

Domestication and Foreignization in Translating Children's Literature: An Analysis of Alhaffar's Arabic Translation of Grimm's *Snow White*

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

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This study examines the translation strategies used by Alhaffar (2016) in rendering Culture-Specific Items (CSIs) and ideological elements in the Brothers Grimm's *Snow White* (2014) into Arabic. Drawing on Venuti's (1995) domestication and foreignization framework and Aixelá's (1996) taxonomy of translation procedures, the study analyzes nine selected excerpts. The findings reveal a systematic translation approach that domesticates cultural, religious, and material references to align with Arab social norms and Islamic values while retaining selected foreign elements, such as taboo food items and the loan translation *بياض الثلج*. The study concludes that translating for Arab children involves ideological filtering and cultural adaptation while preserving aspects of the source text's cultural identity.

التوطين والتغريب في ترجمة أدب الطفل: تحليل ترجمة الحفار العربية لقصة بياض الثلج للأخوين جريم

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الملخص

الكلمات المفتاحية:
أدب الطفل، التغريب، التوطين
العناصر الثقافية، بياض الثلج

تناول هذه الدراسة الاستراتيجيات الترجمة التي اعتمدها الحفار (2016) في نقل العناصر الخاصة بالثقافة والأبعاد الأيديولوجية في حكاية *بياض الثلج* للأخوين جريم (2014) إلى العربية. واستناداً إلى مفهومي التوطين والتغريب لدى فينوتي (1995) وتصنيف أكسيلا (1996) لإستراتيجيات الترجمة، تحلل الدراسة تسعة أمثلة مختارة. وتكشف النتائج عن منهج ترجمة منظم يعتمد على توطين العناصر الثقافية والدينية والمادية بما يتوافق مع القيم الإسلامية والأعراف الاجتماعية العربية، مع الإبقاء في الوقت نفسه على بعض العناصر الأجنبية، مثل الأطعمة المحرمة والترجمة الاقتراضية لاسم *بياض الثلج*. وتخلص الدراسة إلى أن ترجمة أدب الأطفال إلى العربية تمثل عملية من التصفية الأيديولوجية والتكييف الثقافي، مع الحفاظ على جوانب من الهوية الثقافية للنص الأصلي.



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Introduction

Translation Studies is the field of study that deals with the theory, description, and application of translation. Because it examines translation not only as interlingual transfer but also as intercultural communication, it can also be described as an interdisciplinary which touches on other diverse fields of knowledge, including comparative literature, cultural studies, gender studies, computer science, history, linguistics, philosophy, rhetoric, and semiotics. Since the topic discussed here is categorised as a literary text, it is a highly cultural one and, therefore, cultural differences arise. Children's literature or juvenile literature includes stories, books, magazines, and poems that children read and enjoy. Modern children's literature is classified in two different ways: genre or the intended age of the reader. Children's literature can be traced to stories and songs, part of a wider oral tradition that adults shared with children before publishing existed. The development of early children's literature, before printing was invented, is difficult to trace. Even after printing became widespread, many classic children's tales were originally created for adults and later adapted for a younger audience. Since the fifteenth century much literature has been aimed specifically at children, often with moral or religious messages. The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are known as the 'Golden Age of Children's Literature' because many classic children's books were and still are published, (Demers, 2015).

The global circulation of the Brothers Grimm's nineteenth-century folklore stands as a monumental phenomenon in comparative literature. Among these, *Snow White* has achieved permanent status within the international children's literary canon. However, as these folk narratives cross geopolitical and linguistic borders, their survival relies heavily on translation. When transferring European folk heritage into the Arab-Islamic world, translators do not merely exchange words. Instead, they need completely to negotiate deep-seated cultural disparities, conflicting religious worldviews, and divergent ideological values.

Within the framework of Even-Zohar's (1990) polysystem theory, children's literature occupies a highly scrutinized, peripheral position, meaning it is subject to intense socio-educational regulation. In the Arab world, texts targeting young readers are fundamentally didactic; they are expected to foster linguistic purity, teach moral etiquette, and uphold theological values. Consequently, when Western source texts (ST) contain "Culture-Specific

Items" (CSIs) such as unfamiliar foods, historical clothing, or taboo elements; translators must actively manipulate the text to prevent cultural alienation. While foundational scholars like Shavit (1986) and Venuti (1995) outline the macro-societal pressures driving texts toward target-norm domestication, recent scholarship highlights the precise micro-linguistic tools used to achieve this cultural alignment. Notably, Zagood (2026) states that translators frequently employ euphemistic modifications and semantic mitigation to soften sensitive, taboo, or harsh realities, ensuring the text remains safe and appropriate for young audiences without losing its storytelling power.

