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**A Cultural Contrastive Translation Study of Omission in
*Gibran's the Broken Wings***

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Abstract

This study investigates how omission may affect the aesthetic features of the target text (TT) compared to the source text (ST) and does omission lead to a loss of meaning in translating the aesthetic entertaining features of *Gibran's الأجنحة المتكسرة* *AL 'Ajniha AL-Mutakaserah* source text (ST) compared to its English equivalent novel target text (TT) *the Broken Wings*. It aims to discuss the effects of omission in the translation process between Arabic and English and whether this selected technique may affect the semantic level and the loss of meaning of the target text compared to the source text. Consequently, this article detects omission of metaphor, simile, and repetition and how it may affect the semantic levels of the source text (ST). It is a qualitative comparative analysis examines omission of 20 random samples extracted from *Gibran's AL-'Ajniha AL-Mutakaserah* (1912). The sample is grouped in five categories according to the type of omitted figurative expression as (i) Repetitions; (ii) Metaphors; (iii) Adverb of status; (iv) Personification; and (v) Similes. Each sample is assigned according to their functions. The semantic differences in terms of functions were identified to based on Newmark (1988); Petrulioné (2012); Nida & Taber (2003);

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Baker (2011); Farghal & Shunnaq (1999); Jayyusi (1977); Ryding (2011); Al-Batal (1990); Abdul-Raof (2006); Johnstone (1991); Obeidat (1997); Younis (2015) and Leppihalme (1997). The results show that omission in translating such poetic novel causes loss of the aesthetic semantic features. The sense of originality and the figurative language have been lost. The intentional or unintentional omission lessens the embellishment embedded in the source text (ST). Finally, omission produces a different effective version, other than the source text (ST).

Keywords:

Aesthetic feature, Arabic, Broken Wings, figurative language, Khalil Gibran, omission, translation

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Introduction

The aesthetic features, the cultural registers are key issues in literary texts. Some words and phrases are cultural registers and have no equivalents in other cultures and languages. As literary texts are important to communicate across different cultures, the need for literary equivalents must be elevated between different cultures (Bajnaid et al., 2019). "Differences between cultures may cause more severe complications for the translator than do differences in language structure" (Nida & Taber, 2003, p. 228).

English and Arabic have different patterns of cohesion. Arabic is figurative, expressive and redundant which is a challenge for translators. Arabic literary works, especially poetic novels, have a great deal of rhetorical tools (metaphor, simile and repetition) that play a major role in creating meaning as whole. If these tools were to be omitted, meaning would be affected (Asafi, 1980). Arabic poems "*Qaṣīdas* were filled with metaphors, allusions, similes and utterances that produced an auditory effect on the receivers and aroused their fervor" (Younis 2015, p.118). Ryding (2011, pp. 407- 408) indicates that Arabic seems to have connecting constraints that writers are required to signal continuously to their readers such as the use of connectors. These constraints might be a challenge for translators from Arabic to English where sometimes they tend to omit in TT.

The strategy of omission is commonly used with redundant texts (Nida & Taber, 2003), but a translator should bear in mind that such a solution should be exceptional because it brings a loss of information which was included in the ST.

A Cultural Contrastive Translation Study of Omission in *Gibran's ...*

This mean omission of the ST in the TT causes loss of textual and cultural relevant features (Dickens, 2000, p. 21). The difficulties in finding the appropriate equivalents between cultures are challenging aspects for translators of different cultures. Omission as a translation strategy is not as common as one may think, as traditionally omission is identified with translators' failure to render the necessary translation unit (Petrulionè, 2012, p. 46). Consequently, this study investigates the omission in *Gibran's the Broken Wings* (الأجنحة المتكسرة) (ST-Arabic) and its equivalent in TT (English).

The cultural differences create a challenge for translators. This may lead to translation difficulties between the different cultures. The huge cultural gaps require the use of different theories to get appropriate translation. Omission is a used technique in translation where it may lead to a semantic loss of the TT compare to the ST. As a result, this study is concerned with the effect of omission between Arabic and English in translating a literary text and, whether both texts have the same content messages or not.

