Relevance of Translatability of Cultural Elements in Literary Translation based on Newmark's Theory

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ABSTRACT

In this research, we try to figure out the transfer and also to discuss cultural concepts in literary translation by taking into account the linguistic and cultural differences. Therefore, as the corpus of this research, we will examine some examples from the translations of two works by Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt in different eras and we will analyze the methods that are used by translators for translating some of cultural elements, relying on the theory of Peter Newmark. The applicability of this theory over time and the perspective of its efficiency based on three indicators which are objectives, possibilities and obstacles will be examined. With the expansion of mastery over artificial intelligence and the application of a new generation of translation software by young translators, which always provide more accurate versions of the original content in more languages, we are witnessing the emergence of a generation of translators who ignore the relevance of translation theories regarding the representation of cultural themes. Since the meaning of words or phrases is derived from the culture of a language, understanding the meaning requires complete knowledge of the culture of the language which it originated from, so the translation software alone cannot be effective in obtaining accurate translation. Thus, in this essay, we try to indicate for the next generation of translators the importance of the application of translation theories in the field of literary translation, especially concerning translating cultural elements.

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1. Introduction

Language and culture are closely related and influence each other mutually. These two categories are connected to each other; In other words, the translation process of a reproduced text cannot be separated from the cultural concepts represented in the target text. Cultural elements represent the beliefs and values of a nation in a time interval, which are transferred from one language to another by means of translation, hence the beauty of a literary text and the impact it leaves on the audience partly owe to the cultural elements reproduced in its translation. Translation fulfills different nations' need to communicate with each other, as well as humans' need to go beyond the world limited by their language. Presentation of a nation's culture and literature is not possible without translation, because translation acts as a mediator between the language, culture and literature of different societies, and language and cultural barriers cannot be overcome if it is not for translation. Therefore, in the field of comparative literature, it can be acknowledged that the translation of various works has left a great impact on Iranian culture and the Persian language.

Literary translation involves many challenges, especially when it is marked by the cultural elements of a specific era with all the social events of the society. One of the literary translation challenges that translators face is the difference between two languages in rendering cultural elements, because these are culture-specific to each language and they seem to be difficult to understand for the target language audience. Therefore, translation is not just a linguistic process, but a process that acts on the meaning, and in order to understand the meaning,

a deep understanding of the culture is also necessary. One of the tasks of the translator is to study and compare the cultural concepts in the source and target languages, thus it is fundamental to them to have knowledge of both languages' cultures. A person who translates, in addition to the syntactic structure of the language, must also know about the cultural terms, semantic and implicit implications of own language and the other language, because translation must be essentially a reproduction of the work (Dadvar, 2021: 61)**.**

In literary translation like in other translations, the translator first needs a theory for problem solving. The theory of translation provides the translator with tools to determine the meaning. The desired ideal is achieved when the practice of translation and the theory of translation come together and benefit from one another. But the important question is: To what extent the translation theories from the past relate to future translations? And to what extent can the works of great translators provide a model for novices and future translators? Naturally, with such a point of view, in the future, translation theorists can introduce new theories to the Translation Studies by reflecting on the methods applied by great translators in order to make the translation process more dynamic.

In the present study, we are going to analyze the process of representing cultural concepts from the translations of two works by Éric-Emmanuel Schmitt, the first one named *Oscar et la Dame Rose* (2002), translated by Mehtab Sabouri under the title "اسکار و خانم صورتی" (eng. *Oscar and the Pink Lady*), and also by Mahboubeh Fahim Kalam under the title "اسکار و بانوی صورتی پوش" (eng. *Oscar and the Lady in Pink*), and the other

one named *Journal d'un amour perdu* (2019) translated by Shahla Haeri under the title " خاطرات عشق از دست رفته" (eng. *Diary of a Lost Love*), with Peter Newmark's approach in order to evaluate the efficiency and relevance of this theory over time while also estimating the developments that translation has ahead. In this article, we are going to answer the following questions**:**

1. According to Newmark's theory, how successful have the translators been in translating cultural elements and what strategies have they used?

2. Among Newmark's methods of translating cultural elements, which one is apt to be the most practical method for translating cultural themes and elements in the works studied in this thesis?

3. What changes has literary translation undergone over time?

4. What is the application of translation theories in the field of literary translation, especially the diachronic translation of cultural elements, and what is the perspective of its efficiency in the future?

Thus, in this research, relying on Newmark's theory and evaluating its efficiency and relevance, we aim to study the transfer of cultural elements in literary translation, and by citing examples from the mentioned works, we will study the methods and strategies of translators in translating cultural elements. In the following, we will first introduce the study case of the research. Then, we will define culture and its relationship with translation and will also mention the views of the experts and theorists of the field of Translation Studies. Subsequently, we will study Newmark's theory in the context of the translation of cultural terms and expressions. Newmark suggests five classes of cultural categories and corresponding strategies for translation, which

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will be our reference classification, and based on which we will evaluate the examples, all for verifying the effectiveness of this classification in the field of literary translation, especially the translation of cultural elements.

