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Metaphors in Translation: A Study of Figurative Language in Badriah Albeshr's *Hend and the Soldiers*

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to examine the translation of metaphors in the Arabic novel "Hend wa Alasker" and its English translation, *Hend and the Soldiers*. It employs the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) and Cognitive Metaphor Theory. Using a mixed-method approach, the quantitative analysis applies MIP to identify metaphors and measure their frequency. The qualitative analysis explores how conceptual patterns are formed and how translation strategies such as adaptation, preservation, alteration, and omission are employed to convey metaphorical meaning across languages. The findings reveal that ontological metaphors are the most frequently used. Structural metaphors follow, while orientational metaphors are the least common. The findings also show that the most frequent category involves different mappings and lexical choices. Metaphors with similar mappings but different lexical choices come next, while metaphors with similar mappings but different lexical choices are the least frequent. The study concludes with a discussion of the translation strategies employed within each category. It identifies adaptation as the most frequently utilized strategy, followed by preservation. Alteration and omission are used less frequently. The study offers theoretical insights and practical strategies beneficial to translators, scholars, institutions, and non-Arabic-speaking readers.

Keywords: Translation; Arabic-English; Metaphor; Identification; Cognitive; Conceptual

1. Introduction

Hend and the Soldiers [*Hend wa Alaskar*] [1] was first published in Arabic in 2006. In 2017, the novel was translated into English [2]. The novel portrays the life of a young Saudi Arabian woman named Hend. Through Hend's experiences, the novel sheds light on the life of women in Saudi Arabia, as they navigate tradition and modernity, while seeking their place in society [3]. The story stands as a touching reflection on the role of women in the Middle East and serves as a powerful narrative of self-discovery and empowerment. The English version of *Hend and the Soldiers* is regarded as one of the best Saudi Arabian novels that depicts women's struggles to find freedom in a society bound by outdated cultural norms. Dhahir's translation has contributed greatly to the spread of the novel worldwide and in Western societies in particular. This reflects the success of her translation in conveying what Albeshr intended to convey in her novel. The reason for choosing this novel is not only its fascinating story, but also Albeshr's masterful use of metaphorical expressions throughout. Albeshr's writing effectively captures the emotional and cultural landscapes of her characters, making the story connect deeply with readers. Furthermore, this study is one of the first to examine metaphor in this novel and its English translation. *Hend and the Soldiers* is also one of the most acclaimed Arabic novels to have been translated into English, allowing this research to explore how a notable Arabic literary work is adapted for an English-speaking audience.

Literary translation is a sophisticated and subtle field. It involves not just translating words from one language to another but also preserving the cultural, emotional, and artistic aspects of the original work. Literary translation requires the translator to engage deeply with the text in order to capture its subtleties and layers of meaning [4]. Meanwhile, it is necessary to ensure that the translated work appeals to readers in the target culture. This challenge is noticeable in the translation of metaphors. Therefore, it requires the translator to navigate between the metaphorical meanings in the source language and the conceptual structures of the target language (TL) [5,6]. Scholars have explored various strategies for metaphor translation, ranging from maintaining the metaphor's original form to adapting it to better suit the target culture, or even replacing it with a culturally equivalent metaphor [6–9]. These strategies underscore the translator's role as both a linguistic and cultural intermediary, ensuring that the metaphor's cognitive and aesthetic functions are preserved in the translation, thereby maintaining the integrity and impact of the literary work [10]. Thus, this study aims to establish a link between the cognitive and linguistic dimensions of metaphor translation—an area that has received limited attention in the translation of Arabic novels into English, especially within the literary genre. It is guided by the main research question:

To what extent do translators adhere to cognitive and linguistic approaches when translating metaphors from Arabic into English?

The study focuses on one of the most acclaimed Saudi novels: *Hend wa Alasker* by Albeshr, translated into English as *Hend and the Soldiers* by Dhahir. This translation serves as the sole available English version of the novel and represents a rich site for examining how metaphorical language—deeply embedded in cultural and cognitive frameworks—is handled across languages. Employing Cognitive Metaphor Theory and the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP), this study focuses on how conceptual patterns and lexical choices are adapted in translation. Specifically, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. How can the MIP be used to identify metaphorical expressions in the novel?
2. How frequently do different types of metaphors (structural, ontological, and orientational) appear in the novel?
3. How do structural, ontological, and orientational metaphors reveal and shape conceptual patterns, and how are these patterns preserved, adapted, altered, or omitted in translation?
4. How do conceptual mappings and lexical implementations of metaphors in the source text compar to those in the target text?
5. What translation strategies are employed in translating metaphors from Arabic to English in the novel, and how were decisions made to preserve, adapt, alter, or omit them?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Metaphor

According to the Merriam-Webster, the English word "metaphor" derives from the Greek word "metapherein," which means "to transfer" or "to carry over." Its roots consist of "meta-" meaning "beyond" or "after," and "phere-in," meaning "to bear" or "to carry", and "meta-," which means "beyond" or "after" [11]. This etymology highlights the metaphor's function of conveying meaning across domains. Aristotle defined the metaphor in his work Poetics as "giving the thing a name that belongs to something else," viewing it as a tool to create dramatic and memorable statements and as an essential component of rhetoric and poetic language [12]. A metaphor involves the transfer or shift of meaning from one concept to another, creating an interaction between the literal and figurative meanings that generates new, enriched understanding [5,6,13–15]. Human language would be incomplete without metaphors, which are essential for both everyday and creative expression.

Traditionally, a metaphor is defined as a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is used to describe an item or activity that it does not literally denote. A famous example is Shakespeare's statement, "All the world's a stage," which compares "the world" to a "stage" to imply that life is a play. A metaphor is defined as a specific linguistic process in which aspects of one object are transferred to another, so that the second is described as if it were the first [16]. Metaphors are essential rhetorical devices that vividly conceptualize ideas by drawing unique comparisons between two concepts, thereby engaging readers and enhancing literary expression [17]. They can also function as linguistic expressions that replace literal ones to enhance the aesthetic quality of a text [18]. Furthermore, metaphors do more than merely describe; they enrich texts by providing vivid, complex imagery, making them more engaging and aesthetically pleasing for audiences [6]. The concept of metaphor has been extensively studied across various disciplines, including linguistics, cognitive science, literature, and philosophy.

Metaphors, however, are more than just language tools; they are also cognitive tools that help readers understand deeper meanings and connections within a work. By combining the familiar with the unexpected, metaphors enable readers to think critically and interpretatively [18]. Metaphors function in a variety of contexts, aiding in the understanding of complex concepts and relationships by bridging the gap between familiar and unfamiliar ideas and improving communication [19]. They serve both decorative and practical purposes [20]. The syntactic forms of metaphors reveal multiple layers of meaning that enhance the interpretive experience [21]. Moreover, metaphors are powerful tools for simplifying complex concepts, thereby facilitating communication and influencing others [22].

From a cognitive perspective, metaphors are understood as deeply embedded in human thought processes and not merely as linguistic expressions but as fundamental structures that shape our conceptual systems [5]. According to the theory of conceptual metaphors, much of everyday thinking is metaphorical, with abstract concepts understood through more concrete experiences—for example, conceptualizing time as money ("saving time," "spending time") or arguments as war ("winning an argument," "attacking a point") [5]. This illustrates how metaphors structure perceptions and actions in the world. Furthermore, this process reveals how one conceptual domain is understood through another [15].

2.2. Metaphor in Literature

Metaphors are essential devices in literature, serving as key mechanisms for conveying complex ideas, evoking emotions, and enhancing the aesthetic qualities of a text. Through their cognitive and aesthetic functions, metaphors enable authors to explore profound themes and create a lasting impact on readers, making them a cornerstone of effective literary expression [5]. The multifaceted role of metaphors has been described as the "dreamwork" of language—an expression of creativity that transcends strict linguistic rules [23]. Metaphors arise from resonant ensembles of perceptual information, leading to adaptive actions that help detect and exploit invariant properties across different categories [23]. This creative process, shared by both the originator and the interpreter, positions the metaphor as a dynamic and collaborative journey in meaning-making. In line with this view, the dynamic interplay between literal and figurative meanings in metaphors has also been emphasized [24]. This interplay not only opens metaphors

to multiple interpretations but also allows them to convey complex ideas in nuanced ways. This flexibility is what makes metaphors particularly potent in literature, where the depth of meaning and the richness of interpretation are paramount.

Metaphors are not merely figures of speech but are central to our conceptual system. This cognitive function is particularly crucial in literature, where abstract themes and ideas are often explored through metaphorical language. Metaphors forge connections between seemingly disparate entities, thereby deepening the expressiveness of literary works, building upon the framework established by Lakoff [5], as further elaborated by Gibbs [25]. These connections are not just stylistic elements; they are cognitive tools that help construct the reality surrounding us, influencing how we interpret and interact with our surroundings [26]. This perspective emphasizes the importance of metaphors not only in literary discourse but also in everyday language, as they shape our perceptions and interactions.