Research questions

This study investigates the following questions:

- (i) How may omission affect the aesthetic features of the TT compared to the ST?
- (ii) Does omission lead to a loss of meaning?

Purpose and significance of the study

This study aims to discuss the effects of omission in translation between Arabic and English and whether this technique may affect the semantic level of the products (TT) compared to the ST. It shed lights on the differences that may occur by omission of words or phrases in both texts. Whether this technique leads to a loss of meaning or convey the message in a better way. This paper takes its significance from the fact that Arabic culture is recently observed in the western communities. The author (*Gibran*) and the novel (*The Broken Wings*) gain a great success in both cultures where it would be useful to examine them.

Literature Review

The author, novel, and translator

Gibran Khalil Gibran is a Lebanese poet, author, and journalist born in 1883. He moved to Boston in 1895. Three years later got back to Lebanon and continued his education. The Broken Wings الأجنحة المتكسرة *AL 'Ajniha AL-Mutakaserah* is an Arabic poetic novel related to the Lebanese culture as a part of the Arabic one. It draws attention to the Christians conservative Lebanese' life and how love at that time may tragically ended. His novel came after his love story with the Lebanese girl of conservative family. It highlights different social issues at that time in the Middle East including religious corruption, the rights of women, and the weighing up of wealth and happiness. Later in 1962, the novel turns to a

movie and was also translated by a Syrian Lebanese Texan, Anthony Rizcallah Ferris. He is a translator, author, and editor with too many publications (Worldcat.org).

Omission and translation loss

Omission may occur in different cultures and different linguistic features (metaphor, simile, personification, etc.) between languages. Baker (1992, p.77) states that omission is allowed only in some cases: first, when there is no close equivalent in the target language; secondly, when it is difficult to paraphrase; finally, an idiom may be omitted for stylistic reasons. On the other hand, Baker (1992, p. 41) states "there is inevitably some loss of meaning when words and expressions are omitted in a translation". Farghal and Shunnaq (1999, p. 136) define 'repetition' as 'a semantic phenomenon' to express a concept by exemplifying of more words. Translators should bear in mind that such a solution (omission) should be exceptional because it brings about a loss of information compared to the source text (ST).

"Translation loss means the incomplete replication of the ST in the TT, that is the inevitable loss of textually and culturally relevant features" (Dickens, 2002, p. 21). Therefore, he states that translators should reduce the loss of meaning. Leppihalme (1997, p. 89) also believes in maintain and retaining every "everything" in the target text. Dimitriu (2004) claims that "this translation strategy is not as common as one may think, as traditionally omission is identified with translators' failure to render the necessary translation unit" (as cited in Petrulioné, 2012:46).

Translation and culture

The divergences of two language systems may pose translation problems. Two different cultures may use different images in expressing the same thing (Larson, 1998, pp. 246-256). Culture would be reflected by literature in oral and written forms, it is an animation of life. Literature reflects civilization and culture and it covers every angle of human activities (Johnson, 1999, p. 1). It is necessary then to point out that literary translation is very challenging because creative writing is itself characterized by a very sophisticated, symbolic and figurative language.

Newmark (1988, p. 94) defines culture as "the way of life and its manifestations that peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression". "Translation is an instrument of education as well as of truth precisely because it has to reach readers whose cultural and educational level is different from, and often 'lower' or earlier, than, that of the readers of the original" (p. 6).

A Cultural Contrastive Translation Study of Omission in *Gibran's ...*

Dickens (2017, p. 36) considers cultural differences to be more problematic in translation more than the linguistic differences. Xian (2008) indicates that it's vital for the translators to be careful when dealing with cultural differences the data translation must negotiate. Translators must highlight cultural differences. A translator is an integral part of the knowledge producing system. The roles of the translator as both an inter-cultural communicator and a data interpreter must be acknowledged in the research process. Panou (2013, pp. 4-5) indicates that the translator's role is to manifest and transfer the ST implicatures in the TT. Translators should recreate the source text intended meaning in a comprehensible way to the target audience.

