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| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Reclaiming Indigeneity: A Postcolonial Analysis of Emile Habibi's The Pessoptimist in Translation

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| ABSTRACT

This study investigates the linguistic and cultural markers of indigeneity in Emile Habibi's The Secret Life of Saeed: The Pessoptimist, a novel translated into more than 12 languages and gaining worldwide recognition. In spite of this recognition, the translation of this indigenous chef-d'oeuvre does not seem to mirror its deep-seated connection to its linguistic and cultural origin. The study, therefore, highlights a gap in the literature that Jayyusi and Le Gassick's English translation of The Pessoptimist has not been verified for its preservation or dilution of the original's essence of indigeneity. This study utilizes a qualitative textual analysis methodology premised on postcolonial translation studies to examine the novel's linguistic and cultural indigenous markers. It then looks into the translation of those markers, only to realize that the indigenous novel has been metamorphosed into a mere narrative overshadowed by the dominant culture. This deformation has not only diluted the novel's indigenous essence but also created gaps in understanding the work's cultural specificity and identity. By highlighting specific instances of such distortions, the study emphasizes the amount of loss incurred in such conventional translation practices. By presenting critical insights into the challenges facing the translation of indigenous literature, this study not only contributes to the broader field of translation studies but also calls for a retranslation of The Pessoptimist, one that aligns with its true indigenous origin.

| KEYWORDS

Indigeneity, postcolonial translation, cultural identity, domestication, foreignization, The Pessoptimist,

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1. Introduction

It is no secret that the translation of indigenous literature is intricately linked to politics (Priyadarshini, 2023; Spivak, 2012; Turner, 2020). This is often evident in the prioritization of target language accessibility over maintaining the indigeneity of the original text (Liddicoat, 2016; Makhecha, 2012; Simon & Von Flotow 1997; Venuti, 1995). Emile Habibi's *The Secret Life of Saeed: The Pessoptimist*, (hereafter *The Pessoptimist*), acclaimed as one of the greatest Arab novels of the 20th century, seems to be a prime example of this dilemma. Deeply-seated in the land and its people, *The Pessoptimist* offers a profound exploration of the Palestinian identity intertwined with themes of anguish and resistance (Alkhadra et al., 2023; Assi, 2024; Ouyang, 2012). The recurrent utilization of such linguistic and cultural features as *jināS* (paronomasia), *al-saj'* (assonance), archaisms, fuṣḥā and ʿāmmiyya (diglossia), and rhetorical oaths, among others, *The Pessoptimist* indicates that these are not merely aesthetic luxuries, instead, they are inextricably linked to the land and identity, weaving a narrative of resistance against colonial and hegemonic powers.

However, reading through the English translation of *The Pessoptimist* by Jayyusi and Trevor Le Gassick, I cannot help but notice that the novel's distinctive features of indigeneity were often simplified. The erosion of the novel's linguistic and cultural distinctiveness can be linked to the ongoing genocide and ethnic cleansing in the Holy Land today. Therefore, revisiting Habibi's work is more relevant than ever, as it offers a vantage point on Palestinian life and resistance in the face of contemporary atrocities. In light of this, this study explores two main questions:

a) What are the linguistic and cultural markers of *The Pessoptimist* that reflect its rootedness in indigeneity and its connection to Palestinian identity?
b) Has Jayyusi and Trevor Le Gassick's translation of *The Pessoptimist* preserved or altered these markers?

This study examines the key translation decisions made by Jayyusi and Le Gassick in relation to the novel's critical features of indigeneity and identity, illustrating how they were oversimplified or erased entirely in the English version. This critique of the translation of *The Pessoptimist* highlights the discrepancies between the original text and its translation, resulting in the erasure of marginalized voices and the silencing of the narratives of resistance against colonial oppression (Baer et al., 2012; Baffoe et al., 2014; Castillo Bernal & Estévez Grossi, 2022). This ongoing practice in translation resonates with the harsh realities of today's world where minority voices are silenced and people's lives and dreams are annihilated in plain sight.

Overall, this paper emphasizes the ethical responsibility of translators to preserve the authenticity of indigenous narratives. While translation can connect cultures, it can also dilute or assimilate the very essence of the source text (Baker, 2018; Cronin, 2006; Munday, 2016; Pym, 2023; Venuti, 1995). Critiquing the amount of domestication that *The Pessoptimist* has undergone, this paper calls for a retranslation of the novel ensuring that its linguistic and cultural richness restored. This retranslation enterprise aims to amplify, not erase, indigenous voices, highlighting that this chef-d'oeuvre should remain true to its roots and relevant to future generations.