2. Literature review

General research has been conducted on the subject of cultural transfer and intercultural relations (La relation interculturelle) in translation, especially in the case of societies that are less related to each other in terms of cultural concepts, what results in cultural differences and generates problems for translators in literary translations. There has also been some research in the matter of translation of cultural elements in novels and other types of works, which has not dealt with this specific problem. On the whole, no research has been done specifically on the subject of the present research.

In an article titled "Investigating the French Translation of Cultural Expressions in Zoya Pirzad's *We'll Get Used to It*" (Mahdavi & Ayati, 2019), the transfer of cultural elements in famous French translator Christophe Balaÿ's translation has been studied using the models proposed by Mona Baker and Peter Newmark.

In another study, Athari Nik Azam & Boloukat, (2013), relying on the semantic theory of point of view, studied the cultural elements in Houshang Moradi Kermanis's *Mom's Guest* translated into French by Maribel Bahia.

Also, in another research titled "Translation of cultural elements from French to Persian: A case study, translation of *I Wish someone were waiting for me somewhere*" (Motamadi & Navarchi, 2018), Nahid Foroughan's strategies in translating the cultural elements of Anna Gavalda's work have been reviewed on the basis of Michel Ballard's classification.

In the article "Analysis of the translation of the novel *Someone I love* written by Anna Gavalda and translated by Elham Darchinian according to Vinay and Darbelnet theories" (Rezvantalab & Kordeyazdi, 2023), the choices made by the translator have been thoroughly studied based on Vinay et Darbelnet's theory.

In the article "Challenges of translating stylistic, semantic and cultural elements in the short story *The Pear Tree*" (Mazhari & Farjah, 2017), the semantic, stylistic and cultural factors that make it difficult to access the meaning in the translation of a literary work were examined in the short story *The Pear Tree* by Goli Taraghi, to reveal the translator's approach in the representation of the meaning as well as the solutions he employs. In another article titled "Translation of cultural elements: case study of *Three Drops of Blood* of Sadegh Hedayat" (Sherkat Moghadam et al., 2023), by examining the French translation of the short story *Three Drops of Blood* translated by Frédérique Razavi, his method in translating cultural elements from Persian to French has been studied according to Newmark and Aixela models.

In another research titled "The Process of Language User Identity from Linguistic Neoteny Perspective" (Rezapour & Farjah, 2021), adopting the approach of bilingualism and linguistic ownership proposed by the neotenic theory of language, the use of language in different stages of linguistic contact with languages has been analysed. The inevitable fact that languages and cultures are closely connected to each other has made bilingualism no longer considered a phenomenon. It is worth mentioning that so far, no research has been done in the matter of relevance of translatability of cultural

elements in the translation of Éric-Emmanuel Schmitt's works based on Newmark's theory.

3. Case of study

The works of French-Belgian writer, philosopher and playwright Éric-Emmanuel Schmitt have been widely welcomed in the last two decades. His works have been published in 43 languages and his plays have been staged in more than 50 countries. According to recent statistics, Schmitt is one of the most read authors in schools and colleges.

He has earned countless accolades up to now. Molière Award for the Best Show in an Independent Theatre in 1994 (Molière du meilleur spectacle du théâtre privé, Molière de l'auteur et Molière de la révélation théâtrale pour *Le Visiteur*), Grand Prize of the French Academy for the Theater in 2001 (grand prix du théâtre de l'Académie française pour l'ensemble de son œuvre), Balzac Academy Prize in 1998 (prix de l'Académie Balzac et deux nominations aux Molières pour *Frédérick ou le Boulevard du Crime*), Goncourt Short Story Prize in 2010 (prix Goncourt de la nouvelle *Pour Concerto à la mémoire d'un ange*) and several academy awards in Ukraine, Canada and Poland are among the awards given to Schmitt.

In recent decades, Schmitt has been acknowledged as the most widely read author in the world, and religious or mystical approaches make up the main theme of his works. He explains complex philosophical matters to the audience with simple wording and his works have attracted many readers in Iran. *Oscar et la dame Rose* and *Journal d'un amour perdu* are two works of him that we have chosen to review their translation in this research. The translations of these two works that we will review in this study

include "اسکار و بانوی صورتی‌پوش" (*Oscar and the Lady in Pink*) translated by Mahboubeh Fahim Kalam and "اسکار و خانم صورتی" (*Oscar and the Pink Lady*) translated by Mahtab Sabouri. In this work, in addition to philosophical and mystical matters, the special place of the child within the family also comes into discussion. In France, this book won the Chronos Award (Prix Chronos) and the Jean Bernard Award (Prix Jean Bernard de l'Académie de Médecine) in 2004. *Journal d'un amour perdu* is another work that we have chosen to study in this essay. In the mentioned book, the author has managed to narrate a sincere and poetic story of his mourning for his mother, memories, childhood, joys and regrets. Schmitt's account of the days after his mother's death is a romantic mourning for a love that has been lost. In his mourning for his mother, the author portrays the state of floundering in inconsolable grief. This work, like many of Schmitt's works in Iran, was translated into Persian by Shahla Haeri. This translator is best known for her brilliant translations of Eric Emmanuel Schmitt's works, and she can be considered one of the most successful female writer and translators in recent years, who has created lasting works both as an author and a translator.