Method

This study is a qualitative analysis examines omission of 20 random examples that are extracted from the Arabic poetic novel of *Gibran's AL-'Ajniha AL-Mutakaserah*. These random examples then were compared to their equivalents in English (*The Broken Wings*) based on the semantic level. The omission is highlighted to show how types of figurative expressions are omitted from the Arabic ST. The used techniques to collect the data used are by reading both texts (ST and TT) and then, select the random sample that includes omission. The sample is grouped in 5 tables and categorized as repetitions, metaphors, adverb of status, personification, and similes to give a better clarification of each category.

Each sample is semantically investigated in ST and TT to show the omitted words and phrases and that lead to the loss in translation. The samples are categorized according to the type of omitted figurative expression in tables. Then, each sample will be assigned according to their functions. The semantic differences in terms of functions were identified to based on Newmark (1988, p. 6, 94); Petrulionè (2012, p. 46); Nida & Taber (2003, p.228); Baker (2011, p. 43); Farghal & Shunnaq (1999, p. 136); Jayyusi (1977, p. 706); Ryding (2011, p. 408); Al-Batal (1990, p. 256); (Abdul-Raof, 2006, p. 255); Johnstone (1991, p. 4); Obeidat (1997, p. 91); Younis (2015, p. 118) and Leppihalme (1997, p.98) in order to find how the ST may get affected of such omission strategy.

Analysis and Discussion

This part shows and discussed the extracted examples from the poetic novel under the study to determine the occurrence of omitted expressions to find out how these omissions may affect the TT. It also investigates in detail the type of omitted phrases and their functions in the ST. The following tables indicate the random examples were to indicate the occurrence of omission in TT compared to

the ST. These examples were functionally compared. Each table includes the ST, the TT and the omitted words or phrases.

Table 1. The first two omitted samples - repetitions

NO.	Arabic Text (ST)	(TT) English Text	Omission
1	فنظرت إلى وجهها, نظرت طويلا, فرأيت تلك....."	"I gazed at her intently....."	نظرت
2	رأيت هذه الانقلابات الموجهة , رأيتها جميعها, ولكنها لم تكن....."	"all these changes I saw in Selma's face, but....."	" الموجهة , رأيتها جميعها

- In these examples taken from the source and their equivalents in the target texts, the author repeat the word (نظرت *Natharat (looked at)*) and the words (*"رأيت و رأيتها" R'aitu wa Raa'tuha (saw, saw them)*) twice. The repeated words in the ST are underlined in the above table to show how many times they are repeated.
- The ST author here used repetition which is used widely in Arabic to serve a valuable role since it links a unit of meaning to a former one (Al-Shurafaa, 1994: 25). When the word "نظرت" is omitted, the function of repetition required by the writer passed and leads to a loss of meaning.
- "Repetition" serves two important functions. Firstly, repetition of words, phrases and roots may allow the writer to link closely related ideas together. Secondly, it serves toward cohesive text-building and the organization of the text. Thirdly, repetition is used to render a rhetorical function that can result in persuasion and emphasis (Dickins et al., 2002: 105-109). These functions were eliminated in the TT.
- As explained by Johnstone (1991: 4) "repetition" is heavily used since it plays important textual and rhetorical features in the Arabic language and culture. These textual and rhetorical features are omitted since the repetitions were omitted too.
- As a result, omission of such a repetition may lead to a loss of all the functions mentioned above that intended by the original text.