2.3. Metaphor Translation

Metaphors have been a central subject of linguistic and cognitive research for a long time, with significant emphasis placed on their importance in communication, thinking, and language [5,6,8,27–29]. Metaphors and the complexity of their translation are a topic that has sparked long debates among scholars and translators alike. The translation of metaphors presents unique challenges, as metaphors contain layers of meaning that extend beyond mere words and are often deeply rooted in the source culture's unique worldview [30–32]. This makes it difficult to translate metaphors without losing the original meaning or effect [18]. To translate metaphors, translators must consider the cultural context and associations related to them. Thus, creative solutions are often required to preserve the metaphor's original impact and meaning in the TL [30,31,33]. Many strategies can be used to translate metaphors, including direct translation, substitution of the metaphor with one that is more appropriate to the target culture, complete rephrasing of the meaning, or even deletion in some cases. Each of these strategies is used depending on the nature of the metaphor and its context, ensuring the original effect and meaning are conveyed in the TL in a way that is appropriate for the recipient and fits the cultural context [18,32–34].

Scholars emphasize the need for specialized approaches to ensure the depth of meaning is preserved or adapted to the TL and its cultural context. This section explores the theoretical framework and practical approaches to metaphor translation, integrating key concepts from literature such as MIP [35], Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) [5], and recent developments in metaphor translation strategies from a cognitive linguistic perspective [6,8,9,18,29].

The MIP developed by the Pragglejaz group is an effective systematic approach to identifying metaphors in texts. This procedure involves four main steps:

- Reading the entire text: to understand the overall context.
- Identifying lexical units: such as words or expressions that may be metaphors.
- Identifying the contextual meaning and basic meaning: for each lexical unit to ascertain whether there is a difference between the contextual meaning and its basic meaning.
- Marking the lexical unit as a metaphor: if there is a difference, mapping between the two meanings can be done.

In this study, the MIP serves as a foundation for further analysis using CMT. According to CMT, metaphors are not just linguistic expressions but are rooted in thought. They involve mappings between two conceptual domains: the source domain and the target domain [5]. They present three types of conceptual metaphors: structural metaphors, ontological metaphors, and orientational metaphors [5,36]. By analyzing the source and target domains, Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) helps uncover the conceptual relationships that shape metaphors across languages [5,15,36].

Cross-linguistic metaphor translation poses significant challenges, due to cultural and linguistic differences between the source text (ST) and the target text (TT) [6,8,15,18,37–40]. The concepts of Similar Mapping Conditions (SMC) and Different Mapping Conditions (DMC) have been introduced to explain the cognitive complexities of metaphor translation [8]. These concepts help explain the varying challenges translators face, particularly when metaphors involve abstract ideas rooted in specific cultural or linguistic frameworks. Building on the Cognitive Translation Hypothesis, several scholars have further examined

the influence of cultural and linguistic differences on metaphor translation [7,9,18,41]. Based on differences in conceptual mapping conditions and lexical implementations, four possible outcomes can be identified when translating metaphors.

- Similar Mapping and Similar Lexical Implementation: When both the metaphorical structure and expression are aligned, the metaphor can be directly preserved.
- Similar Mapping but Different Lexical Implementation: The metaphorical concept is retained, but different vocabulary is used, leading to adaptation [8].
- Different Mapping but Similar Lexical Implementation: Even though the metaphor uses similar wording, the underlying conceptual mapping differs, often requiring alteration or explanation [18].
- Different Mapping and Different Lexical Implementation: Both conceptual and lexical aspects vary, which may result in the metaphor being significantly altered or omitted [41].

Examining the conceptual mapping conditions and lexical implementations naturally leads to a discussion of the translation strategies employed by the translator, as each metaphor's translation strategy—whether preservation, adaptation, alteration, or omission—reflects choices made to convey the metaphor's intended meaning and cultural resonance in the TL [6,15]. Identifying the strategy used for each metaphor helps assess how effectively the translator maintained the metaphor's cognitive and cultural impact in translation.

Nida suggested that metaphor translation should prioritize conveying the meaning and emotional impact of the original text rather than a word-for-word translation [38]. He emphasized using culturally relevant analogies or rephrasing when necessary to maintain the metaphor's effect and ensure it resonates appropriately with the target audience. Similarly, the complexity of metaphor translation has been outlined, with various strategies proposed—ranging from literal translation to paraphrase [6]. The chosen strategy should aim to preserve the original meaning and impact as closely as possible. In the same vein, three main strategies for translating metaphors have been identified: paraphrase, substitution, and deletion [18]. In practice, these strategies—preservation, adaptation, alteration, and omission—hold

substantial practical value in addressing the challenges of metaphor translation.

3. Data and Methodology

The data for this study consist of metaphorical expressions collected from Albeshr's novel, *Hend wa Alaskar* [1], and its English translation, *Hend and the Soldiers* [2]. The novel was selected as one of the most outstanding novels by Saudi authors translated into English. The novel effectively captures the essence of Saudi culture and society in particular, as well as the Middle East in general. Its exploration of local realities through figurative language, including metaphorical expressions, allows readers to engage with the cultural context. This cultural representation is crucial for understanding the subtleties of the text and its relevance to readers.

The study mainly employs a qualitative research method, focusing on detailed metaphor analysis and conceptual understanding. The Metaphor Identification Procedures (MIP), proposed by the Pragglejaz Group [35], and the Cognitive Metaphor Theory (CMT), developed by Lakoff [5], serve as the theoretical framework for this study. Quantitative analysis applies the MIP to identify metaphors and measure their frequency. Qualitative analysis explores how conceptual patterns are shaped and how translation strategies like adaptation, preservation, alteration, and omission are used to convey metaphorical meaning across languages.

In practice, the metaphorical expressions in the novel are identified based on the MIP. Initially, the researchers conducted an exploratory survey of the novel, which revealed that the text extends beyond narrative storytelling to encompass a rich tapestry of figurative language, with metaphor emerging as a dominant and recurring rhetorical device. Therefore, to ensure the validity and consistency of metaphor identification, the researchers sought the expertise of five academics from the Arabic and English language departments at Northern Border University in Arar. These experts participated in identifying metaphorical expressions by employing the MIP (see examples in **Table 1**). The experts collectively extracted 160 expressions believed to be metaphorical. After review, it was agreed that 122 of these expressions were valid metaphors. This process first involves reading the ST carefully to establish

a general understanding of the meaning. The next step is to identify the metaphorical expressions by comparing the contextual meaning of words with their basic, concrete meanings to mark the lexical unit as metaphorical or not. Once metaphors are identified in the Arabic text, the next stage is to examine how they have been translated into English. The CMT is used in this stage to compare the original metaphorical expressions in Arabic with their counterparts in English to examine if the metaphorical meaning has been preserved, altered, or lost during translation.

Table 1. Metaphor Identification Procedure.

Lexical Unit	Contextual Meaning	Basic Meaning	Contextual vs Basic Meaning	Metaphor
تطلق tuṭliq	Sets free (as in letting something loose)	To let go or release	Same	No
بوابة bawwābat	Gate (a poetic reference to dawn)	Literal gate	Contrast	Yes
الفجر al-fajr	Dawn (literal time of day)	Dawn	Same	No
غيماتها ghaymahā	Its clouds (literal reference to clouds)	Clouds	Same	No
لترعى li-tarʿā	To graze (suggesting leisurely movement in the sky)	Grazing, like animals on a field	Contrast	Yes
في fī	In (preposition)	Preposition	Same	No
حقل ḥaql	Field (metaphorically referring to the sky)	agricultural field	Contrast	Yes
السماء as-samāʾ	The sky (literal reference to the heavens)	The sky	Same	No
الأزرق al-ʾazraq	Blue (literal color reference)	Blue	Same	No

Although 122 metaphorical expressions were identified and validated by experts, only a representative sample (45 examples) was selected for detailed analysis. This decision was made because the study is designed as a research paper, which prioritizes depth over quantity. The qualitative nature of the analysis necessitates a focused and interpretive approach, where each metaphor is examined thoroughly in its linguistic and conceptual context. Furthermore, space limitations make it impractical to include all instances. The selected metaphors were purposefully chosen to reflect broader patterns of metaphor use and translation strategies, enabling the study to draw meaningful conclusions without analyzing every expression. This sampling strategy is consistent with qualitative research methodologies, which emphasize the importance of rich, context-sensitive analysis over exhaustive coverage [42,43]. Moreover, the approach aligns with the theoretical requirements of CMT [5] and the MIP [35], both of which call for an in-depth examination to uncover underlying conceptual mappings and interpretive nuance.

4. Data Analysis

4.1. Quantitative Analysis

The metaphorical expressions in *Hend and the Soldiers* are identified based on the MIP. The following table is an example, showing the process of metaphor identification and how a lexical unit is marked as metaphorical.

تطلق بوابة الفجر غيماتها لترعى في حقل السماء الازرق وتحيله الى بياض. (p.7)

The gate of dawn had set free a herd of clouds to graze the sky's azure meadows. (p.1)

It is concluded from the **Table 1** that three out of the nine lexical units in this extract were judged as being used metaphorically:

1.بوابة الفجر (The gate of dawn): The metaphor of a "gate" implies a passageway or opening, which attributes a human-like structure to the time of dawn. "Dawn" here acts as a "gate" that allows clouds to enter the sky.

2.ترعى (to graze): The action of grazing, typically associated with animals in a field, is metaphorically applied to clouds moving across the sky. This metaphor emphasizes a leisurely, natural movement, personifying clouds as if they were animals grazing.

3.حقل السماء (the sky's field): The sky is likened to a "field," reinforcing the idea of an open, expansive space where clouds roam freely, much like animals on a pasture.