4. Centrality of culture in translation

In the translation process, the meaning of the cultural elements of a text can be abstracted from its forms and that meaning can be reproduced in very different forms in the target language. It is obvious that over time, practically there will be a considerable variety in the types of translations produced by translators. Therefore, different theories of translation support the translator in problem solving during translation and help make the latter more coherent. This means that a theory appears, in the first place, as a basis for the

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solution that the translator needs. In the meantime, the question arises as how the translation theories from the past relate to the translation practice in the future. The six main theories of translation, which are sociological, communicative, hermeneutic, linguistic, literary and semiotic, provide a standard based on a solid foundation in understanding how language works. Thus, a translation theory provides translators with the tools to recognize different meanings in different forms of linguistic encodings and leads them to find out the appropriate procedures to preserve the meaning, while using the most appropriate forms of each language.

It is clear that there are no two identical languages, because every society has its own culture and their cultural differences are reflected in their languages. Hence, "culture should be sought not in the explicit meaning but in the implicit meaning of words" (Martinet, 1989: 1292). When the speakers of two languages want to communicate with each other by means of translation, cultural differences challenge the translator in many ways. Therefore, cultural differences sometimes require the translator to change the sentence structure and recreate the text in order to preserve the meaning and convey the message of the source text. Nida and Taber consider translation to be the restatement of the source language in its closest equivalent of the target language (Nida and Taber, 1969: 12). For obtaining the closest equivalent to the source text in terms of meaning and style, the translator is bound to make so many structural or semantic adjustments in order to provide an accurate and correct translation in the target language. "Since language is developed in the context of culture, language transfer in translation, on the one hand,

makes the interaction of the translator with the cultural concepts in the translation, and on the other hand, the communication and interaction between the source and target cultures are inevitable" (Haghani, 2007: 181).

Since the cultural norms of the target language constitute the cultural context and the equivalence of cultural components in translation holds great importance, the role of culture in the translation process has always been the focus of translation scholars and theorists. Due to the cultural differences, the translator is faced with difficulties such as lexical gap and referential gap in translating cultural terms into another language. It can be seen that among translation problems, the share of problems concerning culture is the greatest. Therefore, we cannot expect the reader of the translation to be automatically familiar with the nature of the cultural concepts. The problem is not only which word the translator replaces in the target language in accordance with the source language; Rather, it is important to know how he can express the invisible world of the author (Lederer, 1994: 122). According to Umberto Eco, translation cannot be considered only as the passage from one language to another (Umberto Eco, 2007: 190). In addition to linguistic rules, the translator must also pay attention to cultural elements and must play the role of a cultural mediator (Médiateur interculturel) (Fabrice, 1999: 11).

One of the most popular cultural theories concerning the translation process belongs to Peter Newmark, who defines culture as follows: "I consider culture to be the way of life and the specific manifestations of human life as means of expression, and I distinguish between the language of culture and the universal language. Words such as "dying", "living", "star" and most of the goods such as "mirror", "table" etc. are universal words whose translation implies no challenges, but words such as "Indian monsoon", "Dacha" and... are culturally marked words, and if there is no match between the two cultures of the source and target languages, the translator will face a big challenge in translating them" (Newmark, 2006: 149).

As the cultures of the world are not unified and there are many gaps between their concepts, we mainly see many differences between their material, religious, social and ecological elements. Newmark believes that cultural terms (Les termes culturels) are often recognizable in the text, because they are very far from the target language (Newmark, 1988: 95). Pedersen considers the cultural themes as one of the "critical points of translation" (L'un des points de crise de la traduction), for translating which the translator must make important and difficult decisions (Pedersen, 2005). It can be concluded that over time, theorists have used different concepts for the category of cultural concepts and non-linguistic elements, which can lead translators towards the correct translation. In the following are listed the most important ones:

Culture-specific elements (Les éléments spécifiques aux cultures)	Javier Franco Aixelà, 1997
Culture-specific concepts	Mona Baker, 2011

(Les concepts spécifiques aux cultures)	
Culture-specific phenomena (Les phénomènes spécifiques aux cultures)	Robinson, 1977
Foreign cultural words (Les mots culturels étrangers)	Nida & Taber, 1965
Cultureme (Culturème)	Christiane Nord, 1991 Hans Josef Vermeer & Katharina Reiss, 1984
Culture-specific extralinguistic references (Les références extralinguistiques spécifiques aux cultures)	Jan Pedersen, 2005

Reiss and Vermeer believe that translation is a new presentation of information in the target language culture that implies some information given in the source language culture (Reiss & Vermeer, 1984: 114). So, the author's message must be translated in such a way that the source language audience and the target language audience have the same understanding of the text. In other words, the translated text should have the same effect on the target language audience as the original text has had on the source language audience. Therefore, it is necessary for translators to be not only familiar with the linguistic traits of the source and the target languages, but also with the cultural traits of both. Thus, in the matter of translation, knowing the methods of translating cultural elements is one of the important tools of translators.