Table 2. Six omitted samples - metaphors

NO.	Arabic Text (ST)	Omission (TT) English Text	omission
3	تبتسم كالشفاه وتتحرك كأجنحة الشرور قد غارت وجمدت واكتحلت بخيالات التوجع والألمsmiling like lips and moving like wings of a nightingales, were already sunken and glazed with sorrow and pain"	واكتحلت بخيالات
4	تستهويني وتستهويني وأحسست بقوة تستهويني وتستهويني وتبعطني	"I felt a power pulling me away"	تستهويني

A Cultural Contrastive Translation Study of Omission in *Gibran's ...*

5	واليوم وقد مرت الأعوام المظلمة طامسه بأقدامها رسوم تلك الأيام, لم يبق لي تلك الأيام	"Today, after many years passed, I have nothing....."	المظلمة طامسه بأقدامها رسوم تلك الأيام
6	"فالحب قد أعتق لساني فتكلمت, ومزق أجفاني فبكيت, وفتح حنجرتي فتنهدت وشكوت"	"love provided me with a tongue and tears"	وفتح حنجرتي فتنهدت وشكوت
7	"سلمى الجميلة العذبة, قد ذهبت إلى ما وراء الشفق الأزرق, ولم يبق لي....."	"my beloved , beautiful Selma , is dead and nothing is left...."	إلى ما وراء الشفق الأزرق
8	"أما غصات القلب وأوجاعه فهي التي تتكلم وهي التي تنسكب الآن مع قطرات الحبر السوداء معلنة...."	"by the agonized sighs of my heart announce"	"فهي التي تنسكب الآن مع قطرات الحبر السوداء"

- In this table, there are six examples of omission and grouped together since they are metaphors (واكتحلت بخيالات) *wa iktahalat be khayalaat*); (تستهويني) *tastahweni*); (المظلمة طامسه بأقدامها رسوم تلك الأيام) *almathlama tamesaa be aqdameha rousoum telka alayaam*); (إلى ما وراء الشفق الأزرق) *ela ma wara'a alshafaq ala'zraq*); (وفتح حنجرتي فتنهدت وشكوت) *wa fataha hounjorati fa tanahadatu wa shakaoutu*); and (فهي التي تنسكب الآن مع قطرات الحبر السوداء) *fa hia alti tansakibu al'aana ma' qataraat alheber alsawdaa'*).
- The ST author uses metaphor which is a figurative language to add the aesthetic value; whereas, the translator omitted part of it. The impressive image of using such metaphor is overlooked by the translator.
- Reducing metaphor may affect the aesthetic value and the poetic embellishment embedded in the ST and may produce a distorted or less effective TT version (Obeidat, 1997).
- The used metaphors are typically used to describe something (concrete or abstract) with greater emotional force and more often more exactly than is possible in literal language (Dickens, 2017). This description is partially deleted in every example since they are omitted.
- As a result, omitting such significant images definitely detracts from the TT and the original meaning. Imaginative metaphors can potentially achieve a successful communication with audiences of widely different backgrounds and have the power to link complex similarities and differences (Obeidat, 1997); consequently, omission leads to loss of these functions.

Table 3. The omitted sample- adverb of status

NO.	Arabic Text (ST)	Omission (TT) English Text	omission
9	"فهمست متتهدا, الظمأ بقتله يا سلمى	"when I whispered, "Selma my beloved, thirst will exhaust him....."	متتهدا

The example is capturing the following functions of using adverbs in the ST:

- The adverb (متنهدا *mutanahedan* (sighing)) in the ST is important as a text building element. Johnstone (1991: 256) mentions that “adverbs” are discourse markers that has a focus particularly on the structure of written narrative, they are used to link discourse elements. This function is affected by the omission of the adverb which leads to a loss of meaning.
- The presence of appropriate connectors is an important feature of acceptability (Ryding, 2011, p. 408).
- Al-Batal (1990:256) states that Arabic seems to have adverbs as connecting constraints that requires the writers to signal continuously to the reader through the use of connections. This gives the adverbs a special importance as text-building elements and renders them essential for the reader’s processing text. The function of the adverb is lost by omitting the adverb.