This study addresses a significant research gap: while previous studies look at the cultural adaptation of Western fairytales into Arabic on a surface level, few have examined the exact intersection of ideological domestication, somatic metaphor shifts, and euphemistic interventions in modern Arabic editions of the Brothers Grimm's *fairy tales*, specifically *Snow White*.

To address this gap, this study explores the following research questions:

- 1.To what extent does the Arabic translation of *Snow White* lean toward Venuti's (1995) macro-strategies of domestication or foreignization?
- 2.What specific micro-linguistic strategies does Alhaffar (2016) employ to navigate socio-religious taboos and unfamiliar cultural realities?
- 3.How do these choices reflect the ideological, educational, and ethical expectations governing the contemporary Arabic children's literature?

By analysing nine purposively selected text fragments, this study demonstrates how a classic Western fairytale is systematically reshaped to serve as a functional, culturally approved, and morally didactic narrative for the modern Arab child. The study analyses the culture specific items in Grimm's *Snow White*, which were written originally by Grimm Brothers in 1812 in a collection that is known in English as *Grimm's Fairy Tales*. The collection was published in two volumes: in 1812 and in 1815. The tales were originally written in German and translated into English by Jack Zipes (2014) who translated '*The Complete Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm*'. Zipes (2014) mentioned that fairy tales serve a vital cultural purpose beyond mere escapism or emotional comfort; the most profound stories construct alternative realities that expose the contradictions, deceptions, and hidden injustices of our actual world. The tales were then translated into Arabic by Alhaffar (2016) who is considered one of the well-known and experienced translators and has received numerous awards for his works. Therefore, the empirical corpus of

this investigation comprises selected text fragments from the classic European fairy tale *Snow White*, utilizing Jack Zipes' (2014) English translation as the source text and Alhaffar's (2016) edition as the target text.

Literature Review

The translation of children's literature occupies a unique, highly constrained space within the global children's literature. Historically, children's texts were treated as peripheral, assuming their linguistic transfer was a straightforward, mechanical process. However, pioneering polysystem theorists such as Shavit (1986) fundamentally reframed this view, demonstrating that children's literature is governed by a strict matrix of societal, educational, and ideological constraints. Unlike literature written for adults, translated texts for children are rarely evaluated solely on semantic accuracy. Instead, they are subjected to systemic 'pedagogical filtering' to ensure compliance with the target culture's prevailing models of childhood, education, and moral socialization.

Consequently, translators of children's literature routinely operate as ideological gatekeepers, navigating a persistent tension between text-historical authenticity and socio-pedagogical acceptability. This tension is best understood through Venuti's (1995) dual axis of domestication and foreignization. In children's publishing, the pressure to domesticate, i.e. to smooth away alien cultural codes, neutralize historical anomalies, and realign sensitive materials is exceptionally intense. When a target culture exhibits a heightened degree of 'hyper-cultural sensitivity', as is frequently the case within the Arab-Islamic literary tradition, translators actively employ manipulative strategies to preempt intercultural conflict or moral misalignment.

To operationalize these shifts, translation studies frequently rely on Aixelá's (1996) typology of Culture-Specific Items (CSIs). Aixelá captures how specific localized realities (such as unfamiliar dietary customs, social habits, or religious systems) create friction during intercultural transmission. Within the context of translating Western folklore, such as the Brothers Grimm's fairytales, into Arabic; these CSIs serve as the primary site of systemic text manipulation. Rather than preserving source-text alterity, translators consistently choose between conservation (e.g., orthographic adaptation or calquing) and substitution (e.g., omission, mitigation, or autonomous expansion) to align the narrative world with target expectations.

A crucial micro-linguistic strategy underpinning this domesticating paradigm is examined in Zagood's (2026) seminal article, "*Euphemism in Translating Children's Literature: A Critical Analysis of the Arabic Translation of Twain's 'The Prince and the Pauper'*," published in the *International Journal of Arabic-English Studies (IJAES)*.