The MIP was used consistently across the text to identify metaphors in the novel. Each lexical unit was examined by considering both its basic and contextual meanings to determine the presence of metaphorical contrasts. As illustrated in the above example, each element was reviewed in its context. Following this systematic process results in a corpus containing a total of 122. This provides an answer to the first question and serves as a foundation for further analysis. **Figure 1** also provides a comprehensive overview showing the frequency of metaphor types across various categories. This provides answers to the research questions quantitatively.
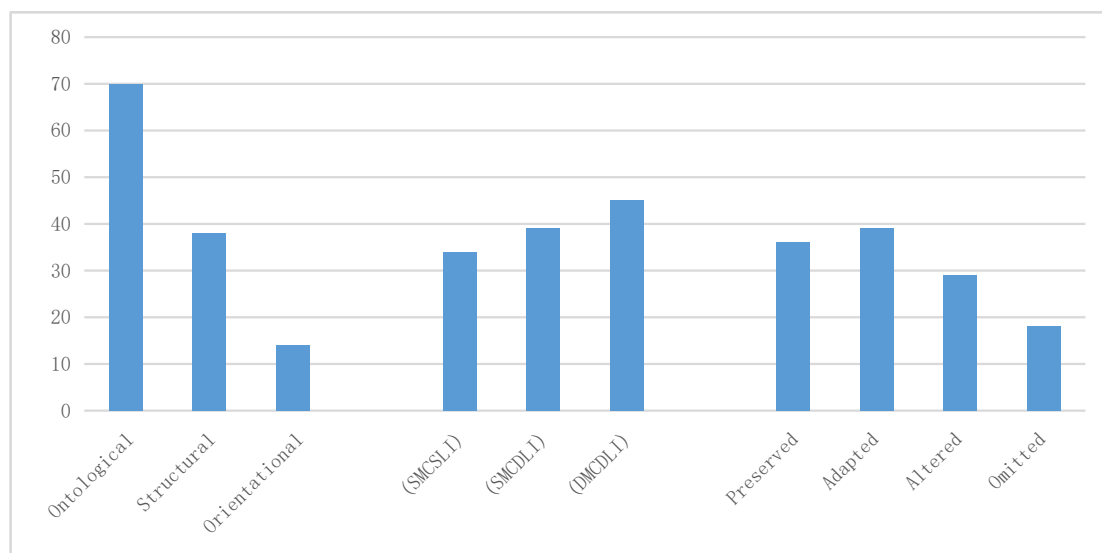
Figure 1. Frequency of Metaphor Types, Mapping Conditions, and Translation Strategies.

Figure 1 shows the frequency of metaphor types, mappings, and translation strategies in the novel's translation. Ontological metaphors are the most prevalent, with 70 instances, suggesting a high use of metaphors that turn abstract entities into physical objects. Structural metaphors come second with 38 occurrences. Orientational metaphors are the least frequent, with only 14 occurrences. Different patterns emerge in the translation process when examining conceptual mappings and lexical choices. Metaphors with similar mapping conditions and similar lexical implementations (SMCSLI) occur 34 times. Metaphors with similar mappings but different lexical implementations (SMCDLI) occur more frequently, with 39 instances. The most frequent category comprises different mapping conditions with different lexical implementations (DMCDLI), recorded 45 times. This suggests that translation often in-

volves reinterpreting both the conceptual mappings and lexical expressions to better suit the TL. The analysis of translation strategies shows a preference for adaptation, used 39 times to align metaphors with the target culture. Preservation was chosen 36 times, alteration 29 times, and omission was least common, with 18 instances. This distribution reflects a balanced approach, as translators sought to retain the ST's essence while adjusting for cultural and linguistic relevance in the TT.

4.2. Qualitative analysis

4.2.1. Metaphor Type Analysis

Ontological Metaphors

An ontological metaphor is a metaphor in which

something concrete is projected onto something abstract. It allows us to view events, emotions, and ideas as entities or substances. The ontological metaphor is one of the conceptual metaphor categories identified by Lakoff et al. [5]. They describe ontological metaphors as "natural and persuasive." This type of metaphor clarifies vague concepts by providing a structure [44]. For example, in personification, human qualities are attributed to nonhuman entities. Personification appears frequently in both literature and everyday speech. The following ontological metaphors in **Table 2** are illustrative examples extracted from *Hend and the Soldiers*:

Table 2. Ontological Metaphors.

No.	Target Text	Source Text
4	The road celebrated the rain. (p. 1)	الشارع يحتفي بندى المطر. (p. 7)
5	The sun had trailed its orange gown away. (p. 23)	تسحب الشمس ثوبها البرتقالي. (p. 44)
6	The sweet smell of cardamom embraces the house. (p. 2)	تنتشر الرائحة الزكية للهال الثائر لتعانق المكان. (p. 8)
7	Ammousha was a reservoir of my family's narratives, including their secret stories. (p. 11)	عموشة صندوق حكايات أسرتي ومستودع أسرارها. (p. 24)
8	My heart is starving to be with him. (p. 45)	قلبي يتضوَّر جوعًا للقائه. (p. 78)
9	The desert was baring her heart to all her children. (p. 114)	فتحت الصحراء قلبها لأبنائها. (p. 187)

In examples (4), (5), non-human elements are given human-like qualities. In example (4), both the ST and TT use the source domain of celebration to represent the target domain of the road's reaction to the rain. This metaphor reflects the personification of the road, depicting it as if it were joyful and actively responding to the rain. However, in the ST, the verb "يحتفي" (celebrate) has a deeper cultural sense of joyful reception and welcoming that implies appreciating the delicate presence of the rain. The TT's use of "celebrated" retains the general idea of joy, conveying a straightforward meaning of joy. In example (5), both the ST and TT use the source domain of pulling/trailing a gown to represent the target domain of the sun setting, highlighting the elegance and slowness of the sunset. However, the source domain of "pulling" in the ST evokes a sense of deliberate action, while "trailing" in the TT softens the imagery, making it feel more passive and natural. The TT reflects the same conceptual metaphor and conveys the same visual image but lacks the intentionality and vividness present in the ST.

In examples (6) and (7), embodiment plays a key role in conveying abstract ideas through physical experiences (6) or objects (7). In example (6), both the ST and TT use the source domain of spreading and embracing to describe the target domain of the cardamom's scent filling the space. However, in the ST, the phrase "rebellious cardamom" (الهال الثائر) adds a layer of intensity and vitality to the scent, suggesting that the scent is not only spreading, but does so forcefully, as if it has its own energy. The use of "تعانق" (embrace) also carries a deeper emotional association, implying that the scent warmly occupies the entire space. In the TT, the translation "embraces the house" retains the metaphor of the scent embracing the space but lacks the same intensity conveyed by "الثائر" (rebellious) that is found the ST. The translation presents a softer, more neutral image of the scent simply filling the house, while the Arabic version evokes a dynamic interaction between the cardamom and its surroundings, with a sense of movement and passion that is less pronounced in the TT.

In example (7), both the ST and the TT use the source domain of a container or reservoir to conceptualize the target domain of memories and stories. The metaphor conveys the idea that Ammousha holds the family's tales and secrets like a container holding valuable contents. In the ST, the word "صندوق" (box or chest) evokes a strong, concrete image of a physical object used for storing precious items or secrets, with cultural hints of safekeeping. The use of "مستودع" (reservoir) further reinforces the idea of Ammousha as a trusted guardian of both family stories and secrets. In the TT, the term "reservoir" effectively conveys the sense of storing and holding, maintaining the metaphor of Ammousha as the keeper of family narratives. However, the richer cultural connotations associated with "صندوق" (box)—particularly its connection to secrecy and protec-

tion—are slightly diluted in the TT. The ST emphasizes a more intimate, protective relationship, while the TT presents a more neutral impression.

In examples (8) and (9), hunger and thirst metaphors are used to convey deep emotional longing or fulfillment through the imagery of physical hunger (8) or nourishment (9). In example (8), the ST and the TT utilize the source domain of hunger/starvation to map onto the target domain of emotional longing and desire, where the metaphor of starvation expresses an intense need to connect with someone. Although both texts use the same source domain to convey emotional longing, the TT presents it with a slight adaptation to match natural English usage. In example (9), the ST and the TT employ the source domain of opening or baring to conceptualize the target domain of nurturing and connection, highlighting the desert's role as a life-giving entity for its inhabitants. The metaphor of "opening her heart" in the ST evokes a sense of warmth and generosity, reflecting the deep bond between the desert and its people. The TT maintains the nurturing aspect of the desert, but the use of "baring" suggests exposure and vulnerability. Thus, while the ST's imagery implies a more protective and intimate relationship, the TT shifts the focus toward openness and the act of revealing.

Structural Metaphors

A structural metaphor is a conceptual metaphor in which one idea is comprehended in terms of another, such as viewing an argument as a war, which emphasizes conflict [5]. These metaphors shape our understanding and actions implicitly by providing a consistent framework through a given text. The following examples in **Table 3** show how metaphors employ structural frameworks to convey complex ideas, emotions, and experiences through familiar and concrete concepts.

Table 3. Structural metaphors.