5. Theoretical foundations

One of the factors that play a significant role in the quality of translation is familiarity with the methods and strategies of translating cultural elements. In the theoretical foundations of research, we will study the theory of Newmark as

well as the strategies that he has proposed for the translation of cultural elements.

5.1. Newmark's Semantic and Communicative Theory of Translation

Newmark, a well-known theorist, has been one of the outstanding figures in the foundation of Translation Studies in the English-speaking world. He proposed his theories in three of his works titled *Approaches to Translation* (1982), *A Textbook of Translation* (1988) and *About Translation* (1991). Fidelity to the source or target text is always a place for debate in Translation Studies, because there is a conflict between the level of fidelities. In order to eliminate this gap, Newmark suggests that by introducing the terms "semantic translation" (Traduction sémantique) and "communicative translation" (Traduction communicative), the aforementioned conflict can be made less obvious. Therefore, in Translation Studies, Newmark is known for his "semantic and communicative theory of translation".

According to Hashemi-Minabad, semantic translation is "the transfer of the co-textual

meaning of the original text while taking into account the limitations of the target language, remaining bound to the text and the author, paying attention to the transfer of the formal characteristics of the source text, having greater linguistic flexibility as compared to literal translation, staying closer to the syntactic and semantic structure of the source text, acknowledging the author, and prioritizing the form of the source language" (Hashemi-Minabad, 2019: 9). According to Newmark's opinion, semantic translation tries to transfer the meaning of the original text as far as the syntactic and semantic structures of the target language allow (Newmark, 1982: 39).

Hashemi-Minabad defines communicative translation as follows: "Communicative translation emphasizes on the message and the main intention of the source text, tends to the target culture, tries to achieve a similar effect in the target language, remains bound to the target culture and reader, gives priority to the transfer of information, transfers the co-textual meaning of the source text in a way that is easy and familiar for the audience, puts emphasis on eloquence and readability of the target text, acknowledges the importance of making changes in the translation according to the needs of the audience, acknowledges the reader, and prioritizes the message of the source language. Semantic translation is more appropriate for literary texts and communicative translation for informational texts" (Ibid.: 9). From these definitions, we can conclude that in semantic translation, the emphasis is on the author of the source text, whereas in communicative translation, the recipient of the message in the target language

becomes the centre of focus, such as in technical texts, stories and novels.

Therefore, the semantic translation is close to the formal equivalence (L'équivalence formelle) of Nida, which is strongly focused on the source text both at the level of syntax and at the level of other elements of the text. On the other side, communicative translation aligns with Nida's dynamic equivalence (L'équivalence dynamique); An equivalence that takes the colour of the target language, and the translation must have the same effect as the source text on the reader of the work in the target language. Like this, dynamic equivalence can help the translator to achieve the correct translation. Nida believes that in order for the new audience to identify with the target text, the translator must link the message to the structural and semantic modes associated with the target language, so that it seems completely natural (Sassani & Inanlou, 2022: 104).

Considering that the main objective in the translation of cultural concepts is to reproduce the same reaction in the audience of the translated text, communicative translation helps in establishing a better relationship with the reader of the target language. That being said, in this research, Newmark's theory of communicative translation is adopted as an efficient model for the evaluation of contemporary translations, because the translation of cultural concepts in the target language must be in a way that is understandable for the reader of the target language, and that the reader does not struggle in the face of cultural differences.

5.2. Newmark's theory in the translation of cultural elements

Every people have their own customs and social values, which are referred to as culture. So, the terms related to geography, customs, institutions and currents are considered cultural elements. In translation, it is necessary to pay attention to cultural topics. Nida maintains that culture occupies an important place in translation, and in fact, what makes translating much more difficult is the cultural differences rather than the structural differences of languages (Nida, 1964: 130). Therefore, linguistic differences can be approximated or amplified in order to be understood by the reader; However, cultural differences are not easily understood and communicated. For this reason, paying attention to the role of culture in the translation process has become especially significant recently (Ibid.: 60). To conclude, translation is a type of cultural interaction that makes communication between two cultural systems possible.