Zagood (2026) establishes that euphemism serves as a deliberate, protective tool used by translators to soften offensive, harsh, or taboo expressions in a source text, directly enhancing its cultural acceptability for young readers. While Zagood's (2026) empirical focus centres on the Arabic translation of Mark Twain's *The Prince and the Pauper*, his theoretical insights provide an invaluable framework for analysing European fairytales. Zagood (2026) argues that the systemic application of euphemistic modifications and semantic shifts does not diminish the original message; instead, it successfully generates a linguistically and culturally adapted target text that fits the pedagogical expectations of the target community.

By merging Aixelá's (1996) CSI framework with Zagood's (2026) conceptualization of euphemistic intervention, it becomes clear that translating Western folklore into Arabic involves more than just swapping out words. It functions as an active site of ideological transmission, where taboo substances, sensitive religious references, and foreign societal values are systematically recalibrated or linguistically cushioned to protect the child reader while preserving the core, universal appeal of the classic fairy tale narrative. Children's books are generally short, they tend to have dialogues and incidents, optimistic rather than depressive, language is child oriented, plots are of distinctive order and one could go endlessly talking of magic, and fantasy, and simplicity, and adventure. Defining 'children's literature' has always been a difficult task. When it comes to translating children's literature, a common problem is that some of the cultural elements in the source text are not understood by the target audience (Asghari and Salmani, 2016).

The problem intensifies if the translator or the reader lacks the knowledge needed to understand those elements or the limitations according to the norms and values regarding the target text culture. To solve such problems, translators tend to either domesticate or foreignize. Domestication tends to relate texts to target linguistic and cultural values, and anything can be domesticated: names, settings, genres, events, cultural rites, religious rites and

beliefs; while foreignization tends to preserve significant traces of the source text (Venuti, 1995).

In their study, Sabermahani and Ghazizade (2017) stated the procedures that translators use to translate culture-specific items in children's literature. For instance, they referred to Klingberg (1986) who proposed nine procedures for translating culture-specific items, such as; added explanation, rewording, deletion and simplification. Newmark (1988) also introduced some procedures, such as; transference, cultural equivalent, naturalization and paraphrasing along with Hervey and Higgins (1992) who proposed five procedures for dealing with cultural transposition. It was also mentioned that Aixela (1996) proposed eleven procedures for translating culture-specific items that are divided into two categories. In addition to those scholars who focused on procedures, Fernandes (2006) investigated the translation of names in children's fantasy literature and focused on the types of meaning conveyed by such names.

The translation of culture specific items has been widely investigated in recent studies. For example, Mouzughy (2025) investigated the complexities of eco-translation in children's literature focusing on the translation of English environmental narratives into Arabic. Mouzughy (2025) used a qualitative comparative analysis of five translated stories examining the linguistic, cultural, and pedagogical obstacles inherent in the transmission of ecological themes to young Arabic audiences. Her study underscores the significant role of translation in cultivating environmental awareness while accommodating the specific challenges of cross-cultural communication in children's literature.

Similarly, Zagood (2023) investigated the translation of culture-specific items (CSIs) in Jamal Al Shehhi's *أنا والعَم سام* / *Ana wa Al-Am Sam* and its target text, *Uncle Sam & Myself*, translated by Renaissance Translation and Businessmen Services. Grounding the comparative analysis on Newmark's (1988) taxonomy of cultural categories and translation procedures, the author observed frequent semantic breakdowns. Zagood (2023) attributed these inaccuracies to the vast socio-cultural divergence between Arabic and English, the translation agency's failure to capture localized Emirati idiomatic expressions, and a systemic overreliance on structural literal translation. In an investigation into the cross-cultural representation of Arab identity in Western literary spheres, Aldawood (2017) evaluated the translation of

culture-specific items (CSIs) in Yousef Al-Mohaimed's Saudi novel *فخاخ الرائحة* translated by Anthony Calderbank as *Wolves of the Crescent Moon*. By conducting a comparative analysis of selected cultural markers, the study challenged the assumption that English translations inherently reinforce Orientalist stereotypes through domesticating manipulation. Instead, Aldawood (2017) demonstrated a clear systemic preference for foreignization, characterized by the extensive use of literal translation and transliteration. Furthermore, the study highlighted the strategic implementation of an explanatory glossary, which allowed the translator to preserve the source culture's distinct identity while providing the target reader with necessary socio-cultural access.