2. Literature review

The translation of indigenous literature has become a crucial focal point in literary and cultural studies, primarily because of its role in either upholding or undermining the cultural identity of marginalized communities (Brisset et al., 2020; Hedge Coke & Swan, 2004; Makhecha, 2012; Roig-Sanz & Meylaerts, 2018). Key scholars such as Bassnett and Lefevere (2012), Niranjana (1992), Spivak (1993), Tymoczko (1990), and Venuti (2017) demonstrate how translation is deeply influenced by ideological and cultural forces that shape the representation of marginalized voices. While translation can well amplify these voices, it often risks cultural erasure when manipulated by dominant market considerations and audience expectations (Hostova, 2024; Saint-Martin, 2022; Spivak, 1993; Venuti, 2017)
In postcolonial translation studies, there is a growing recognition of the power dynamics involved in translating indigenous texts from the Global South (Bassnett & Trivedi, 2012; Faiq, 2001; Shamma, 2007; Simon & Von Flotow, 1997; Tymoczko, 2000). Works like Easterine Kire's *When the River Sleeps* illustrate how literature can both preserve cultural identity and resist hegemonic narratives (Dhanya & Bhattacharya, 2019). However, the translation of indigenous works must navigate a delicate tension between making the text accessible to a wider audience and maintaining its cultural authenticity. This balance seems to be sometimes lacking in the English translation of *The Pessoptimist*.

Emile Habiby's *The Pessoptimist* is emblematic of indigenous literature steeped in a particular cultural and linguistic context. The novel intricately blends political satire, humor, and tragedy to depict the Palestinian post-Nakba experience. Habiby's linguistic features—such as jinās (paronomasia), al-saj' (assonance), archaisms, diglossia, rhetorical oaths, and culturally specific humor—are central to its portrayal of Palestinian identity and indigeneity. These elements demand a translation that respects both the linguistic complexity and the cultural richness embedded in the original.

There exists a significant gap in translation studies regarding the consequences of domestication on the linguistic and cultural integrity of indigenous works. While Venuti (2017) and Spivak (1993) discuss the broader implications of domestication and foreignization, the specific impact on marginalized voices remains underexplored. In particular, the English translation by Jayyusi and Le Gassick sometimes dilutes the novel's themes of resistance and decolonization, often oversimplifying its humor, linguistic hybridity, and cultural subtleties. This study aims to address this gap by critically analyzing how these translations distort the original and to argue for a retranslation approach that better respects Habiby's linguistic and cultural specificities.

In *The Pessoptimist*, the translation of indigenous markers that tie the novel to the land and its people becomes a battleground for such translation strategies as domestication, which aligns the text with expectations of the target audience, and foreignization, which maintain the text's unique identity. For instance, diglossia, a linguistic phenomenon Habibi uses in this novel, uses both formal and colloquial registers to reflect sociopolitical realities. Ignoring the colloquial register in translation inevitably results in a loss of the text's cultural depth (Baker, 2018; House, 2015; Venuti, 2017). Similarly, humor in *The Pessoptimist* operates as a form of resistance, imbuing the narrative with layers of political critique. Translating this humour demands cultural sensitivity to preserve its subversive role. Reducing humour to simplistic comedy risks stripping the text of its resistance to dominant cultural narratives, which risks undermining its political function (Bhabha, 1994; Hutcheon, 2023).

The translation of *The Pessoptimist* brings to the forefront the ethical responsibilities of translators in preserving the cultural integrity of indigenous works. No doubt, translation can be an effective tool for cultural preservation, but this can only occur if the translator respects the source text's linguistic and cultural specificity (Belmar, 2017; Roza et al., 2024). When readability is prioritized over authenticity, translation risks cultural erasure, thus severing the work from its resistance to hegemonic forces (Venuti, 2017). Spivak (1993) further contends that translation should protect marginalized voices rather than accommodate mainstream tastes, a stance that highlights the ethical implications of translation practices in postcolonial contexts.

In summary, this literature review critically underscores the vital role of translation in shaping the cultural and political identity of indigenous works like *The Pessoptimist*. By interrogating translation strategies and their effects on linguistic and cultural features, this study calls for a more nuanced, culturally sensitive approach to translation—one that respects the authenticity of indigenous narratives and their resistance to dominant power structures. The findings aim to contribute to a broader understanding of the ethical challenges and responsibilities translators face in maintaining the integrity of marginalized voices.