No.	Target Text	Source Text
10	…taking our conflict to a new battlefield. (p. 79)	نقل خلافه معي إلى ساحة حرب. (p. 113)
11	Everyone showered him with praise. (p. 100)	والكل يمطره بعبارات الإطراء. (p. 165)
12	…tales woven around coffee (p. 3)	حكاية وُلدت في فناجين القهوة. (p. 9)
13	…the seeds that stories planted in my chest… (p. 18)	زرعت القصص بذورها في صدري. (p. 36)
14	The edges of my heart burning with passion. (p. 65)	أطراف قلبي تحترق بالعشق. (p. 110)
15	…existential questions that cause anguish. (p. 68)	اسئلة الوجود التى تشعل قلقها. (p. 118)

Examples (10) and (11) reflect how abstract ideas like conflict and appreciation are expressed and understood through familiar scenarios. Metaphor (10) portrays conflict as a battlefield and praise as a shower of admiration. The ST and the TT employ the source domain of war or the battlefield to convey the target domain of conflict/disagreement, indicating a shift in the nature of the struggle. The metaphor "ساحة حرب" (battlefield) in the ST evokes intensity and seriousness. The conflict has escalated into a more aggressive arena. The TT's use of "new battlefield" retains the essence of this escalation. While both versions convey heightened conflict, the ST emphasizes the gravity of the situation more strongly than the TT, which suggests a broader perspective on the disagreement. In example (11), both the ST and TT use the source domain of rain to convey the target domain of praise—indicating an expression of admiration and praise. The TT's use of "showered" maintains the same metaphor as the ST, but lacks the deeper cultural nuance of the ST, where rain connotes abundance.

Examples (12) and (13) employ the structure of the concrete-to-abstract relationship, where concrete elements are used to represent abstract ideas. Example (12) presents another structural metaphor, where the source domain is "birth/woven," and the target domain is "stories or narratives." It highlights the relationship between coffee and narrative sharing. The metaphor "وُلدت" (born) in the ST conveys a sense of natural origin linked to the coffee-drinking ritual, while the TT's use of "woven" emphasizes the artistic process of crafting stories, suggesting a collaborative aspect. Although both versions connect coffee to storytelling, the ST evokes intimacy and origin, while the TT shifts the focus toward the creative construction of narrative, slightly

altering the original's emotional weight. In example (13), the source domain is "planting seeds," which suggests the process of nurturing and growth. It symbolizes the initial influence of stories on a person's emotional and intellectual development. The target domain is "the person's internal experience." The metaphor shows how stories can inspire people: they nurture their thoughts and feelings. This inspiration can lead people to gain more knowledge and potentially become writers. It emphasizes the transformative potential of storytelling. Both the ST and TT capture the essence of this metaphor. The metaphor highlights the journey of personal growth sparked by stories.

Examples (14) and (15) show how emotional experiences are conceptualized through familiar imagery that evokes physical sensations. In example (14), the ST and TT employ the source domain of burning to capture the target domain of intense emotions—specifically love and passion. Both versions illustrate how overwhelming feelings of love can cause pain, portraying passion as both exciting and potentially painful. In example (15) the ST and

TT employ a structural metaphor where the source domain is "ignition/causing", and the target domain is "existential questions." This metaphor highlights the emotional impact of deep philosophical inquiries on one's psyche. In both texts, the source domain relates to an action (ignition/cause) that triggers an emotional response, while the target domain encompasses the concept of existential questions and the emotional turmoil they provoke. The ST emphasizes the igniting aspect of these questions, while the TT highlights their capacity to provoke anguish.

Orientational Metaphors

Orientational metaphors map physical directions such as UP/DOWN and IN/OUT onto abstract concepts. These metaphors are grounded in both physical and cultural experiences and play a crucial role in shaping how we understand abstract ideas—e.g., success and happiness are often conceptualized as "up," while failure and sadness are seen as "down" [5]. These mappings are considered to be largely universal. The following examples in **Table 4** are illustrative.

Table 4. Orientational Metaphors.

No.	Target Text	Source Text
16	My heart sank. (p. 121)	انقبض قلبي. (p. 197)
17	My heart gave a sudden leap. (p. 54)	قفز قلبي. (p. 92)
18	I lost him in the maze. (p. 74)	ضاع مني في متاهاته. (p. 126)
19	This lesson, which made him the center of attention. (p. 101)	الدرس الذي أخذه من الهامش إلى المركز. (p. 165)
20	The fear inside me. (14)	الرعب الذي يسكنني. (p. 29)
21	My heart follows the clock of its new location. (p. 124)	أخذ قلبي يتبع عقارب توقيته الجديد. (p. 202)

Example (16) illustrates a downward movement as the source domain. This downward movement expresses a negative emotional state, such as sadness, which serves as the target domain. However, the imagery shifts from a physical tightness in the ST to a sinking sensation in the TT. This subtle shift can influence how the reader interprets the intensity and nature of the emotional experience. The ST reflects an Arabic cultural tendency to connect physical sensations with emotions. In this context, the contraction of the heart conveys sudden distress or fear. In contrast, the TT uses a "sinking heart". This aligns with English-speaking audiences' association of sinking with gradual hopelessness. Example (17) showcases an upward

orientation, where the source domain of upward movement corresponds to sudden joy or excitement. The ST conveys this intense emotional response effectively, and the TT captures it as well. However, cultural interpretations of the heart's leap and its associations with joy may vary. This variation shapes the audience's emotional response.

Examples (18) and (19) demonstrate how spatial orientation captures complex emotional dynamics. Example (18) uses a maze as the source domain for confusion or loss. This metaphor applies to both the ST and the TT. It reflects disorientation within a relationship or situation. The interpretation, however, may differ based on cultural familiarity with maze imagery. In Example (19), movement from

the margin to the center represents a shift in importance. Here, the source domain of the center relates to attention or significance in the ST. This metaphor shows a transition from marginalization to prominence, emphasizing personal growth or recognition. However, the ST conveys deeper themes of marginalization and empowerment, while the TT focuses more on gaining public attention.

In example (20), the inside/outside orientation illustrates fear as an internal, almost physical presence. Here, the source domain is the concept of a physical space within the self—suggesting depth and containment—while the target domain is the experience of being inhabited by fear. This use of "inside" as internal reflects how deeply rooted emotions, such as fear, can feel as if they reside within one's body, almost like a concrete entity occupying space. This orientation reflects deep, pervasive emotions, making the metaphor relatable and impactful across languages and cultures.

Example (21) uses spatial time to represent adjusting to a new emotional state. The source domain is physical space measured by a clock, while the target domain is emotional adaptation to change. This metaphor reflects

how movement and place symbolize new phases in life. The image of "following a new clock" signifies aligning internally with a different pace or rhythm. The translation retains this orientation, capturing the universal experiences of adjusting to change and making the metaphor relatable across cultures.

4.2.2. Cross-Linguistic Comparison

Similar Mapping Conditions, Similar Lexical Implementations

The SMCSLI category represents metaphors where both the source and target languages share the same conceptual and linguistic basis. This similarity comes from universally shared human experiences and cognitive schemas [5,27]. When metaphorical mappings align across languages, a literal translation often retains both its meaning and impact. This allows for a straightforward translation with minimal adaptation [6]. This category presents the least risk of misinterpretation. It enables direct translation without any loss of metaphorical depth [8,18,41]. The following examples in **Table 5** are from the novel.

Table 5. Similar Mapping Conditions, Similar Lexical Implementations.

No.	Target Text	Source Text
22	A rose I water every night with your love. (p. 25)	وردة أسقيها بماء محبتك كل ليلة. (p. 46)
23	…and enjoy the taste of the details. (p. 55)	وأتسلّى بتذوُّق طعم التفاصيل. (p. 94)
24	My legs froze. (p. 97)	تجمَّدت رجلاي. (p. 160)
25	My heart chirped with joy. (p. 116)	قلبي يغرد بالفرح. (p. 190)
26	…lodged in his lips a few hot coals that kindled a fire in his face…(p. 102)	أسكنت في شفتيه جمراً اشعل النار في وجهه. (p. 168)
27	The windows of heaven were all closed in my face. (p. 74)	نوافذ السماء أغلقت في وجهي. (p. 127)

In Example (22), the metaphor of a "rose" represents love and care. This rose is "watered" with love, which expresses affection and continual care in the relationship. This metaphor conveys the idea that love is essential nourishment. The phrase "a person is a rose" suggests that the recipient of love, like a rose, is nurtured. This nurturing comes from the attentive and loving care of the speaker. The conceptual mappings emphasize growth and nourishment. Here, the "rose" symbolizes the beloved, while "watering" signifies providing love and care. This universal concept of nourishment is understood across cultures. Such

a metaphor is grounded in bodily and sensory experiences, such as nurturing, which are widely shared. Thus, this ontological metaphor is preserved through a literal translation. The translation retains the imagery of "watering" the rose with love. The translator's choice to maintain "rose" and "water" emphasizes shared metaphorical understanding. This makes a literal translation both appropriate and impactful.

In Example (23), the metaphor "tasting the details" suggests deep enjoyment of life's finer moments. This metaphor can be understood through the conceptual metaphor

that understanding is tasting, depicting experience in a sensory way. The phrase implies that just as one savors food, the speaker savors each small detail. The speaker immerses himself fully in the experience. The conceptual mappings emphasize appreciation and sensation. They link the act of savoring food to enjoying life's details. The translator's choice to use "enjoy the taste of the details" is effective. This choice preserves both the imagery and the meaning of the original metaphor. This literal translation aligns with a similar metaphor in the TL: "Savoring the flavor of life's moments." This alignment creates a culturally and conceptually consistent interpretation.