As mentioned earlier, Newmark's cultural theory of translation is one of the most popular theories of translation. Newmark is an outstanding figure among translation theorists, because he established a strong connection between theory and practice. That is why we will apply Newmark's theory to our study of cultural elements in this research. Newmark believes that for translating a cultural term that depends more on the colloquial language than the text, it is important to take into consideration the motivation and cultural knowledge as well as the linguistic competence of the reader (Newmark, 2007: 123). He also classifies cultural categories into five main classes by making some modifications in Nida's classification:

1) Ecology and environment (Écologie): plants and animals, winds, plains, mountains, etc.;

2) Material culture, man-made artefacts (Culture matérielle): food, clothing, housing, cities and vehicles;

3) Social culture (Culture sociale): work, leisure, recreation and hobbies;

4) Organizations and institutions, customs, activities, currents, deeds and conducts, social concepts, political and administrative matters, religion, art (Organizations, activités, procédures, concepts);

5) Vocabulary related to signs and gestures, head and hand movements, behavioural habits, speech gestures and body language (Gestes, habitudes, dictons et proverbes) (Newmark, 1988: 95).

From this classification, it can be derived that the customs and the social and cultural values of the source language must be taken into account in the translation, because recognizing the cultural manifestations and achievements of the source text is the most important rule (Newmark, 2007: 102-117).

5.3. Translation procedures of cultural elements

The role of the translator in the translation of cultural elements is absolutely critical because the cultural concepts in the text familiarize the audience with the culture and customs of the other nation. The strategies proposed by Newmark for the translation of cultural elements can provide translators with important criteria for recognizing the correct translation, of which we will discuss below the most important ones with examples extracted from the corpora studied in this research:

1- Transfer or borrowing (Emprunt): Bringing a word from the source language to the target language.

2- Naturalization (Naturalisation): By overcoming the transfer process, the word is naturalized first in terms of pronunciation and then the natural form of the target language.

3- Cultural equivalent (Équivalent culturel): Translating a cultural term from the source language with a cultural term in the target language.

4- Functional equivalent (Équivalent fonctionnel): It is specific to cultural terms that require the use of a word independent of the culture, which can sometimes be a specific new word.

5- Descriptive equivalent (Équivalent descriptif): In translation, description should sometimes be preferred over function.

6- Synonymy (Synonymie): Using synonyms when there is no exact equivalent for the word in the source text.

7- Calque (Calque): Loan translation or literal translation of common collocations.

8- Shift and transposition (Déplacement ou transposition): Grammatical change in the passage from the source language to the target language.

9- Modulation (Modulation): Changing the point of view and the way of expression.

10- Accepted translation (Traduction acceptée): Organizational use of an official translation or a translation that has general acceptance.

11- Temporary translation (Traduction temporaire): Using a new organizational word inside quotation marks to be replaced in later opportunities.

12- Compensation (Compensation): A method that takes place due to the partial loss of the meaning in another part of the sentence.

13- Reduction and expansion (Réduction et expansion): A process that is applied by the translator in some cases out of vision and concern, but in each of the cases, especially if they are poorly written, it may be necessary to make at least one adjustment.

14- Paraphrase (Paraphrase): A process in which a part of the text is expanded or explained. This process is used in anonymous texts that are poorly written or have an implicit meaning and important points are omitted.

15- Componential analysis (Analyse componentielle): Separating a lexical unit into its semantic components.

16- Compound strategy (Stratégie composée): Combining several processes at the same time to solve the translation problem.

17- Notes, additions, descriptions (Notes, ajouts, descriptions): Additional information, usually cultural explanations, that the translator must add to his translation depending on the requirements of the readers of the translation.

6. Application of the Newmark model in the translation of cultural elements

In this section, we will examine the translation method and the processes applied by the translators of these two works for translating cultural elements from the source language to the target language, using Newmark's model. It is worth noting that we obtained many examples from the comparison of the translated text with the original text, which is beyond the scope of this essay to mention them all. Hence, we will do a case study of cultural elements and their translation in the two mentioned works.

6.1. Elements of ecology and environment

1. C'est sûr qu'elle est plutôt chétive et riquiqui comme fleur – elle n'a rien d'un **baobab**. *(Oscar et la dame Rose, p. 71)*	
Translation of Fahim Kalam, p.69	Surely that plant is as delicate as a flower—nothing like a **baobab** tree; But bravely, like a stout tree, it did all the things that plants do without stopping in one day to grow like a plant.
Translation of Sabouri, p.65	It is definitely a sham. It looks nothing like a **baobab**.

According to Larousse, "Baobab" is the name of a very sturdy and leafy tree whose trunk diameter reaches twenty meters and has different species. This tree is found in tropical regions such as Africa and Australia (Larousse, 1996: 124). Both translators have used the transfer method in their translation. Fahim Kalam has also applied the expansion process in her translation by adding the specifier "tree" to facilitate the transfer of meaning.