3. Methodology

In this study, I followed a qualitative, descriptive-analytical approach grounded in textual analysis. I examined *The Pessoptimist* in its original Arabic alongside its English translation by Jayyusi and Le Gassick (Habibi, 2003), focusing on the linguistic and cultural markers of indigeneity and their rendition in translation. The study is conducted in two stages:

a) **Analysis of the original text:** This stage involved a thorough analysis of the original Arabic text to identify key linguistic and cultural markers that contribute to the novel's distinct indigenous identity.

b) **Comparative analysis**: The second stage entailed a side-by-side comparative analysis of the identified linguistic and cultural markers and their English translation to identify specific translation decisions. These decisions were analyzed to determine whether they preserved or distorted the novel's unique linguistic and cultural markers.

While conducting the second stage, I gave special attention to such translation strategies as domestication and foreignization, as conceptualized by Venuti (2017). The study therefore concludes whether these strategies align with or diverge from the original text, thus assessing their impact on preserving or erasing the novel's indigenous identity.

4. Findings

The textual analysis of *The Pessoptimist* revealed six-layers of linguistic and cultural indigeneity. Each layer highlights distinct indigenous elements that collectively underscore the novel's profound ties to its literary and cultural heritage. This analysis will present specific instances of these indigenous elements, alongside their literal translation and the translation provided by Jayyusi and Le Gassick to showcase the translation choices made by the translators. The examples that will be provided are from Habibi's original novel (Habibi, 1974) and from Jayyusi and Le Gassick's translation (Habibi, 2003).

Linguistic and cultural indigeneity

The analysis of *The Pessoptimist* uncovered six predominant tendencies that collectively establish the indigeneity of the novel, i.e. *Jinās* (Paronomasia), *Al-Saj'* (Assonance), archaisms, and diglossia, religious expressions, and *al-qasam* (rhetorical oaths), as illustrated in Tables 1-6 below. The words that convey the specific indigenous aspect is highlighted in red for easy identification.

Jinās (Paronomasia)

Jinās is a known Arabic literary and rhetorical tradition epitomized in two words sharing similar pronunciation or spelling but having different meanings. Two instances of Jinās are quoted in Table 1, along with their literal and actual translations, the first provided by me and the second by Jayyusi and Le Gassick.

Table 1 Jinas: Instances of linguistic indigeneity and their translations

Source Text (ST)	(1)وقد استخفهم اطمئنان البحر، فاستخفوا أسئلة العسس فباتوا بقية ليلتهم في سجن (p.9) (2)وكانت يعاد بين الرجال رجلا حسنها شباب, وشبابها حسن وأحسنهما إلمامها الحسن بحديث الرجال (p.184)
Literal Translation (LT)	(1) They felt lightheaded (istakhafa-hum) by the calmness of the sea, so they dismissed (istakhaf-fu) the questions of the guards and spent the rest of their night in prison. (2) And she, 'Yaʿād', among men, was a man whose beauty (ḥusnu-hā) was youth and her youth was beauty (ḥasan), with the best of the two (aḥsanahumā) being her great (ḥasan) mastery in conversing with men.
Target Text (TT)	(1) The calm security of the sea made the fishermen feel bold. Taking the questions from the police too lightly, They would end up spending the rest of the night in jail. (p. 70) (2) She was young and beautiful, and, even more important, she knew just how to converse with men. (p.141)

Another tendency of linguistic indigeneity is *al-saj'*, as illustrated in Table 2 below:

Al-Saj' (Assonance)

Al-saj' is a rhythmic and rhyming way of writing, derived from the Arabic tradition of Maqamat—Arab tale literature told in melodic prose. Three instances of *al-saj'* are provided in Table 2.