In Example (24), the metaphor "My legs froze" conveys a state of paralysis or immobilization. This immobilization occurs specifically due to fear or shock. The conceptual metaphor suggests that being unable to move is like freezing. This implies that the speaker is so gripped by fear that they cannot physically move. The conceptual mappings highlight the themes of immobility and fear. Here, "frozen" signifies an inability to act or react in frightening situations. This aligns with the shared human experience of feeling stuck during intense fear or panic. In many cultures, "freezing" is a widely used metaphor. For example, the English metaphor is "I was frozen in place." The shared cognitive experience of freezing as a physical sensation makes the metaphor universally recognizable. This metaphor retains both the conceptual mapping and the lexical choice [5,6]. The translation effectively conveys the feeling of immobility caused by fear or shock.

In example (25), the metaphor "my heart chirped with joy" uses the image of a bird chirping to symbolize happiness and excitement. The metaphor is grounded in the conceptual metaphor *a happy heart is a chirping bird,* which signifies joy and a lively spirit. This metaphor exemplifies SMCSLI. Both Arabic and English cultures associate birdsong with happiness. The conceptual mappings focus on *expressing joy* and *liveliness,* where the heart, like a bird, "chirps" to reflect positive emotions. Because this metaphor is accessible through shared sensory experiences—birdsong as an expression of liveliness—the translator chose to render it literally without altering the meaning [5,6]. This category facilitates a direct translation that preserves both the imagery and its impact, enabling the metaphor to convey its full emotional resonance across languages.

In example (26), the metaphor shows the intense effect of a kiss. The kiss is compared to placing hot coals on his lips. This makes his face turn red, as if ignited by fire. The imagery of heat and fire conveys strong emotions like passion or embarrassment. The conceptual metaphor, "a kiss as fire," suggests that affection or desire can provoke a visible reaction. The "hot coals" symbolize the kiss's intense impact. "Kindled a fire in his face" implies a flushed or reddened appearance. This shift in imagery—from warmth to a visible reaction—represents how the kiss sparks a passionate response. In English, similar metaphors like "her kiss set him on fire" or "her kiss burned him" also use fire to describe passion. These expressions reflect the powerful response to affection, using fire as a metaphor for passion. The translation successfully retains the intensity and emotion of the original. This fiery imagery makes the metaphor universally relatable.

In example (27), the metaphor conveys feelings of despair and hopelessness. The speaker uses this imagery to express a sense of rejection and loss. The conceptual metaphor suggests that opportunities can be represented as open or closed windows. The conceptual mappings highlight themes of disappointment and despair. The phrase evokes a strong emotional impact, illustrating the feeling of being denied what one hoped for. Metaphors grounded in physical experiences, such as open and closed spaces, are considered to be universally understood [5]. These metaphorical structures are effective for expressing abstract ideas like hope and despair. The translator's choice to use "closed in my face" conveys a sense of direct rejection and signifies the sudden end to hope. This literal translation preserves the metaphor's meaning and emotional resonance in both languages.

Other examples in this category include example (8) in which the metaphor reflects "emotions are hunger," conveying intense longing. Example (11) employs the metaphor "giving praise is showering," indicating an abundance of compliments. In example (13), the metaphor "stories as seeds" highlights the journey of personal growth sparked by stories. In Example (14), the metaphor "passion is fire" expresses intense emotions. Example (17) uses the metaphor "the heart is a moving object," reflecting a sudden emotional reaction. In these examples, the translation maintains the integrity of the source text, allowing readers

in the TL to experience comparable imagery and emotional depth as intended in the original. More examples are listed in **Appendix A**.

Similar Mapping Conditions, Different Lexical Implementations

In this category, metaphor translation involves cases where the source and target languages share similar conceptual mappings but differ in how these are expressed lexically. While the metaphorical concept is generally accessible in both languages, translators must carefully choose equivalent expressions that preserve the meta-

phor's impact in the target language. Although the structural framework of the metaphor is retained, literal translation may still be ineffective due to lexical variation [45]. To handle such cases, translators may opt to substitute metaphors with culturally appropriate equivalents, modify them into similes, or rephrase them for clarity, or omit them when they may cause confusion [46] (as seen in **Table 6**). Adaptive strategies informed by cultural and cognitive awareness are recommended to maintain the intended meaning and avoid awkward or unnatural renderings in the target language [47,48].

Table 6. Similar Mapping Conditions, Different Lexical Implementations.

No.	Target Text	Source Text
28	…my heart warmly wrapped by Mae's story… (p. 32)	قلبي متدثِّر بحكاية مي. (p. 56)
29	Her smile captivated his heart. (p. 101)	سرقت ابتسامتها قلبه. (p. 166)
30	My mother left me prey to anxiety. (p. 96)	تتركني اسيرة القلق. (p. 158)
31	…she seemed as harsh as cut stone. (p. 11)	امراةً **قُدَّت** من صخر. (p. 24)
32	Freedom wafted into our home. (p. 109)	هبَّت على منزلنا نسمات من الحرية. (p. 178)
33	The bell rang before I finished reading, rending my heart in two. (p.15)	**شقَّ** صوت الجرس قلبي. (p.31)

The metaphor, in example (28), uses the term "متدثِّر" (gently and warmly covered). This term is rooted in Arab culture and has religious connotations. It conveys comfort and spiritual peace, suggesting Mae's story as a source of both emotional and spiritual solace. This expression implies that cherished narratives provide inner peace, akin to spiritual reflection. In translation, "warmly wrapped" preserves the metaphor's emotional warmth while omitting the specific religious undertones, adapting it for target readers in line with approaches of Newmark [6] and Schäffner [47] to culturally bound metaphors. The adaptation preserves the emotional depth but simplifies the spiritual layer, choosing a lexical unit that resonates more broadly in English without the specific religious context.

Example (29) employs the metaphor love as theft: a person's smile "steals" another's heart, expressing deep affection in the ST. In both languages, the heart represents affection or emotional attachment [5]. However, instead of "stole his heart," the TT uses "captivated his heart." This choice matches English-speaking cultural norms. It also avoids any negative connotations of theft [6]. Moreover, this adaptation makes the English version more metaphorical than the original. In example (30), the metaphor conveys

anxiety as imprisonment, suggesting that the speaker is held captive by their worry. In English, translating this metaphor as "prey to anxiety" shifts the metaphor from anxiety as imprisonment to anxiety as predator, but both share the conceptual mapping of loss of control. By adapting the linguistic expression, the translator conveys a similar emotional state without a direct translation, thus maintaining coherence in the TL.

In example (31), the narrator views her mother as "قُدَّت من صخر," literally "cut from stone" to convey her mother's hardness or lack of warmth. This metaphor shares conceptual mappings across cultures as stone symbolizes unyielding nature. However, the Arabic expression implies an inherent toughness. In English, a simile is used instead of a metaphor, "as harsh as cut stone" to maintain both emotional depth and cultural familiarity [49]. It also fits linguistic norms in the TL.

Example (32) metaphorically describes the feeling of liberation entering a personal space. The metaphor freedom as a breeze aligns across languages in that breeze symbolizes gentleness and transformation, though in Arabic, it is culturally enriched as a sign of hopeful change. Translating this metaphor as "freedom wafted into our home" employs

equivalent imagery that reflects the lightness and gradual arrival of freedom, adapting a similar mapping with alternative lexical choices in the TL [46,50].

Example (33) uses the metaphor emotion as physical pain. In Arabic, the expression suggests that a loud or startling sound emotionally disrupts the narrator while she is reading a story. It metaphorically causes pain, as if the heart were torn. The concept of the heart as an emotional center aligns between Arabic and English. However, Arabic uses physical imagery to emphasize the effect. In translation, "rending my heart in two" adapts the emotional intensity without a literal approach. This technique is supported by Newmark and Schäffner [6,47], as they state that adaptation maintains the metaphorical impact while adjusting the linguistic expression. This adaptation helps avoid a literal translation that might sound peculiar in English. Thus, it preserves the emotional resonance for the target audience.

Other examples of this category, that illustrate how culturally specific metaphors can be adapted in translation to retain their conceptual meaning and emotional impact, are in example (4), the metaphor "nature is alive" personifies the road. This captures nature's lively response to rain in both languages. However, in the ST, the verb "يحتفي" (celebrate) suggests a deeper, culturally rich sense of welcoming and appreciation for rain's delicate presence. TT's "celebrated" keeps the general idea of joy but presents it in a more straightforward way. Similarly, example (6), in the TT, "embraces the house" maintains the image of the scent filling the room but lacks the intensity of "الثائر / rebellious," offering a softer portrayal. The Arabic version thus suggests a more dynamic, passionate interaction between the scent

and the space than the English version conveys. Example (7) employing a person is a container of memories. Here, "reservoir" aptly translates the image of safeguarding memories, meanwhile omitting ST's "box / صندوق". In example (9), the nature is a mother metaphor maintains its nurturing connotation. However, the ST's phrase "opening her heart" suggests warmth and generosity, symbolizing a protective bond between the desert and its people. While TT retains this nurturing aspect, "baring" implies sharing and exposing. Similarly, metaphors such as "conflict as war" in example (10), and sadness is heaviness in example (16) carry over conceptually well into English, with different lexical realization.