The previously mentioned studies have dealt with the translations of culture specific items and whether the function has been conveyed or not. It is clear how the previous different results showed a partial success of translators in the translations of the cultural items and how difficult it is and sometimes impossible to find equivalents in the target language. The current study investigates the same field but adopting a different corpus, as it studies the cultural specific items in the translation of one of *Grimm's fairy tales* collection, namely *Snow White*.

Research Methodology

To investigate the linguistic and cultural shifts occurring in the Arabic translation of Grimm's *Snow White*, this study adopts a hybrid theoretical approach anchored in Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS). The primary analytical macro-framework is derived from Venuti's (1995) concepts of domestication and foreignization. To operationalize these macro-strategies at the micro-linguistic level, this study applies Aixelá's (1996) framework for the translation of Culture-Specific Items (CSIs), tracking conservation strategies such as literal translation or calque, alongside substitution strategies including neutralization, situational equivalence, omission, and autonomous expansion. Additionally, Luc van Doorslaer's (2007) typology is utilized to analyse shifts in material culture and interpersonal scripts, ensuring a holistic evaluation of how the target text (TT) functions within the broader socio-educational traditions of the Arab world.

The source text (ST) corpus consists of the Grimm's *fairy tale*, *Snow White*, which mirrors the nineteenth-century narrative structure and cultural markers

of the original folk tales, while the target text (TT) corpus is comprised of Alhaffar's (2016) translation which is a widely circulated, authoritative modern Arabic print edition designed for young readers. A qualitative, purposive sampling method was utilized to compile the research data, extracting specific excerpts based on the dense presence of CSIs, ideological statements, religious idioms, or instances of significant narratives. A total of nine representative examples were selected for close comparative analysis, distributed across four critical analytical categories: onomastics and material culture, socio-cultural scripts, ideological and didactic interventions, and theological or taboo mediation. The selected data underwent a rigorous comparative analysis to reveal the underlying translation norms. They were firstly aligned, i.e. the nine ST segments were placed side-by-side with their corresponding Arabic versions and subjected to deep comparison to ensure absolute analytical precision.

Commentary and Qualitative Data Analysis

A purposive sampling of the Arabic translation of the Brothers Grimm's collection titled Grimm's *Fairy Tales* yielded nine dense examples of Culture-Specific Items (CSIs) extracted directly from the tale of *Snow White* (Pp. 299–310). The following textual analysis examines these excerpts comparatively, mapping how specific linguistic shifts, theological adaptations, and euphemistic interventions reconcile European folkloric elements with the didactic and moral norms of the target Arab young readers.

Example One:

ST: Snow white.

TT: بياض الثلج

Commentary: The Arabic translation بياض الثلج uses a literal calque strategy that achieves complete linguistic naturalization within the target culture. By avoiding a foreignizing transliteration and using a classical Arabic genitive construction (إضافة), the translator preserves the original symbolic imagery of purity while making the name phonetically pleasant and instantly recognizable to young Arab readers.

Example Two:

ST: Just at that moment, a young wild boar came running by, so he caught and killed it, and taking out its lungs and liver, he brought it to the Queen for a token.

TT: "وعندما مر أمامه خنوص صغير يتفافز، اصطاده و طعنه و أخذ كبده و رثيته للملكة كدليل على تنفيذ المهمة."

Commentary: The translator uses precise, classical Arabic to render the young wild boar as خنوص صغير and employs a foreignizing approach to maintain the cultural setting, rejecting the substitution of the taboo animal. Through dynamic verb choices and the explicit translation of "token" as "proof of the execution of the mission," the text is adapted for a young audience with increased dramatic, storytelling flair.

Example Three:

ST: Snow-white, being very hungry and thirsty, ate from each plate a little porridge and bread, and drank out of each little cup a drop of wine.

TT: "كانت (بياض الثلج) تشعر بجوع وعطش شديدين فأكلت من كل صحن صغير قليلا من الخضار المطبوخة والخبز و شربت من كل قدح صغير قطرات من النبيذ، إذ أنها لم تبغ أكل حصة أحدهم كلها."