Table 2 Al-Saj': Instances of linguistic indigeneity and their translations

ST	(1) ها نحن خرجنا عن الخط الأخضر ودخلنا في خط العرب الأغبر (p.166) (2) أن المرحوم كيوورك كان يقدم لنا في مطعمه لحم الحمير, فنطعم ونشكره (p.152) (3) وكانت الريح صرصرا والأرض قرقرا (p.70)
LT	(1) So I said mockingly, pretending to be ignorant of geopolitics: "Here we are, crossing the green line (*al-khaṭ al-akhdar*) and entering the dusty line of the Arabs (*khaṭ al-ʿarab al-aghbar*). (2) The late Kiork used to serve us donkey meat in his restaurant (fī maṭʿamihi), so we would eat (fanaṭʿam) and thank him. (3) The wind was howling (ṣarṣaran) and the ground was rumbling (qarqaran)
TT	(1) So now we have left the Green Belt and have entered the Dust Bowl of the Arabs, who have let their lands go to waste. (p.127) (2) The late Kiork used to serve us donkey meat in his restaurant; and we used to eat it and thank him (p.43) (3) A wind was blowing, strong and bitter cold (p.117)

1)

Archaisms

A remarkable feature in *The Pessoptimist* is its frequent use of archaisms—classic and traditional expressions. These language choices anchor the novel in its cultural and historical traditions and link it to its oral and literary heritage.

Table 3 Archaisms: An instance of linguistic indigeneity and its translation

ST	(1) **أما بعد، فأمسكت عن الكتابة إليك زمنا شحيحا لأسباب أمنية (p.33)** (2) **صبرا، صبرا، ولا تتساءل (p.2)** (3) **فهو، بعد الأدون سفسارشك، وصية أبي. فماذا تفعل هنا يا معلمي؟ (p.12)**
LT	(1) As for what follows, I refrained from writing to you for a meager period due to security reasons. (2) Patience, patience, and do not ask questions." (3) He, after Adon Safsarshek, is my father's will. So, what are you doing here, my teacher?"
TT	(1) I haven't written for some time for reasons of security (P. 69) (2) Now, now! Patience, please! And don't ask (p.3) (3) He had been recommended to me by my father as second only to Adon Safsarsheck. "What are you doing here, principal?" I asked. (p.23)

Diglossia

The fourth layer of indigeneity in *The Pessoptimist* is the blending of Fuṣḥā (standard Arabic) ʿāmmiyya (colloquial Arabic), as indicated in Table 4.

Table 4 Diglossia: Instances of linguistic indigeneity and their translations

ST	(1) وتبح قائلة: مليح إن صار هكذا وما صار غير شكل (p.17) (2) فإذا باللغط المحبوس ينفلت. وتنشال الأكف عن أفواه الأطفال المنكتمة (p.9) (3) نحونا بجلودنا إلى لبنان حيث بعناها واسترزقنا (p.4) (4) لم يشأ الرجل الكبير إلا أن يصحبني إلى بيت خالتي فيسلمني إلى مدير السجن (p.60)
LT	(1) She croaks, saying: 'It's good that it turned out this way and didn't turn out any differently. (2) And suddenly, the restrained clamor breaks free, and the hands are lifted from the mouths of the silenced children. (3) We, with our skins, headed to Lebanon where we sold them and earned a livelihood (4) The big man desired nothing but to accompany me to my aunt's house to hand me over to the prison warden.
TT	(1) She said hoarsely: "It's best it happened like this and not some other way! (p.13) (2) Immediately a great hubbub arose and hands were removed from the mouths of little children. (p.20) (3) We fled to Lebanon to save ours. And there we sold them to live. (p.9) (4) The big man insisted on accompanying me to jail to hand me over personally to the warden. (p.123)

Religious expressions

An instance of cultural indigeneity is the frequent use of religious expressions, as shown in Table 5:

Table 5 Religious Expressions: Instances of cultural indigeneity and their translations

ST	(1) قلت: ما شاء الله! (p.163) (2) قلت: ما شاء الله!(p.164) (3) كان جدي لأبي, رحمهما الله, الذي خطفت امرأته الأولى (p.29) (4) سوى صاحبتي الطنطورية, شقراء مثل روميات بيزنطية, فكانت تتنحى مكانا قصيا (p.108)
LT	(1) I said, "Masha'Allah!" (2) I said, "Masha'Allah!" (3) My paternal grandfather, may God have mercy on them both, whose first wife was abducted. (4) Except for my Tanturiyya companion, blonde like Byzantine Romans, who would withdraw to a distant spot.
TT	(1) How, exactly? (p.125) (2) (No translation) (p.125) (3) The father of my own father, may they both rest in peace, whose wife ran off with another man (p.18) (4) My girl, my Tanturiyya, blonde like a Byzantine, would not participate in this, but would always stand a little off. (p.83)

Al-qasam (Rhetorical oaths)

The protagonist oftentimes resorts to *al-qasam* to highlight absurdity or irony of situations, as illustrated in Table 6.