Different Mapping Conditions, Different Lexical Implementations

This category represents more complex cases in which both the conceptual mappings and lexical realizations differ significantly between source and target languages. The absence of a shared metaphorical structure means that the metaphor may be unfamiliar or culturally irrelevant in the target culture, making direct translation ineffective [45]. In such instances, translators must reconstruct or replace the metaphor to fulfill its communicative function. Recommended strategies include transforming the metaphor into culturally relevant alternatives, paraphrasing the idea, or omitting the metaphor entirely when necessary to prevent misunderstanding [46] (see **Table 7**). Successful translation in this category relies on a deep understanding of cultural and cognitive contexts, requiring flexible and context-sensitive approaches [47,48].

Table 7. Different Mapping Conditions and Different Lexical Implementations.

No.	Target Text	Source Text
34	You meddle in other people's affairs. (p. 62)	تعلكين شؤون الناس. (p. 105)
35	To save my pen from gallows of Mansur, Ibrahim and Heila. (p. 83)	لإنقاذ رقبة قلمي من مقصلة منصور وإبراهيم وهيلة. (p. 140)
36	…to lead a new sally against me. (p. 120)	تقود انقلاباً جديد في حياتي. (p. 194)
37	These stories fed my mind on a world… (p. 17)	ربّت تلك القصص في خيالي عوالم. (p. 34)
38	…the look, which she flashed… (p. 95)	النظرة التي تبرق في عيناها. (p. 157)
39	…rolling in pleasure… (p. 17)	يتمرَّغ في سعادة غامرة. (p. 34)
40	the photos, which I had hidden in a drawer. (p. 45)	صوره التي ترقد مختبئة في إحدى الادراج. (p. 79)
41	…this blatantly violent language. (p. 96)	اللغة المكشوفة والعارية بالعنف و الضيق. (p. 158)

In example (34), the metaphor is altered. The conceptual metaphor in the ST is Meddling is Chewing, where meddling is framed as a repetitive action akin to chewing. The conceptual mapping relates a person chewing to a person interfering, and affairs to other people's business. In Arabic, (literally, "you chew on people's affairs") employs the idea of "chewing" as a metaphor for meddling. Since "chewing" in this context would be unfamiliar or confusing in English, the metaphor was modified to "meddle," which captures the interference aspect without the original metaphor. Altering metaphors can be effective when a literal translation might not be clear or idiomatic in the TL [6,46]. Here, alteration ensures clarity while conveying the speaker's critique of meddling behavior.

In example (35), the metaphor is adapted. The conceptual metaphor in the ST is Criticism is execution, where harsh judgment is portrayed as a death sentence. The conceptual mapping relates guillotine to intense judgment and pen's neck to the vulnerability of a writer's work. The Arabic "مقصلة" (guillotine) evokes a strong image of punishment that might not have a direct impact if translated literally. Therefore, the metaphor was adapted to "gallows" in English, preserving its intense connotation and aligning with Western ideas of public punishment. This choice illustrates how a translator can maintain metaphorical force by substituting culturally equivalent imagery, aligning with guidance of Newmark and Deignan [6,45] on adjusting metaphors for cultural resonance while preserving core meaning.

The metaphor in example (36) is adapted. The conceptual metaphor in the ST is *Change* is *a military revolt*, where *change* is depicted as an aggressive uprising. The conceptual mapping involves leading a coup as initiating significant life changes. In Arabic, "انقلاب" (coup or revolt) is used to indicate a drastic life shift. To avoid the heavy political tone of "coup" in English, the phrase was adapted to "a new sally," suggesting a bold change without political associations. This adaptation preserves the intensity without the cultural and political baggage that might distract English readers, as suggested by Deignan and Dickins, et al. [45,46].

In example (37), the metaphor is adapted. The conceptual metaphor in the ST is Mental stimulation is nourishment, where learning is depicted as feeding. The conceptual mapping involves stories as nourishment for the imagination and raising/fostering worlds as enriching imagination.

In Arabic, "ربَّت تلك القصص في خيالي عوالم" (literally, "these stories raised worlds in my imagination") uses nurturing language to indicate intellectual growth. This was adapted in English to "fed my mind," which is more familiar in the TL and still suggests mental enrichment. Adapting metaphors with similar conceptual meanings between languages helps preserve metaphorical expression without altering the text's intended impact [45].

In example (38), the metaphor is adapted. The conceptual metaphor in the ST is intensity is light, where emotional intensity is depicted as a flash of light. The conceptual mapping involves eyes as sources of intensity and flashing as intense emotional expression. The Arabic expression "النظرة التي تبرق في عيناها" (literally, "the look that flashes in her eyes") uses a vivid light-related image to signify emotional intensity. This was maintained as "flashed" in English, which conveys a similar level of emotional intensity, while aligning with TL expressions. Adapting metaphors to fit the TL's cultural and linguistic context can enhance reader comprehension while preserving the emotional resonance intended in the ST [45].

In example (39), the metaphor is adapted. The conceptual metaphor in the ST is Happiness is a concrete substance, where happiness is represented as something one can immerse in. The conceptual mapping links a person experiencing joy to someone physically rolling in it, with satisfaction mapped to pleasure. The Arabic expression "يتمرَّغ في سعادة غامرة" (literally, "rolling in overwhelming happiness") uses vivid physical imagery to emphasize deep joy. In the TT, this was adapted to "rolling in pleasure," maintaining a similar sense of indulgence that is culturally accessible to English speakers. Such adaptations ensure that the metaphor's emotional connotation remains intact while enhancing intelligibility in the TL [46].

In example (40), the metaphor is omitted. The conceptual metaphor in the ST is Memories are animate objects that sleep, where memories are depicted as living beings at rest. The conceptual mapping involves photos as stored memories and sleeping as being kept. In Arabic, "ترقد مختبئة" (literally, "sleeping hidden") conveys that the photos "sleep" in a drawer, adding a sense of stillness to the stored memories. However, English does not typically use "sleeping" for inanimate objects, so the metaphor was omitted in favor of a simpler "hidden in a drawer." This choice avoids

confusion and aligns with recommendations to omit metaphors when cultural mismatches arise [46].

In example (41), the metaphor is omitted. The conceptual metaphor in the ST is directness is exposure, where the rawness of expression is likened to bareness. The conceptual mapping links bare or exposed language to direct and aggressive language, and violence to emotional intensity. In Arabic, "اللغة المكشوفة والعارية" (literally, "bare and exposed language") employs nudity imagery to indicate blunt language. This was translated to "blatantly violent language," which conveys the intended meaning but without the metaphorical nudity reference, which may seem odd in English. This approach aligns with the recommendation that metaphor omission can be appropriate when literal metaphors do not resonate culturally or stylistically in the TL [46].

Other examples include such cases as (12), in which the metaphor "ولدت" (born) conveys a sense of natural origin linked to the coffee-drinking ritual. "Woven around" in English conveys shared moments. The TT shifts the focus toward the creative nature of narrative construction, slightly altering the original's emotional weight. It aligns with cultural familiarity. Similarly, example (15) links existential questions to igniting worry. "Cause anguish" in English reduces the intensity. However, it keeps the idea of questioning as unsettling. In example (20) the ST shows fear as an occupant within, indicating a profound and persistent internal disturbance. The TT shows fear as an internal presence but lacks the depth and intensity of the original Arabic expression, offering a simpler depiction of unease. These strategies align with techniques outlined by Kövecses, Dickins, et al., and Schäffner [15,46,47]. They emphasize adjustments that keep metaphorical coherence across cultures.

5. Discussion

Ontological metaphors help to connect with complex emotions through personified or concrete imagery. For instance, in example (4) the personification of the road suggests a reverent cultural attitude toward rain. While the TT maintains the personification, it lacks the ST's nuanced connotations of reverence, portraying a simpler notion of joy. In example (5), the TT preserves the sunset metaphor but uses "trailed" instead of "pulled." This creates a gentler, less intentional image than the ST's elegant depiction of the sun leaving. The metaphor in example (7) shows a similar contrast. The TT loses some of the ST's intimate, protective meaning. "Reservoir" does not capture the familial safekeeping that "صندوق ومستودع" (Reservoir and box) conveys in Arabic.

Structural metaphors help conceptualize abstract ideas through familiar experiences. In example (10), the Arabic language frames conflicts as a battlefield, intensifying the sense of hostility. The TT mirrors this by "new battlefield," but the ST's wording adds a graver sense of escalation. Similarly, example (11) preserves the metaphor in the TT, yet misses the cultural generosity implied by "يمطره," where rain in Arabic symbolizes abundance. Example (13) highlights storytelling's nurturing role, symbolizing how stories plant "seeds" that encourage personal growth and emotional development. Stories resonate within, inspiring people to expand their knowledge and identity. Both ST and TT convey this transformative journey effectively.

Orientational metaphors use spatial orientation to show emotions. For example, the metaphor in example (16) utilizes a downward orientation to represent despair. The TT adapts this to "sinking heart." This choice suits English-speaking audiences. In English, "sinking" conveys a gradual feeling of hopelessness or despair. Despite these differences, both the ST and TT share the same core emotional meaning. This effectively bridges cultural interpretations of the metaphor. Similarly, example (17) uses upward movement to express joy. The TT also captures this feeling of excitement. Example (19) describes a shift from "margin" to "center," where centrality means recognition. Although the TT uses "center of attention," it softens the ST's emphasis on the difference between "center" and "margin." Here, "margin" suggests being dismissed.