2. Depuis la terrasse de mon hôtel, je contemple **le Danube** qui étale sa puissance paisible sous les ponts de Budapest. *(Journal d'un amour perdu, p. 168)*	
Translation of Haeri, p.195	From the balcony of the hotel, I watch the **Danube River** expanding its calm dominion under the bridges of Budapest.

In this example, the translator has used the loanword "Danube" and then, using the expansion process, has unnecessarily added the specifier "River" to it for facilitating the understanding of its meaning.

6.2. Material culture

3. Il n'y a pas qu'une **Jeep rouge** au monde. C'est interchangeable, les voitures. *(Oscar et la dame Rose, p. 41)*	
Translation of Fahim Kalam, p.37	Is there only one **red Jeep** in the world? Maybe they mistook it.
Translation of Sabouri, p.36	Is there only one **red Jeep** in the world? Well, cars can be interchanged.

"Jeep" is the name of a car that is also known in Persian language. So, in this example, both translators have used the transfer method.

4. On ne met pas de levure dans un gâteau de **Savoie** *(Journal d'un amour perdu, p. 153)*	
Translation of Haeri, p.177	You don't add yeast to a **Savoy**[1] cake. 1. Savoie

"Savoy" is the name of a type of pastry. The translator has used the transfer process to translate this proper noun. Then, in the footnote, he also mentioned its French name. The author has also mentioned the word "gâteau" in the source text, which is a specifier translated in the target text as "cake", making it clear that Savoy is indeed a type of pastry.

5. — Quelle tisane ? **Ceylan** ou **Earl Grey** ? On ne distingue pas tisane et thé chez les Ricklin. Je m'amuse à semer le trouble : — **Bergamote**. *(Journal d'un amour perdu, p. 152)*	
Translation of Haeri, p.177	- Which herbal tea? **Ceylon** or **Earl Grey**? At Ricklin's, you can't tell the difference between herbal tea and tea. I feel like teasing them. - **Citron**.

Ceylon is the old name of Sri Lanka and tea cultivation has been common in this island country since the past. In this region of Asia, tea is named after the area where it is cultivated, for this reason, the tea made in this country is known as "Ceylon tea". "Earl Grey" tea is also black tea to which the extract or dried bergamot peels have been added. In this example, the translator has once again used the transfer method, and since the loanwords "Ceylon" and "Earl Grey" are already part of the Persian language, the translator has not found it necessary to explain them in the footnotes. The closest Persian equivalent of "bergamot" is "ترنج" (eng. *bergamot orange*) or "بالنگ" (eng. *citron*). As mentioned earlier, bergamot originates in citrus fruits and the orange family, and is mainly used for flavouring tea. In this example, the translator has applied the synonymy method by using the word "citron", the other appellation of "bergamot orange".

6. – elle riait quand j'imitais les gens de **Charleroi**. *(Journal d'un amour perdu, p. 5)*	
Translation of Haeri, p.7	Mom used to laugh when I mimicked **Charleroi**[1] people's unusual manner of speaking. -------------------------------- 1. Charleroi, city in Belgium.

In this example, the translator has used the transfer method to translate this word and has left "Charleroi", name of a city in Belgium, without modification in her translation, and then through the process of notes, additions and explanations, has given the necessary explanations in the footnote.

6.3. Social culture

7. C'est génial ce genre de voiture d'avant l'automobile, ça fait tellement de boucan qu'on a l'impression d'aller très vite et ça secoue autant qu'à la **fête foraine**. *(Oscar et la dame Rose, p. 63)*

Translation of Fahim Kalam, p.60	These old cars are very interesting; They make so much noise that one feels that it is fast-moving and it makes one jump up and down like in the **festivals in the bazaars**.
Translation of Sabouri, p.57	This clunker is also amazing. It makes such a crackling sound that one imagines that it is going at a very high speed and vibrates so much that it seems like it is a **fair market festival**.

"Fête foraine" is a temporary festival where entertainment is provided and goods are sold and the profits are donated to charity. In the translation of this phrase, Fahim Kalam has used the functional equivalent method by explaining the word, whereas Sabouri has used its cultural equivalent "fair market". These two events have the same characteristics, so "fair market" is an appropriate translation for "Fête foraine". "Amusement Park" is also a correct equivalent for the translation of this phrase.

6.4. Customs, socials concepts, religion

8. Il ne fredonnait pas une chanson sans détonner, commençant par *La Marseillaise* et pataugeant, malgré lui, dans *L'Internationale*. *(Journal d'un amour perdu, p. 95)*	
Translation of Haeri, p.113	He began with **The Marseillaise[1]** and unintentionally got excited and continued with **The Internationale[2]**. -------------------------------- 1. La Marseillaise, national anthem of France. 2. L'Internationale, international anthem of the working class.

The author has italicized the two words "La Marseillaise" and "L'Internationale" in the source text, a proof that these two words are proper nouns. In her translation, the translator took advantage of the transfer process to render in the target language the social concepts "The Marseillaise" and "The Internationale" just as they are. Then, applying the process of notes, additions and explanations, he noted further details in the footnote.

