first of the series was published in 2022. It is apparent that fresh understandings for readers are in the spirit of the *Synergy* book series. The three volumes seek to offer fresh viewpoints to their disciplines from diverse aspects.

The first volume of the series, *Linguistics Cross-Cultural Perspectives*, is edited by F. Büşra Süverdem and Selen Tekalp. The edited volume consists of 233 pages and 10 chapters. Following an outline of the scope of the volume, a short description of the chapters is presented in the introduction. The chapters are written by experts and researchers offering a thought-provoking read for readers. The book provides diverse perspectives from various linguistic domains encouraging readers to explore new understandings. The topics covered by the authors of chapters in the book include, but are not limited to critical discourse analysis, corpus-based crosslinguistic investigation, cultural aspects of language learning, intercultural pragmatics contrastive studies in applied linguistics, and cross-cultural communication. There is no doubt that the book primarily focuses on the cross-cultural dimensions of language by greatly enriching the literature in the field. To be more precise, Chapter 1, by Ahmet Bora Dindar and Zeynep Doyuran, is in search of learning the creation of hegemony as well as finding sociocultural and historical settings designation of discourse examining Yaşar Kemal's *İnce Memed I*. The following chapter, by Alper Kumcu, presents a corpus-based, crosslinguistic investigation in which he looks into the weight of moving-time and moving-ego patterns in

Turkish. As the author suggests time is an essential aspect of our lived experience and a vital component of human cognition, so the subject provides a thought-provoking read. Chapter 3, by Betül Ertek, construes cultural aspects of language learning and the interdependent relationship between the concepts of culture and language in the learning process. The following chapter, by Canan Terzi, examines the forms of address pre-service English-language teachers prefer to use in academic and non-academic settings and investigates how appropriate the address forms preferred by pre-service English-language teachers are according to native speakers of English. Chapter 5, by Emel Kökpınar Kaya, invites readers to explore the newsprint media representations of Türkiye's role in the refugee crisis particularly following the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan by setting out discursive strategies and linguistic means depicted in a newspaper. The next chapter, by Emin Yaş, encourages readers to explore the aspects of the monitor theory in second-language acquisition. Chapter 7, by Hacer Hande Uysal and Sami Alhasnawi, enriches readers with a comprehensive critical review of contrastive studies in applied linguistics as well as a macro-focus on language analysis. In the following chapter, by Mustafa Sarıoğlu, the effect of lexical aspects on Turkish EFL learners' use of present perfect forms is examined. Chapter 9, by Müge Gündüz, investigates understanding the experiences of international students as they grapple with the challenges and opportunities presented by conflicting norms and values. The last chapter, by Sladjana Djordjevic, looks into the influence of linguistic mediation on communicative behavior and early second-language appropriation and provides qualitative analyses' results of the interactions.

The second volume, *Translation Studies: Translating in the 21st Century-Multiple Identities*, is edited by Sinem Sancaktaroğlu-Bozkurt and Tuğçe Elif Taşdan-Doğan. The book is 236 pages long and comprises 12 chapters written by valuable voices in the field of translation studies in line with interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches. After providing an overview of the volume's scope, the introduction presents a summary of the chapters. Authored by experts and researchers, these chapters offer an engaging read for the readers. The book offering various contemporary subjects encourages readers to discover a diverse and vibrant array of topics in translation studies. The topics covered by the authors of chapters in the book include but are not limited to training of sign language interpreters, translation of sound books for children and comic strips in multimodal perspectives, remaking repertoire, translation of linguistic hybridity, (self-)investigation of translation, manga translation, translation memories in the legal translation process, poetry translation through common machine translation tools, translation education, translation of an alien language, identity of translators. The first chapter, by Ayşe Şirin Okyayuz and Hilal Erkazancı Durmuş, illustrates the interconnectedness of identity formation, deaf sports, and sign language interpreting in consideration of a sociological perspective. Besides, the authors propose a training model for sign language interpreting aiming to establish a professional habitus that