Table 4. The omitted samples - personification

NO.	Arabic Text (ST)	Omission (TT) English Text	Omission
10	"تاليا على مسامعنا أخبار أعمار مضت, فكفنها الدهر بقلبه وكفنها في صدره"	"Recalling the time they spent together"	" فكفنها الدهر بقلبه وكفنها في صدره"
11	"وشعرت بجانب خفي يدنيني إليه بطمأنينة مثلما تقود الغريزة....."	"I was attracted to him like a bird whose instinct..."	" "بجانب خفي" "بطمأنينة"
12	" ففي يوم من تلك الأيام المفعمة " بأنفاس نيسان المسكرة و ابتساماته المحيية , ذهبت....."	"one day, in the month of Nisan, I went"	"المفعمة بأنفاس المسكرة, و ابتساماته المحيية"
13	"والمراء إن لم تحبل به الكابة و يتمحض به اليأس , و تضعه المحبة في مهد الأحلام, تظل حياته....."	"unless a person is born again, his life will remain"	"الكابة و يتمحض به اليأس و تضعه المحبة في مهد الأحلام"
14	" وقد يكون ذلك صحيحا عند الذين يولدون أمواتا و يعيشون كالأجساد الهامدة الباردة فوق التراب. ولكن إذا كانت الغباوة العمياء قاطنة في جوار العواطف المستيقظة تكون الغباوة أفسى من الهاوية وأمر من الموت."	"It may be true among those who were born dead and who exist like frozen corpses; but the sensitive boy....."	"ولكن إذا كانت الغباوة العمياء قاطنة في جوار العواطف المستيقظة تكون الغباوة أفسى من الهاوية وأمر من الموت"
15	" واليوم وقد مرت الأعوام المظلمة " طامسه بأقدامها رسوم تلك الأيام , لم يبق لي من ذلك....."	"Today, after many years passed, I have nothing left out of that"	"المظلمة طامسه بأقدامها رسوم تلك الأيام"

16	قد رأيت تلك البشرة وتبرقعت الفتوط "وتبرقعت "الفقنوط "الفتوط ..."	"her face had faded and became colorless"
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This table includes seven examples of omitting personification, (فكفنها الدهر بقلبه) fakafanaha aldahar beqalbeh wa kafanaha fi sadreh); " بجانب خفي " "المسكرة و ابتساماته المحيية المفعمة بأنفاس" ("بتمانينية" *almofa'mah be anfas neesan amlmuskerah wa ebtesamatuhu almuhababa*); *alkaabah wa yatamahadbehi alya'as wa tadaouhu almahaba fi mahid alahlaam*); و يتمحض به اليأس و تضعه المحية في مهد الأحلام) ولكن إذا كانت الغباوة العمياء قاطنة (*wa laken etha kanat alghabouah ala'mea'a qatenah fi jewaar ala'watef almostayqedah ta toun alghabauah aqsa min alhawyeah wa amar min almout*); "المظلمة طامسه بأقدامها " (*almouthlemah tamesah be aqdameha rousoum telka ala'ayam*); and (*wa tabarqa'at be neqaab alqonout*). These phrases indicate implicit metaphors in Arabic. The examples are capturing the omitted functions of metaphor of personification as follows:

- The rhetorical function which is to make a comparison between two different concepts and to achieve aesthetic values (Newmark, 1988: 205). The omitted samples in table (4) have a great deal of function intended by the ST.
- "In personification, the characteristics of a human entity are transferred to an inhuman entity. In other words, in this mode of semantic embellishment, non-human, inanimate, and abstract entities are given human features" (Abdul-Raof, 2006: 255). The omissions here affect the aesthetic features of the ST.
- Omitting such decorative sentences may affect the ST compared to TT. The omissions occurred have omitted this function the decorative addition.
- The cognitive function as means of formatting language in order to describe a certain concept to make objects more comprehensive and accurate (Newmark, 1988:205). Omitting such personification intended by the author affects the TT.
- The method of translation used here gives the ability to omit personification that affected the TT and led to a loss of meaning compared to the ST.