Table 6 Al-qasam: Instances of cultural indigeneity and their translations

ST	(1) أما والذين أنا في كنفهم (p.2) (2) ولكنني، وحقك، مختار من المخاتير (p.3) (3) إلا أنه استحلفها بقبر والديها ألا تخبر أحدا (p.15) (4) نزل بهم، والله، هازم اللذات ومفرق الجماعات ومخرب المنازل العامرات (p.48) (5) اسمع، يا ابن عمي! أحببتك! فبرأس أمي وأبي أحببتك. (p.42)
LT	(1) As for those I am under their care. (2) But by your right, I am a chosen one among the chosen. (3) However, he made her swear by her parents' grave not to tell anyone. (4) By God, the destroyer of pleasures, the disperser of gatherings, and the ruin of flourishing homes has descended upon them. (5) Listen, my cousin! I loved you! By my mother's and father's head, I loved you
TT	(1) By those heavenly hosts with whom I abide (p.4) (2) I most certainly have been chosen by them. (p.5) (3) He made her solemnly swear not to tell anyone (p.29) (4) God, who brings all pleasure to an end, sets communities asunder, and devastates prosperous homes, has come down upon them (p. 103) (5) Listen, husband, I really did fall in love with you. By the lives of my father and mother, I did fall for you. (p.88)

5. Discussion

By focusing on the indigenous elements in *The Pessoptimist*, the findings uncover how the English translation negotiates between the preservation of the novel's authenticity and ensuring accessibility for a foreign audience. The duality of preservation and authenticity reflects the challenges translators face while translating indigenous literature. The following discussion highlights the compromises made by the translators, resulting in notable linguistic and cultural losses that this indigenous chef d'oeuvre has incurred. This analysis sheds light on whether the translation of *The Pessoptimist* preserved or altered indigenous markers.

Linguistic markers

The translation of *jināṣ,* a typical feature of the Arabic rhetorical style, fails to capture the linguistic and rhetorical depth of the original. For instance, the repetition of *istakhafa* in "فاستخفهم اطمئنان البحر، فاستخفوا أسئلة العسس," reflects a layered irony that is lost in the translation's use of "bold" and "too lightly." Likewise, the intended symmetry of *ḥusn/ḥasan/aḥsan* in "حسنها شباب, وشبابها حسن وأحسنهما إلمامها الحسن بحديث الرجال" is flattened into "young and beautiful." It is clear that these translations prioritize fluency over fidelity, diluting the linguistic and rhetorical richness of the novel (Venuti, 2017).

Moreover, Habibi's adherence to the Arabic literary tradition of *al-saj'* (rhythmic assonance), which oftentimes evokes irony, is diluted in the translation. In an expression like "ها نحن خرجنا عن الخط الأخضر ودخلنا في خط العرب الأغبر," the rhythmic assonance is disregarded and so is the irony. Similarly, the rhythmic humour in "يقدم لنا في مطعمه لحم الحمير، فنطعم و نشكره" loses its cadence. The omission of sound symbolism in *sarsaran* (howling) and *qarqaran* (rumbling) reinforces the erosion of rhetorical depth, clearly foregrounding the translators' prioritization of clarity over stylistic nuance (Baker, 2018).

Cultural markers

Habibi's inclusion of archaisms firmly roots *The Pessoptimist* in its cultural and historical context. However, these elements are found to be often simplified or omitted in the translation. For instance, the traditional opening of "أما بعد" is flatly excluded, which leads to neutralizing its rhetorical weight and severs ties with the Arabic literary tradition. Also, the repetition of "صبرا، صبرا" loses its emphatic quality, turning it into a mere plea. Moreover, the translation of "وصية أبي" overlooks the cultural significance embedded in the term "will," which carries nuances of responsibility and tradition in Arabic.

The blending of *fuṣḥā* and *ʿāmmiyya* (diglossia) in the novel is another important indigenous feature echoing the rich linguistic and cultural duality in real-life Arab societies. The translation, however, tends to homogenize these layers, neutralizing one of the most notable indigenous features in the novel. Colloquial expressions like "مليح" (good), "ما صار غير شكل" (didn't turn out any differently), "تنشال (are lifted)," واسترزقنا (earned a living) and "بيت خالتي" (my aunt's house) are flattened, causing the novel to lose the conversational tone and cultural fingerprints that shape its indigenous identity. While functional, the translation choices of homogenization highlight the challenge in conveying diglossia while retaining the intended cultural depth of the original (Venuti, 2017).