encompasses the attitudes and abilities that SLIs are expected to develop through socialization and professional education. The following chapter, by Gökçen Hastürkoğlu, looks into translation problems regarding sound elements in a multimodal children's work and reveals the solutions translation finds to provide the meaning both at semantic and cognitive levels. Chapter 3, by Göksel Öztürk, analyses comic strips in a multimodal framework as well as questioning the visibility of translators in translation of a comic strip series. The following chapter, by Mehmet Erguvan, focuses on how TV shows from different cultures are remade for the Turkish audience, a common type of audiovisual translation in Türkiye, and examines the portrayal of LGBTI+ characters in those remakes. Chapter 5, by Selen Tekalp, invites readers to a thought-provoking read by exploring hybridity in a translated postcolonial literary work. Employing the hybrid elements, Tekalp encourages readers to think about recolonization and decolonization concepts. The following chapter, by Sema Üstün Külünk, uptraces the self-portrayal of a translator's identity and questions translatorial identity. The next chapter, by Yeşim Dinçkan, looks into the use of sensitive language in Manga translation. Intending to find translators' choices, Dinçkan uses content, linguistic track, and visual track dimensions in the analysis of three translated mangas. Chapter 8, by Büşra Özer Erdoğan, elaborates strengths and weaknesses of translation memories in the legal process, which is also a call for further research regarding translation memory use in legal translation. The following chapter, by Kadir Sariaslan, explores the enjambments analysis in two translated poems: *The Waste Land* and *Seyfi Baba*. The translations of Google, Yandex, Bing, and human, as a reference, are compared employing a quality assessment metric. Chapter 10, by Müge Kalıpçı, discusses perceptions of language and literature students and their attitudes towards translation courses provided at universities. The following chapter, Siray Lengerli Aydemir, focuses on the positioning of human language as a hyperobject while translating an alien language. Aydemir analyses the translation of a Hollywood movie in terms of positioning human language in communication, (mis)interpretation, and action. The last chapter, by Ahsen Ay and Elif Ceylan Yağız, examines the depiction of characters who are translators and play lead roles in three 21st-century films. Drawing from both textual and visual elements of these films, the study analyses the identity, status, role, and image of these translator characters as portrayed in the cinematic discourse.

The third volume, *Synergy Literature: Different Perspectives and Approaches in Postcolonial Studies* is edited by Alev Karaduman and Göksel Öztürk. The book is 205 pages long and comprises 12 chapters written by a group of qualified academics in the field given interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches. Following the introduction part in which an overview of the volume's scope is given the summaries of chapters are also provided. In the spirit of the *Synergy* book series, the book offers an interesting and captivating experience for the readers. Besides, it provides a stimulating collection of contemporary subjects. The topics covered by the authors of chapters in the book include but are not limited to postcolonial

reading, feminist activism, postcolonial translation, postcolonial gothic, colonial biopolitics, volunteerism, and presentations of masculinity and femininity. The first chapter, by A. Nejat Töngür, invites readers to explore transcultural encounters and relationships with many people from different countries including his friends, his benefactors, his slaves, and Friday from a postcolonial hermeneutical perspective in the novel *Robinson Crusoe*. The following chapter, by Alev Karaduman, intriguingly depicts the post-colonial conflicts between history and identity in Okot p'Bitek's *Song of Lawino*. Chapter 3, by Kuğu Tekin and Zeynep Rana Turgut, investigates the black feminism in Bernardine Evaristo's novel, *Girl, Woman, Other* by analyzing twelve mostly black women characters. The next chapter, by Sinem Sancaktaroğlu Bozkurt, encourages readers to explore the concept of translation within postcolonial translation studies, with a particular focus on Abdulrazak Gurnah's novels that have been translated into Turkish. His novels and their Turkish translations are comparatively examined by applying the concepts of "cultural translation" and "translated men". Chapter 5, by Yıldırım Çevik, represents the gothic elements and the postcolonial under the background of slavery in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*. The following chapter, by Pınar Taşdelen, examines the dichotomy between the past living in the memory of the immigrants and the uncertain future that is built on their present anxieties in Carol Ann Duffy's selected poems. Chapter 7, by İmren Yelmiş, encourages readers to discuss the biopolitical representation of the British colonial administration in the Great Famine. The following chapter, by Emine Seda Çağlayan Mazanoğlu, explores racism against immigrants and the thin and dangerous boundary between nationalism and racism. Chapter 9, by Zafer Parlak, dwells on postcolonial perspectives of Voluntary Service Overseas. The next chapter, by Azime Ekşen Yakar, examines how Zadie Smith's *The Wife of Willesden*, a modern adaptation of Chaucer's *The Wife of Bath's Tale*, challenges the oppressive forces that marginalize women and minorities in English literature and reveals the struggle for power between the colonizer and the colonized using postcolonial theories of rewriting. Chapter 11, by Yakut Akbay, investigates subversion and containment in Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* applying a New Historicist analysis. The last chapter by, Duygu Serdaroğlu, explores the diverse and dynamic expressions of femininity and masculinity in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Buchi Emecheta's *The Bride Price*, and reveals how these novels critique and reshape the cultural and gendered structures of their colonized male-dominated culture.