Table 5. The omitted sample - similes

NO.	Arabic Text (ST)	Omission (TT) English Text	Omission
17	"لامسا بأطراف أصابعه جبهته العالية المكلة بشعر أبيض كالثلج	Touching his forehead with the ends of his fingers	العالية المكلة بشعر أبيض كالثلج
18	"هي حواء هذا القلب المملوء بالأسرار والعجائب وهي التي أفهمته كنه هذا الوجود وأوقفته كالمرآة أمام هذه الأشباح"	she was the Eve of my heart who filled it with secrets and wonders and made me understand the meaning of life	كالمرآة أمام هذه الأشباح

19	"أنتم تدعون تلك السنين..... ويطير مرفرفا فوق رؤوس المشاعل والهموم مثلما تجتاز النحلة فوق المستنقعات الخبيثة سائرة نحو البساتين المزهرة, أما أنا....."	You speak of those years, but I...	ويطير مرفرفا فوق رؤوس المشاعل والهموم مثلما تجتاز النحلة فوق المستنقعات الخبيثة سائرة نحو البساتين المزهرة
20	"أدعو سني الصبا سوى عهد الأم خفية خرساء تقطن قلبي وتثور كالعواصف في جوانبه وتتكاثر"	I call those years an era of silent sorrow which dropped as a seed into my heart and grew with it	وتثور كالعواصف

This table includes four examples of omitted "similes" (العالية المكلفة بشعر أبيض كالثلج) (*Alalia almokalalh beshar abiad k'atalj*); (كالمرآه أمام هذه الأشباح) (*Kalmeraah amam hatheh alashbaah*); (ويطير مرفرفا فوق رؤوس المشاعل والهموم مثلما تجتاز النحلة فوق) (*wa yateer morafrefan fauq r'ous almasha'al walhoumoum methlama tajtaz alnahla faouq almostanqaat alkhabetha sa'erah nahu albasateen almozherah*); and (وتثور كالعواصف) (*wa tathour al'asefah*) that are capturing the following functions:

- Simile is an aesthetic and skillful mode of discourse whose major pragmatic aims are to clarify an opinion or feeling, to bring two significations close to each other and to compare a given entity with another (Abdul-Raof, 2006, p. 205). All these functions intended by the ST were omitted that leads to a loss of meaning and affect the TT.
- Similes and other rhetorical devices are used in Arabic poetry to arouse the receiver's feelings and stimulate his mind Younis (2015). This important function an Arabic poetry is lost by omission.
- Abdul-Raof (2006: 206) states that a major rhetorical pragmatic criterion has been established by effective similes are succinctness which is lost here because of omitted similes.
- Simile as being "exact and similar" to the object compared an "in exactness and similarity there exist clarity, emphasis and definiteness" (Jayyusi 1977, p. 706). She also adds that simile can enrich and vary the texture and effect of a poem.
- Different types of similes in Arabic hold other functions; to construct cognition, express emotional feelings and to provide clarification (Abdul-Raof, 2006, p. 207). Omitting all these similes loses their functions. These functions are omitted and deleted that detracts the meaning and leads to a meaning loss.

Conclusion

The comparative analysis of the poetic novel of Gibran's *Al 'Ajniha Al Motakassirah* and its equivalent *The Broken Wings* investigates the effect of omission on translating the aesthetic poetic features. The translator uses omission as a translation technique where he found no equivalents in TT. The

A Cultural Contrastive Translation Study of Omission in *Gibran's ...*

translator omits many figurative expressions as seen in the representative examples.

The functions of the Arabic figurative language were omitted in TT as the results show. The discussion and analysis conclude that the omission used as a translation technique to omit such valuable expressions is not an effective strategy to translate such poetic novels as in Gibran's *Al 'Ajniha Al Motakassirah and its equivalent (The Broken Wings)*. The omitted repetitions, of words and phrases, metaphors, and similes affected the TT compared to the source text (ST). The functions of each category were deleted and that leads to a meaning loss. The rhetorical functions used as esthetic features, expressing feeling, constructing cognition, emphasis, definiteness and clarity used in the ST are all got affected by omission and led to translation loss in the TT based on the different scholars such as Abdul-Raof (2006); Newmark (1988); Petruioné (2012); Nida & Taber (2003); Baker (2011); Farghal and Shunnaq (1999); and Leppihalme (1997); Johnstone (1991); Dickens (2017); Obeidat (1997); Ryding (2011); Al-Batal (1990); Younis (2015); and Jayyusi (1977).

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