Religious and emotional markers

The incorporation of religious expressions in the novel serves as strong markers of cultural and spiritual identity, inextricably situating the text within its socio-religious context. However, these markers are found to entail a great degree of cultural loss. For instance, "ما شاء الله," a phrase that is deeply steeped in irony in the novel, though commonly used to express admiration, is either omitted or changed into the colourless "How, exactly?" Similarly, "رحمهما الله," which invokes divine mercy, is diluted into the secular "may they both rest in peace," stripping away its spiritual connotation. Furthermore, the translation of **"**صاحبتي**"** as "my girl" simplifies the deep sense of companionship and intimacy in the original. In addition, **"**مكانا قصيا**"**, loses its Quranic connotations of distance or separation in its translation as "a little off."

Rhetorical devices

The inclusion of rhetorical oaths imbues the novel with emotional weight, cultural specificity and, sometimes, irony. These oaths underscore the protagonist's deep connection to Palestinian identity and Arab-Islamic culture. The translation, however, sometimes fails to maintain these rhetorical markers which emphasize sincerity and conviction. For instance, **"**وحقك**"** becomes "most certainly," "بقبر والديها" is generalized to "solemnly swear," and the emphatic oath **"**والله**"** is reduced to a plain informational statement. In addition, an oath like **"**برأس أمي وأبي**"** exemplifies the profound love and reverence for parents, central to Islamic and Arab values, indicating the speaker's sincerity and unbreakable commitment. Replacing "head" with "lives" shifts the focus from honour and respect (associated with "head") to existence (associated with "lives"). While both express reverence, the Arabic phrase carries a more culturally embedded sense of veneration and solemnity towards parents.

Overall, the translation of *The Pessoptimist* highlights the tension between preserving linguistic and cultural indigeneity and ensuring readability for a foreign audience. By examining these linguistic and cultural markers in light of the research questions, it becomes evident that while the translation strives for accessibility, it often sacrifices much of the novel's indigenous essence. This aligns with Venuti's (2017) concept of domestication, where cultural specificity is often neutralized in translation to cater to target audiences.

6. Conclusion

In this study, I explored linguistic and cultural markers of indigeneity and Palestinian identity in *The Pessoptimist* and examines how these markers are rendered in Jayyusi and Trevor Le Gassick's English translation. The findings reveal significant compromises in translating these indigeneity markers, demonstrating discrepancies between the original text and its translation (Venuti, 2017; Baker, 2018). The homogenization of such indigenous features as *jinās*, *al-sajʿ* and diglossia are found to dilute the rich linguistic and cultural tapestry of the original (cf. Nida, 1964). The translation is also found to neutralize cultural and spiritual elements like archaisms, religious expressions which contribute to the deep-seated indigeneity of the original text (Baker, 2018; Venuti, 2017). The emotional and cultural weight of *al-qasam*, or rhetorical oaths, is often lost. This points to a clear divide between the original text's cultural richness and authenticity and the translation's domestication approach, which seems to have diluted much of the original's unique cultural and literary essence (Venuti, 2017).

These findings have critical implications for the field of translation studies, notably the translation of indigenous literary works. They reveal that translations of such works diverge significantly from their originals. This diversion may occur when the translator, the writer and the target audience lack direct engagement or shared understanding. It is clear that this disconnect can strip the translation of the cultural richness and authenticity of the original. It can also deprive the target audience of the opportunity to fully appreciate and savour the depth and breadth of the original work. Moreover, the findings highlight the challenges translators face in balancing fidelity to source text with target audience's expectations, especially in indigenously dense works like *The Pessoptimist*. Preserving the cultural and linguistic essence of the original is critical to avoid eroding its unique identity (Baker, 2018). The study also underscores the importance of opting for non-domesticating translation strategies that minimize the loss of cultural specificity and authenticity.

6.1 Study Limitation and further research

This study has a number of limitations. First, the scope is limited to the linguistic and cultural markers of indigeneity and does not account for reader perception, i.e. how the translation has been perceived by the target audience. In addition, while the study focuses on translation choices that have influenced the translation of indigenous markers, it does not explore the translators' perspectives or real constraints which might have informed their choices. Future research could expand on these findings by conducting comparative analyses of multiple translations of indigenous works, including the examination of the translators' methodologies and challenges. Notwithstanding the limitations, this study offers valuable insights into the ongoing challenges faced by indigenous literary works translated into a dominant language and culture.

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