Commentary: The Arabic translation balances cultural adaptation, semantic retention, and pedagogical intervention by strategically blending domestication and foreignization. It features a domesticating cultural substitution by changing the unfamiliar "porridge" into "الخضار المطبوخة" (cooked vegetables) to reduce cognitive friction for young readers. Conversely, it employs a foreignizing approach by retaining the taboo element "wine" ("النبيذ"), preserving the text's historical European authenticity instead of censoring it. Finally, the translator introduces an unprompted ideological expansion ("إذ أنها لم تبغ أكل حصة أحدهم كلها"), transforming Snow White's survival instinct into a lesson in empathy and manners, which satisfies the highly didactic and moralistic norms inherent in Arabic children's literature.

Example Four:

ST: After that she felt so tired that she lay down on one of the beds, but it did not seem to suit her; one was too long, another too short, but at last the seventh was quite right; and so she lay down upon it, committed herself to heaven.

TT: "وبعد ذلك، ولأنها كانت مرهقة من المشي عبر الغابة، استلقت في أحد الأسرة، ولكن لم يلائمها أي منها، فإما أن يكون قصيرا جدا أو طويلا جدا، إلى أن وجدت السابع ملائما فبقيت فيه، وصلت إلى ربها ونامت."

Commentary: The Arabic translation utilizes strategic expansion and cultural adaptation to bridge narrative gaps and align the text with Islamic cultural norms. First, the translator introduces an explicative addition, من المشي عبر الغابة (from walking through the forest) to provide logical continuity for a child audience, clarifying the root cause of Snow White's exhaustion. Second, and most significantly, the translator applies a domesticating substitution to the

culture-specific, religious idiom "committed herself to heaven," rendering it as *وصلت إلى ربها* (and she prayed to her Lord). This substitution replaces a vague, Eurocentric or Christian-aligned spiritual phrasing with a concrete Islamic practice (*صلاة* / supplication), transforming a passive act of surrender into an active, relatable moral behaviour. Through these shifts, the target text reinforces the didactic imperatives of Arabic children's literature, normalizing the protagonist's actions within the target culture's religious and behavioural expectations.

Example Five:

ST: Then the dwarfs said, "If you will keep our house for us, and cook, and wash, and make the beds, and sew *and knit*, and keep everything tidy and clean, you may stay with us, and you shall lack nothing. "With all my heart," said Snow-white.

TT: "فقال أحد الأقزام: ((إذا دبرت شؤون بيتنا من طبخ وغسيل وترتيب أسرة وحافظت على نظافة كل شيء، يمكنك البقاء عندنا، ولن ينقصك شيء)). فأجابتهم (ببياض الثلج): ((بكل سرور))، وبقيت عندهم مشرفة على تدبير شؤون البيت و نظامه."

Commentary: The Arabic translation adapts the text by omitting specific, old-fashioned tasks like sewing and knitting, replacing them with broader phrases focused on general household management. It also adds a closing detail to confirm that Snow White fulfils her responsibilities, aligning with a focus on duty and practical action in Arab children's literature.

Example Six:

ST: "What a figure you are child!" said the old woman, "come and let me lace you properly for once."

TT: "فقالت لها العجوز: ((ما هذا المنظر يا ابنتي! دعيني أربطه لك بشكل صحيح))."

Commentary: The Arabic translation employs domesticating neutralization to increase accessibility for young readers, replacing the generic 'child' with the intimate *يا ابنتي* (my daughter) to align with Arab familial norms. Furthermore, the European concept of "lace you" is simplified to the neutral *أربطه* (tie it), removing historical barriers and ensuring a smooth narrative flow.

Example Seven:

ST: When the dwarfs heard what had happened, they said, "The old peddler woman was no other than the wicked Queen; you must beware of letting anyone in when we are not here!"

TT: "وعندما سمع الأقزام منها ماجرى، قالوا لها: ((البائعة الجواله العجوز لم تكن سوى الملكة الزنديقية، فاحترسي ولا تدعي أحدا يدخل الدار في أثناء غيابنا))."

Commentary: The Arabic translation balances domestication and ideological intensification to maximize the story's moral clarity for young readers. While the narrative framework undergoes a domesticating syntactic smoothing, evidenced by adding the clarification pronouns منها (from her) and لها (to her) to optimize target-language readability—the rendering of ‘wicked’ as الزنديقية (the heretical/godless) represents a powerful ideological domestication. Instead of utilizing a neutral equivalent for wicked (like الشريرة), the translator chooses a religiously charged term that anchors the antagonist's evil within the theological framework of the target culture. This deliberate cultural adaptation heightens the absolute binary between good and evil, successfully fulfilling the rigid didactic and moralistic expectations governing Arabic children's literature.