9. Elle m'a porté dans son salon, où elle avait dressé **un grand arbre de Noël** qui clignait des yeux. *(Oscar et la dame Rose, p. 65)*	
Translation of Fahim Kalam, p.61	He took me to the salon. **A large Christmas tree** was decorated in the salon, which captivated the eye.
Translation of Sabouri, p.59	He took me to the reception room. He had set up **a big Noel tree** that was twinkling there.

Today, the Christmas tree is an inseparable symbol of the celebration of the birth of Christ and the New Year. Therefore, this tree represents Christian culture. In this example, both translators have used the transfer procedure. The word "Christmas" is borrowed from English and the word "Noel" is borrowed from French, both of which are used in Persian.

10. Christine, ma cousine et sa filleule, déclama **les Évangiles** avec la voix énergique et courageuse d'une authentique croyante. *(Journal d'un amour perdu, p. 19)*	
Translation of Haeri, p.25	Christine, my cousin and my mother's goddaughter, read the **gospel** with the sentiment and in the strong and steady voice of a true believer.

The translator has adopted the transfer method for translating the title of Christians' Book. "Évangile" (eng. *gospel*) is borrowed from the Greek word "εὐαγγέλιον" and means "good news or tidings". It comprises the account of Jesus Christ's teachings. With a slight change in pronunciation, this word has entered the Persian and Arabic languages under the form "انجیل".

11. Dès l'adolescence, je m'étais exclu des célébrations de la **Toussaint**, ce moment de novembre où les familles nettoient et décorent leurs tombes. *(Journal d'un amour perdu, p. 164)*	
Translation of Haeri, p.191	When I was a teenager, I didn't attend the ceremony of **All Saints' Day**[3], the day in November when families clean and decorate the graves of their departed.
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	3. Toussaint

In Larousse, "Toussaint" is referred to as one of the Christian celebrations and holidays related to the Catholic Church, which is held on the first of November to commemorate all the saints and respect the dead (Larousse, 1996: 1020). In this example, the translator has used the descriptive equivalent method while also mentioning the French name of this festival in the footnote. Although the descriptive equivalent is always a solution for the transfer of the meaning in translation, it doesn't allow the audience of the target language to know about this religious and cultural ritual which has an appellation of its own.

12. — Ah, dans sa fiche, votre mère a oublié **les soins du thanatopracteur**. — Pardon ? — Elle n'a pas coché la préparation de son corps, le maquillage pour l'exposer avant la mise en bière. Elle semblait une dame très coquette, cela m'étonne. Je rajoute le forfait beauté, bien sûr ? *(Journal d'un amour perdu, p. 14)*	
Translation of Haeri, p.19	- Your mother forgot the **embalming process** in her sheet.

	- Sorry? - She did not mark the corpse preparation part. The ornamentation of the corpse for display to the people, before it is placed in the coffin. I am surprised that she seemed to be a very elegant lady. Add the beautification option, right?

In this ritual, the corpse of the deceased is trimmed before embalming. In this example, the translator applied the modulation process by translating "les soins du thanatopracteur" with the equivalent "embalming process". Since this ritual is explained in the co-text, the translator has avoided providing an explanation in the footnote.

Since we don't have such a ceremony in Iran, so there is no word for it in Persian, and the translator is forced to provide additional explanations, which should be ideally included in the footnotes.

13. L'église de mon enfance. Des fleurs partout. Un orchestre à cordes. Une chanteuse. Des textes vibrants. Des amis. Des proches. **La messe** fut digne, simple et belle ; je crois qu'elle aurait plu à Maman. *(Journal d'un amour perdu, p.18)*	
Translation of Haeri, p.24	The church of my childhood. Flowers everywhere. A string orchestra. A female singer. Emotional texts. Friends. Relatives. The **religious ceremony** was dignified, simple and beautiful. I think my mom liked it.

In this sentence, the translator has translated "messe" using the functional equivalent "religious ceremony". For more transparency and better transmission of this cultural ritual, it can be translated as "آیین عشاء ربّانی" (eng. *Eucharist* or *The Lord's Supper*). The latter is borrowed from Arabic and is understandable to the audience. "Gratitude Ritual" can also be used as an equivalent to translate the name of this ritual. "The Lord's Supper" is one of the seven sacraments of Christianity known as the "Seven Secrets". The origin of this ritual goes back to the Last Supper that Jesus Christ had with his apostles on the night of his arrest by Roman soldiers. Since according to Christians, his nature is the same as God's nature, applying the reduction process, the translator has avoided

using "The Lord's Supper" which is related to Christianity and has chosen instead the functional equivalent "religious ceremony" which can be extended to all religions.