In the first category, SMCSLI, the examples show how metaphors grounded in sensory experiences and universal emotions can bridge cultural gaps and convey complex feelings effectively [5,6,15,51]. The metaphors utilize various conceptual mappings. These include nurturing (water and roses) in example (22), sensory engagement (taste) in example (23), emotional responses (freezing and chirping) in examples (24) and (25), personification (windows and sun) in examples (27) and (14), deep longing (hunger for companionship) in example (5), intense passion (burning heart and face) in examples (8) and (26), and the beauty of natural

transitions in example (14). These elements enrich the emotional landscape of the narratives. The translator's choice to preserve these metaphors reflects a decision to emphasize universal emotions and experiences [51]. By maintaining the original imagery and conceptual mappings, the translation effectively conveys feelings of longing, passion, and sensory engagement. This approach enhances the emotional depth of the narrative [15]. It ensures that readers from different cultural backgrounds can connect with the underlying sentiments. This connection bridges the gap between languages, fostering a shared understanding of human experiences [5,6]. Consequently, these examples illustrate how literal translation can succeed in cross-linguistic metaphor translation when source and target languages share compatible conceptual frameworks.

The SMCDLI category in metaphor translation illustrates how shared conceptual mappings between Arabic and English are often expressed through varied lexical choices, requiring thoughtful adaptations to convey cultural resonance and emotional depth. In translating these expressions, the challenge lies in finding culturally resonant lexical choices that maintain the metaphor's impact without sounding forced in the TL. This process underscores the need for flexible, culturally attuned lexical choices to maintain the metaphor's intended impact in the TL, as suggested by scholars [6,15,18]. Examples of this category illustrate how translators navigate metaphorical differences while maintaining the intended impact for English readers. In example (28), the word "متدثِّر" (gently covered) has spiritual connotations in Arabic. The English translation "warmly wrapped" keeps the emotional meaning but removes the religious element. This approach reflects theories that emphasize cultural adaptations in metaphor translation [6,47]. In (29), the translator used "captivated" rather than "stole" to avoid negative connotations. The metaphor of emotional capture remains clear, and both cultures understand it similarly [5]. Example (30) translates the Arabic concept of "imprisonment" to "prey." The adapted version keeps the sense of helplessness while making it relatable to English readers [52]. Example (31) uses a simile to convey toughness, symbolized by stone. The translator preserves this meaning in English, adapting it to maintain both emotional depth and cultural familiarity. Example (32) uses "breeze" to evoke gentleness and gradual change in the ST. Though "breeze"

is omitted, the translation keeps the original meaning and creates a similar image for English readers [46]. Finally, example (33) compares emotional pain to physical pain. The English phrase "rending my heart" preserves the original metaphor and feels natural in English.

The DMCDLI category represents the most frequently occurring pattern, where metaphors in the source and target languages differ not only in linguistic expression but also in conceptual domains and mappings. In such cases, translators often adapt, alter, or omit the metaphor to preserve clarity and cultural resonance [6,46]. By modifying the metaphorical imagery, the translator aims to retain the emotional and conceptual force of the original while using expressions that are familiar and meaningful in the target culture, thereby enhancing reader comprehension and relevance [6,46]. For example, in example (34), the metaphor of "chewing" is rendered as "meddling" in English, as the literal image would be considered unnatural or confusing. This shift avoids misleading or culturally opaque metaphors by selecting a more accessible and contextually appropriate expression. Such strategies are especially necessary when a direct translation would result in obscure or awkward phrasing for the target audience [6,46].

In adapted metaphors, the translator adjusts the metaphor to maintain its conceptual impact and emotional tone while using expressions that resonate more naturally in the TL. For instance, in example (35), the Arabic term for "guillotine" is adapted to "gallows" in English, preserving the intensity of punishment while aligning with Western cultural associations [6,46]. Similarly, example (36) is rendered as "to lead a new sally against me," retaining the sense of significant change while avoiding political implications. This aligns with the argument that adaptation should maintain the metaphor's meaning but use terms that avoid misinterpretation [45]. Other examples of adaptation include example (37), where "these stories raised worlds in my imagination" is adapted as "these stories fed my mind," a phrase that better resonates with English readers and achieves similar intellectual connotations. Example (39) is rendered as "the look, which she flashed," and "يتمرَّغ في سعادة غامرة" translated as "rolling in pleasure." These adaptations help preserve the original metaphor's meaning and emotional resonance in a way that feels natural in English. Through these varied strategies, translators balance cultural nuance and emotion-

al depth, ensuring the metaphor's impact and clarity in translation.

In examples (40) and (41), the translator removes the metaphorical element as a literal translation would sound awkward or obscure in the TT. In example (40), the metaphor of "sleeping" is omitted, resulting in "the photos, which I had hidden in a drawer." This choice avoids an unusual image in English, aligning with suggestions that metaphors can be omitted when they seem awkward in the TL [6,46]. Similarly, in example (41) the metaphor "bare and exposed language" is omitted in favor of "this blatantly violent language," which preserves the intended tone of aggression and directness in a way that reads more naturally for English readers. This approach aligns with the view that metaphor omission can be appropriate when literal metaphors do not resonate culturally or stylistically in the TL [46].

It is also noted that some metaphors present in the ST are omitted in the TT. For example, in (42), the metaphor (تتعرى فيه مشاعري امامها "my emotions are laid bare before her") is not rendered in the translation. In (43), (رجل حرون a "stubborn man" or "a mule refusing to be led") is also omitted. Similarly, (44) (تحمل عيناه هلعاً "his eyes held panic") and (45) (ذاق طعم الود "he tasted the flavor of friendship") are missing in the TT. These omissions may reduce the expressive depth and cultural richness of the narrative, as metaphors play a crucial role in conveying emotional and cultural nuances [6,46]. However, the translator may have intentionally chosen to omit these expressions to maintain clarity, avoid culturally opaque imagery, or ensure a smoother reading experience for the target audience. Such choices demonstrate sensitivity to the stylistic and cultural expectations of the TL readership—an approach often recommended in metaphor translation when direct equivalence is unavailable or might confuse the reader [8,18,41].

In short, the findings of this study effectively address the main research question and its sub-questions, demonstrating that translators generally adhere to cognitive and linguistic approaches when rendering metaphors from Arabic into English. Using the MIP, the study systematically identified metaphorical expressions and classified them into structural, ontological, and orientational categories. The analysis revealed varying frequencies across these types, with the DMCDLI category occurring most frequently. Through detailed comparison of source and target texts, the study showed how conceptual mappings were preserved, adapted, altered, or omitted to align with the cultural and stylistic norms of the target language. Lexical choices were carefully examined, revealing that the translator employed a range of strategies—including preservation, adaptation, and omission—guided by the need to balance conceptual fidelity with readability. These findings align with existing theoretical models [6,15,46,47] and underscore the importance of culturally sensitive yet cognitively coherent metaphor translation.

6. Implications

6.1. Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to the theoretical development of translation studies, cognitive linguistics, and metaphor research by demonstrating how established frameworks—namely, the MIP and the CMT—can be applied to analyze metaphors in cross-linguistic literary contexts. Through a systematic examination of metaphorical expressions in a contemporary Arabic literary text and its English translation, the study deepens our understanding of how metaphor typologies—structural, ontological, and orientational—function across languages. It further refines the application of conceptual mappings in metaphor translation, providing insights into how metaphors are cognitively processed, culturally adapted, or structurally altered. This theoretical lens strengthens the foundation for analyzing metaphors beyond isolated examples, offering a replicable model for future metaphor studies in comparative literature and translation.

6.2. Practical Implications

The study offers several practical contributions to the field of translation, especially in the domain of literary and metaphor translation between Arabic and English. First, it provides translators with empirically supported strategies for dealing with culturally rich and metaphorically dense texts. These strategies are not only informed by cognitive linguistics and metaphor theory, but they are also tested against actual translation practices in published literary works. This makes the findings directly applicable to real-world translation challenges.

Second, the study serves as a training resource for prospective translators and students of translation. By showcasing how metaphorical expressions can be preserved,

adapted, altered, or omitted, the research provides illustrative examples that can be used in classroom settings and professional workshops to build competence in metaphor translation.

Third, translation institutions, agencies and publishing houses can benefit from the study's recommendations for handling figurative language in Arabic-to-English literary translation. These organizations can incorporate the findings into editorial guidelines and quality assurance protocols to ensure that the cultural and emotional depth of original texts is retained in translation, thus enhancing the overall literary value of the translated work.

Fourth, the study has practical value for cross-cultural communication stakeholders, such as international literary festivals, cultural diplomacy programs, and media organizations that work with multilingual content. By helping these entities better understand how metaphorical language shapes meaning, the study supports more nuanced and culturally informed content creation and interpretation.

Finally, the research benefits non-Arabic-speaking readers by promoting more faithful and emotionally resonant translations of Arabic literature. When metaphorical language is translated with cultural sensitivity and conceptual clarity, readers can engage more deeply with the text, enhancing their appreciation of Arabic culture, values, and literary aesthetics. This, in turn, contributes to the broader goals of cultural exchange and mutual understanding.