Example Eight:

ST: When she heard that she was so struck with surprise that all the blood left her heart, for she knew that Snow-white must still be living.

TT: عندما سمعت الملكة ذلك اندفع دمها كله نحو قلبها في حالة زعر شديد، فقد تأكد لها أن (بياض الثلج) قد استعادت الحياة."

Commentary: The Arabic translation employs physiological domestication and semantic shift to heighten the emotional and dramatic impact for the target audience. In the source text, terror is expressed through the idiomatic European concept of blood *leaving* the heart (all the blood left her heart), causing deathly paleness. The translator reverses this physiological phenomenon, rendering it as اندفع دمها كله نحو قلبها (all her blood rushed toward her heart), which matches the target culture's physiological perception of a sudden shock causing a racing, pounding heart. Additionally, the translator adds the explicit affective phrase في حالة زعر شديد (in a state of severe terror), an explicatory expansion that ensures young readers fully comprehend the Queen's psychological state. Finally, ‘still be living’ is translated as استعادت الحياة (regained life), a semantic adaptation that dramatically sharpens the narrative stakes by framing Snow White's survival as a miraculous resurrection rather than a mere continuation of life.

Example Nine:

ST: The old woman, however, nodded her head, and said, “Ah, my dear children, how come you here? You must come indoors and stay with me, you will be no trouble.”

TT: "أما العجوز فهزت رأسها بمئة ويسرى وقالت: ((ياسلام، أيها الطفلان العزيزان، من أوصلكما إلى هنا؟ تفضلا وابقيا في ضيافتي، ولن يمسكما أي سوء))."

Commentary: The Arabic translation utilizes strategic ideological domestication and cultural adaptation to align the text with Arab social values and linguistic norms. First, the translator adapts the cultural script of hospitality [Venuti]. The English phrase "you will be no trouble" focuses on the host's convenience. The translator reverses this perspective into a pledge of safety, rendering it as *ولن يمسكما أي سوء* (no harm shall touch you). This shift invokes the traditional Arab cultural imperative of *ضيافة* (hospitality), where a host is morally obligated to guarantee the absolute protection and sanctuary of their guests. Second, the text employs a domesticating shift in interpersonal dialogue.

The spontaneous exclamation 'Ah' is translated into the highly expressive, culturally resonant Arabic expression *ياسلام*. Similarly, the phrase "stay with me" is elevated to the formal, honourable domain of host-guest relations as *ابقيا في ضيافتي* (stay in my hospitality), removing the casual nature of the original invitation. Finally, the translator applies explicatory expansion by turning "how come you here?" into *من أوصلكما إلى هنا؟* (who brought/guided you here?). This phrasing subtly fits the magical, deterministic world of Arabic folk narratives, replacing a pragmatic inquiry about travel with a question that implies a hidden guiding force behind the children's arrival.

Discussion of the Findings

The empirical evidence obtained from the nine textual excerpts of the Arabic translation of the Brothers Grimm's *Snow White* reveals a highly systematic, non-arbitrary translation methodology. Rather than adhering to a single, monolithic translation axis, the translator moves dynamically across a spectrum. They balance domestication and foreignization (Venuti, 1995) to satisfy the rigid linguistic, ideological, and pedagogical expectations that govern the Arabic children's literature.

The empirical evidence reveals that the Arabic translation of the Brothers Grimm's *Snow White* dynamically balances domestication and foreignization to satisfy the linguistic, ideological, and pedagogical expectations of the Arabic children's literary polysystem. To minimize cognitive friction for young Arab readers, the text undergoes meticulous onomastic and cultural domestication. This is achieved by rendering the protagonist's name into classical Arabic using a literal loan translation structured as a genitive construction (*بياض الثلج*, إضافة), which preserves the core symbolic imagery of purity while ensuring phonetic naturalization. Furthermore, the translator

employs situational equivalence and neutralization to alter foreign material culture, substituting the unfamiliar European food staple "porridge" with *الخضار المطبوخة* (cooked vegetables) and simplifying the historical practice of tightening a corset ("lace you properly") into the universally understood physical action *أربطه* (tie it). This domesticating impulse extends to abstract cultural metaphors through a physiological reversal; the Western idiom "all the blood left her heart" is rendered as *اندفع دمها كله نحو قلبها* (all her blood rushed toward her heart), perfectly matching the target culture's somatic perception of sudden shock while ensuring emotional clarity.