6.5. Vocabulary related to signs and gestures

Changes in posture and emotions can convey certain feelings and meanings, which are better to pay attention to in translation. Body language is a non-verbal act. Every gesture or behaviour carries a specific meaning and message which stem from the culture of the source language. Below we will analyse examples of this component. It can be said that the translators have performed well in translating cultural terms and have been able to find correct equivalents in the target language. Here are the examples:

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14. Quand le docteur Düsseldorf m'examine, le matin, **le cœur n'y est plus**, je le déçois. *(Oscar et la dame Rose, p. 12)*	
Translation of Fahim Kalam, p.11	Dr. Düsseldorf **has been looking listless** since he examined me in the morning. My condition disappointed him.
Translation of Sabouri, p.10	In the mornings, when Dr. Düsseldorf examines me, **I become very peevish**. He becomes disappointed in me.

The expression "Le cœur n'y est plus" is an allusion to lack of motivation and dullness in doing something. In her translation, Fahim Kalam has used the functional equivalent "to look listless", whereas Sabouri has naturalised it by using the allusive phrase "to become peevish", which carries the same cultural connotation and implicit meaning.

15. Allez **vous crêper le chignon** ailleurs. *(Oscar et la dame Rose, p. 48)*	
Translation of Fahim Kalam, p.45	Go **scream** somewhere else.
Translation of Sabouri, p.43	Go **get a life**.

The expression "Se crêper le chignon" means to quarrel and fight. In this example, both translators have used a functional equivalent. The abovementioned phrase portrays a conflict between women. Therefore, "to scream" or "to get into a catfight" well expresses this conflict and is a more correct equivalent for the translation of this phrase.

Through the analysis of these cases, we find that what makes communication between different societies and cultures possible is the translation process. From the perspective of translation studies, cultural concepts are an integral part of translation and certainly their

translation requires particular attention. That being said the important role that translation plays in the transfer of culture and intercultural communication cannot be ignored. In culture-oriented translation, the translator's critical role is to examine the cultural concepts of the source text and decide how to transfer them in the target language. Therefore, it is necessary for the translator to master the culture of two languages. In addition, in the process of translation, using the appropriate model provides the translator with the means to recognize the meaning.

Even though Newmark's theory is largely accepted, due to the complexity of the concept of culture, he believes that the process of transferring cultural themes does not take place perfectly. Thus, the mentioned methods are considered the only available solutions. He believes that no two readers react the same to any text; even if they belong to the same language community and cultural and social context. According to him, the creation of the same reaction is impossible (Farahzad, 2019: 70). Also, the study of loanwords allows linguists to show what elements a language community has borrowed from other language communities (Safavi, 1995: 100). The use of "Functional Equivalent" has also made the translation more audience-oriented. "In functional equivalence,

the translator's objective is to transfer the linguistic, non-linguistic and cultural elements of the source language in such a way that it has the same function, role and effect in the target language and culture, even if this effect is relative." (Sassani & Nassiri, 2021: 543).

7. Conclusion

In this research, the definition of culture and its relationship with language and translation were first examined and it was found that cultural elements consist of terms and concepts related to geography, traditions, customs, social and material cultures, institutions and currents of a culture and language. Then, relying on Newmark's theory in the translation of cultural elements and applying his five-fold division, we studied the translation of the cultural themes of two works by Éric-Emmanuel Schmitt in order to evaluate the relevance of this theory in contemporary translations. Regarding the questions raised in the introduction, the results obtained are as follows:

In the two works that were studied as the case studies of the research, the translators have used various methods to transfer cultural concepts, with the aim of bringing the translated text as close as possible to the target culture and language. For this purpose, they have used different types of equivalents; Meanwhile, "Transfer" and "Functional Equivalence" appeared to be the most used methods. Also, in some cases, the transfer method has been used to translate proper nouns, along with further explanations in the footnotes. Therefore, "Compound Strategy" is another method that translators have used in the translation process. It is noteworthy that in cases where the translators have used the transfer method without noting an explanation in the footnote, it is because that

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loanword has already entered the target language and is understandable to the audience of the translated text. In other cases that were mentioned, the use of a specifier in a sentence has made it easier to grasp the correct meaning of the specified word.

Relying on Newmark's theory, the data analysis showed that the translators have been pretty successful, and the translation of each of them counts as a correct translation, which testifies to their mastery of the culture of two languages. The translators have tried to transfer cultural elements well and make the translation understandable for the audience of the target text. At the same time, by preserving the cultural characteristics of the source text, they have tried so that the translation is not much far from the source text.

It must be noted that the focus of discussion in Translation Studies is always changing; Because translation is no longer a linguistic phenomenon, but a cultural phenomenon. Therefore, today, the application of translation theories is hugely involved in the field of literary translation, especially the translation of cultural elements. In the last decade, a lot of theorizing has taken place, and it seems that in the future, translation theories will appear more efficient than before. As language and culture are subject to everyday changes, in the future we will witness the integration of new theories and methods of translating cultural elements, in a way that reflects linguistic and cultural characteristics to a great extent.

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