7. Conclusion

This study has explored the translation of metaphors from Arabic to English within a contemporary literary text, using the MIP and CMT frameworks. It has provided a structured approach to identifying, categorizing, and analyzing metaphorical expressions across languages. The findings highlight both the challenges and strategies involved in metaphor translation, particularly where conceptual mappings differ or require adaptation. The study offers both theoretical and practical insights—enhancing our understanding of metaphors in cross-linguistic contexts and informing translators on effective techniques for metaphor transfer. Overall, the research contributes to the refinement of metaphor typologies and opens pathways for future investigations into metaphors across different languages, genres, and translation contexts.

However, the study is limited by its focus on a single novel and its sole translation, which may not fully capture the broader range of metaphorical translation strategies across genres or authors. Furthermore, the evaluation of metaphor translation was based on a textual analysis without incorporating translator interviews or reader reception, which could provide further insight into translation decisions and interpretive impact. Future research could extend this work by examining metaphor translation in other Arabic literary texts, exploring how different translators might handle similar metaphors, or integrating empirical approaches such as interviews or reception studies. These directions would enhance the understanding of metaphor translation practices and contribute to more culturally and cognitively informed translation strategies.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Appendix A

Table A1. Similar Mapping Conditions, Similar Lexical Implementations.

No.	Target Text	Source Text
46.	…emerges from the womb of long cardamom	خرجت من رحم حبة هال طويلة
47.	…and wrapped it around the neck of the sky…	وتلفُّه على رقبة السماء
48.	… my own cold dying life with Mansur…	حياتي الباردة التي تحتضر مع منصور
49.	…my family pick me up…	التقطوني
50.	She snatched the receiver from my hand.	خطفت مني السماعة
51.	I fell asleep to the sound of music coming from the tape player. It descended on my ribs like a gentle waterfall, washing my body and taking me to a longer river, which stretched all the way up to white clouds.	غفوت على صوت الموسيقى وهي تهبط على اضلعي كشلال من الماء و تغسلني، تم تاخذني نحو نهر طويل يمتدُ ويعلو ليتشابك صعوداً مع غيم ابيض
52.	…my heart was burning.	كان قلبي يحترق
53.	Mansur is a cavern, having managed to escape the sun.	منصور مغارة هاربة من الشمس
54.	…roasting me, sinking a knife into my flesh, and peeling the skin off.	يقلَّبني على نار الشواء ويغرس السكين في لحمي ويسلخ جلدي
55.	His suspicions continued to blaze.	ظل شكه بي يستعر
56.	While Ibrahim continued to scream, breaking the silence of the night.	كان صراخ إبراهيم وأمي يقطع سكون الليل
57.	I just felt the darkness of his cloak falling upon me.	شعرت بظلام عباءة سوداء تهبط علي
58.	Ibrahim flew to the store, his heart trilling, his wings keeping him off the ground.	طار إبراهيم وقلبه يغرد و جناحاه يحملانه عن الأرض
59.	The word "mercy" dropped from mother's vocabulary.	سقطت مفردة الرحمة من قاموس أمي
60.	When I wake up, coffee receives me like the smiling face of a mother…	كلما استيقظت صباحاً، كانت القهوة تستقبلني، و تبتسم في صحوي مثل وجه أم
61.	…to drive away thoughts…	لأطرد فكرة
62.	…the last days of winter bid farewell…	الطقس يودّع اخر أيام شتائه
63.	The light breeze blew the fig leaves out of my heart.	طرحت نسائم الهواء على قلبي كل أوراق التوت
64.	In summer Riyadh turns into large oven.	في الصيف، تتحول الرياض إلى فرن كبير
65.	The smell of travel wafted by.	هبَّت رائحة السفر

Table A2. Similar Mapping Conditions, Different Lexical Implementations.

No.	Target Text	Source Text
66.	Cooling itself from the heat of the sun.	يستحمُ بعيدا عن لفح الشمس الساخنة
67.	Cloudlets bounced like happy soap bubbles.	تمرح الغيمات الصغيرة مثل فقاعات صابون تتقافز
68.	her children were her link to emancipation.	كانت جسرهم اليها (الحرية)
69.	….which looked like a very long, hard road	كانت الحروف المنقَّطة السوداء طريقاً طويلاً وشاقاً
70.	….sleep would throw sand into my eyes,..	النوم يرشُّ رمله في عيني
71.	… the seeds that planted in my chest…	زرعت القصص بذورها في صدري
72.	Writing gave me a cool, fortified cave…	صنعت لي مغارة باردة حصينة
73.	You are embers slumbering in my heart…	أنت جمر غاف في صدري
74.	My mind escaped my present jail.	هرب عقلي من سجن الغرفة

Table A2. *Cont.*

No.	Target Text	Source Text
75.	Mudhi's heart fell to the marble floor and broke into pieces.	سقط قلب موضي على ارض غرفتها الرخامية و تفتت إلى قطع زجاجية صغيرة
76.	Cloud of affection float over everyone.	غمائم من الحب تتوزع بينهم
77.	…the city glittered	الرياض تتزخرف
78.	His consideration touched my heart.	لمست عبارته الواثقة من نفسها و الحنونه قلبي
79.	His tenderness left, having fled to a secret relationship.	غابت رقة روحه. هربت في علاقة سرية اخري
80.	…locked up inside their wardrobes and kitchen pots…	(النساء) مسجونات في خزانات ثيابهن و قدور مطابخهن
81.	My writing won.	الكتابة انتصرت لي
82.	I could smell his mysterious women.	شممت رائحة نساء
83.	Your harness will be in my hand.	سيكون لجامك في يدي
84.	Fahad was a tame bird, not a predator.	كان طيراً أليفاً وليس جارحاً
85.	The ground had been cleaved between us so deeply…	انشقَّ بيني وبينها صدع أرضي
86.	A loud, fragmented scream rang.	انطلقت صرخة متقطِّعه
87.	The heart was simple an electric generator.	وما القلب إلا مُولّد كهربائي
88.	It was my custom to have the smell slip its fingers into my hair, caress my cheek, and tickle my toes upon waking.	رائحة القهوة التي اعتدتُ أن تدخل أصابعها في شعري في الصباح، و تربت على خدي، و تدغدغ برائحتها أصابع قدمي
89.	…was received only by the gloom that had settled on the house.	استقبلني حزنُ حلَّ بالبيت

Table A3. Different Mapping Conditions, Different Lexical Implementations.

No.	Target Text	Source Text
90.	Asphalt playing games with the light.	اسفلته يلاعب رشّه الناعم الخفيف
91.	…the story of my grandmother over a cup of coffee.	حكاية جدتي التي صنعها فنجان قهوة
92.	…her dreams would roam around her family's house	احلامها ظلت كل ليلة تسبح في بيتهم القديم
93.	…her face marked by smallpox	أكل وجهها بقايا الجدري
94.	…my breasts started to grow into two little buds…	نبت صدري
95.	In writing I found a different world…	صنعت لي الكتابة عالماً مشتركاً
96.	I cried now and then…	داهمتني نوبات بكاء
97.	…the night had veiled Heila's eyes…	طوّق الليل بعصابته عيني هيلة
98.	…pushed her toward a man fifteen years senior…	يدحرجونها نحو رجل اكبر منها
99.	…poverty-stricken widow…	تقتلها الحاجة والترمُّل
100.	…a peaceful silence settle over the office.	سبح المكتب في هدوء
101.	He stabbed his knife into the tender flesh between her legs.	قص بسكّينه لحمها اللدن الرقيق
102.	… whenever I felt bored.	كلما داهمني الملل
103.	…rows of teapots and coffee urns were stacked.	صُفَّت أباريق الشاي ودلال القهوة القديمة
104.	…my heart crackling.	شعرت بخشب قلبي يطقطق
105.	…faith helps to blot out the fear.	الإيمان يختصر علينا طريقاً طويلاً
106.	Men create homes for women to imprison them.	البيوت خلقت للنساء، قضبانها حدودهن

Table A3. *Cont.*

No.	Target Text	Source Text
107.	Men can sit at the head of life's dining table and eat a whole cake without a single prick of conscience.	الرجال يجلسون إلى طاولة الحياة ويأكلون كعكتها كاملة من دون ان يشعروا بوخزة ضمير واحدة
108.	The world that fed my mind…	العوالم التي تغذّيت بها
109.	Ibrahim was overjoyed.	سبح إبراهيم في سعادة
110.	Then I stopped writing.	غبت عن الكتابة
111.	I locked up everything I wrote.	أنقش كل ما اكتب في قلبه (الايميل الاكتروني) ثم اغلقه
112.	I was delighted.	طار قلبي فرحاً!
113.	They were intimately engaged in a conversation.	كان غارقاً معها في حوار حميم
114.	My mother continued her attempt to curb me.	تعوَّدت أمي على لجم نفوري
115.	After winning the morsel of love from my mother's mouth, he flew away.	فهد هو الطير الذي فاز بجبنة الحب الوحيدة في فم أمي تم طار
116.	I felt distressed.	انقبض قلبي
117.	Open the door, animal.	افتحي يا كلبة
118.	I stiffened.	شلني الخوف
119.	…the silence around me.	الصمت يبتلع المكان
120.	March is rarely forgotten by the rain.	شهر مارس هو الشهر الذي يواعده المطر ولا ينساه
121.	To reach the moisture, the sun must slip its fingers right under the dewy surfaces.	تمد الشمس أصابعها تحت جلد الرمل حتى تدرك رطوبة الماء
122.	Painful sensations hard to identify coursed through my body.	وجع يتنقل في جسمى ولا أقدر على تحديد مكانه

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