Concurrently, the translation operates as a vehicle for pedagogical filtering and moral socialization, actively reinforcing target ethical standards, filial respect, and Islamic values through explicit textual additions and ideological realignment. The translator introduces unprompted explicatory expansions, such as appending the clause... *إذ أنها لم تبغ أكل حصة أحدهم كلها* (...as she did not wish to eat the entirety of anyone's share) to transform Snow White's survival instinct into a conscious lesson in empathy and respect for property. Similarly, the text handles interpersonal dynamics by transforming the generic vocative 'child' into the emotionally intimate *يا ابنتي* (my daughter) to match traditional Arab familial address norms. Where the source text relies on abstract or secular Western concepts, the translation enforces theological domestication and moral polarization. It alters the passive spiritual sentiment "committed herself to heaven" into the active Islamic practice *صلت إلى ربها ونامت* (she prayed to her Lord and slept), and intensifies the narrative's moral binary by rendering the generic adjective "wicked Queen" as *الملكة الزنديقية* (the heretical/godless Queen), elevating a fairy-tale flaw into absolute spiritual deviance.

Despite these dominant domesticating forces, the translation strategically employs foreignization to preserve the narrative alterity of the European folk tale, carefully managing socio-religious taboos and structural adjustments to prevent linguistic alienation. The translator deliberately resists censoring sensitive materials that conflict with Islamic dietary laws, accurately maintaining the 'young wild boar' as *خنوص صغير* and the reference to 'wine' as *النبيذ*. Rather than substituting or purging these taboo elements, the translator relies on precise classical vocabulary and volumetric cushioning, noting that *Snow White* consumed only drops (*قطرات*), to maintain historical authenticity. Finally, the narrative is structurally optimized and dramatically heightened through minor semantic shifts and explicative smoothing. The insertion of clarifying structural connectors and the translation of 'still be living' into *استعادت الحياة* (regained life) dramatically reframe the protagonist's survival as a

high-stakes, miraculous resurrection. This hybrid methodology ultimately demonstrates how a classic Western fairytale is systematically reshaped to function as a culturally approved and morally didactic tool for the target Arab readership without sacrificing its global storytelling magic.

Conclusion

The Arabic translation of the Brothers Grimm's *Snow White* is an intricate act of cultural, linguistic, and ideological mediation. Rather than operating as a passive linguistic transfer, the target text functions as an active site of renegotiation, where the text is reshaped to meet the needs of a new audience. The empirical data demonstrates that the translator systematically domesticates localized dietary habits, historical material artifacts, somatic metaphors, and spiritual expressions. These systematic modifications directly serve the educational, moral, and Islamic traditions that regulate the contemporary Arab children's literary polysystem. By embedding these target-culture parameters directly into the narrative fabric, the translation transforms a nineteenth-century European text into a highly localized, didactic instrument designed to instil social responsibility, civic empathy, and theological alignment in young Arab readers.

Simultaneously, the text rejects absolute over-domestication by maintaining a highly calibrated relationship with source-text alterity. By intentionally keeping specific foreign markers intact, such as the onomastic calque *بياض الثلج* and religiously sensitive elements like wine and wild boars, the translation preserves the narrative's exotic allure as a classic European folk tale. Crucially, as observed through the lens of recent scholarship by Zagood (2026), these foreignized taboos are never left unmediated. Instead, they are masterfully cushioned through micro-linguistic euphemisms, volumetric reductions, and narrative framing. This ensures that the foreign elements register as historical or geographic placeholders rather than moral disruptions.

Ultimately, this hybrid methodology establishes a dual-functioning model for children's literature translation. By blending Franco Aixelá's (1996) culture-specific adaptations with Zagood's (2026) principles of protective mitigation, the translator creates a text that functions seamlessly within regional ideological boundaries while keeping its captivating, global fairy-tale magic intact. This study proves that for a translation to succeed in a highly sensitive

literary polysystem, the translator must act not merely as a decoder of words, but as an active cultural architect.

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