Human Versus Artificial Intelligence Translations: A Contrastive Analysis of Ghassan Kanafani's Men in the Sun

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Abstract:

This study is an attempt to address a gap in research on evaluating human versus AI translations of modern Arabic literary works. To achieve this objective, the study conducts a qualitative, quantitative descriptive-analytical comparison between Hilary Kilpatrick's published English translation of Ghassan Kanafani's novella Men in the Sun (1963) and those generated by three AI tools: ChatGPT, Gemini, and DeepSeek. Using a corpus of randomly chosen 17 extracts from the novella and guided by Nord's functionalist error typology, the study focuses specifically on evaluating the data translations in terms of fluency, cultural adequacy, and literary devices. The findings reveal that the human translation has proved superior in that it, by means of adaptation, attends to the nuanced pragmatic and cultural aspects in the ST to preserve the original author's intent, a task that all AI models appear to frequently fail to undertake. The AI translations, though often linguistically fluent, exhibit pragmatically and culturally serious errors, tending to misinterpret contextual variables, idioms, and culture-specific references. Among the AI tools, it is DeepSeek that produced a translation with more lexical precision and stylistic alignment. The study concludes, then, that while AI is a powerful translation tool, it currently lacks the components that can efficiently handle deep contextual knowledge essential for literary translation, which reinforces the indispensability of the human translator's role as a cultural mediator.

الترجمة البشرية في مقابل مخرجات الذكاء الاصطناعي: دراسة تحليلية تقابلية لرواية "رجال في الشمس" للكاتب الفلسطيني غسان كنفاني

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الكلمات المفتاحية

2. أدوات الذكاء الاصطناعي	1. الترجمة الأدبية
4. أخطأ في الترجمة	3. غسان كنفاني

الملخص:

في إطار سعيها لاستكشاف حدود الترجمة الأدبية في ظل تطور تقنيات الذكاء الاصطناعي، تقدم هذه الدراسة مقارنة نوعية كمية تحليلية وصفية بين الترجمة البشرية وترجمات أدوات الذكاء الاصطناعي لرواية غسان كنفاني "رجال في الشمس" (1963). وتهدف الدراسة إلى سد فجوة بحثية تتعلق بتطبيقات الذكاء الاصطناعي في ترجمة الأدب العربي الحديث، من خلال مقارنة الترجمة الإنجليزية التي أعدّتها المترجمة المحترفة هيلاري كيلباتريك بمخرجات ثلاثة نماذج لغوية ضخمة هي: تشات جي بي تي وجمني وديب سيك.

اعتمدت الدراسة على عينة تحليلية مكونة من 17 مثالًا، واستندت إلى تصنيف نورد الوظيفي للأخطاء لتقييم جوانب متعددة تشمل الطلاقة اللغوية، والملاءمة الثقافية، والتعامل مع الأساليب البلاغية. وقد كشفت النتائج عن تفوق واضح للترجمة البشرية، التي تميزت بقدرتها على إجراء تكييفات براغماتية وثقافية دقيقة تحافظ على مقاصد كاتب النص الأصلي، وهي جوانب أخفقت نماذج الذكاء الاصطناعي في معالجتها بفعالية. وعلى الرغم من الطلاقة الظاهرية لترجمات أدوات الذكاء الاصطناعي، إلا أنها ارتكبت أخطاء جوهرية في تفسير السياقات، والتعابير الاصطلاحية، والإشارات الثقافية الخاصة.

ومن بين النماذج الثلاثة، برز نموذج ديب سيك من حيث الدقة المعجمية والاتساق الأسلوبي. وتخلص الدراسة إلى أن الذكاء الاصطناعي، رغم إمكاناته المتنامية، لا يزال يفتقر إلى الفهم السياقي العميق الضروري لترجمة النصوص الأدبية، مما يؤكد على الأهمية المستمرة والدور المحوري للمترجم البشري بوصفه وسيطًا ثقافيًا لا يمكن الاستغناء عنه.

Introduction:

It is true that modern life is much affected and steered by technologies, including highly sophisticated AI applications, some of which have surpassed humans in terms of their capability to complete many bureaucratic and operational tasks at a much faster speed. However, humans still excel at carrying out tasks that require intellect and thought, relying on their innate capacity of thinking that has always ensured human dominance in the natural world.

In recent years, however, there has been increasing debate over the potential impact of AI on the very existence of humans in future, with different views ranging from those holding that AI will be an aid in human development to those maintaining that it will cause multiple issues in the future. Some, for example, expressed concerns over the rapid advancement of AI and the potential for human replacement; indeed, they went far to not ruling out the possibility that further development in AI could result in the creation of novel forms of life.

Therefore, both humans and AI have their strengths and weaknesses, and whether the one or the other is better in translating texts depends on the specific context and needs of the translation. Human translation is generally better for complex or creative texts, such as literature, legal documents, or marketing materials, where accuracy, style, and cultural nuances are crucial. A human translator can grasp the intended meaning of the target text and make use of their expertise and creativity to render it accurately and elegantly into the target language. Translators can also ~~use~~ resort to their cultural knowledge and context to ensure a translation appropriate for the target audience.

Machine translation (MT), on the other hand, is faster and more cost-effective to translate large volumes of simple or repetitive texts, such as technical manuals, product descriptions, or user-generated content. This is due to the fact that MT uses algorithms to automatically translate texts, which can be helpful for quickly understanding the general meaning of a text. However, MT may struggle with accurately capturing nuances, idioms, or

cultural references, and the translation quality may vary depending on the language pair and the complexity of the source text. Ultimately, the best approach to translation may be a combination of both MT and human mediation, where human translators can review and edit machine-generated translations to ensure accuracy, style, and cultural appropriateness. In fact, this approach is now widely used and called "machine-assisted translation"; it can provide a cost-effective and efficient way to produce high-quality translations.

The Objectives of the Study

The study aims:
1. To identify the differences between human and AI translations in literary discourse, focusing specifically on Kanafani's *Men in the Sun*, translated by Hilary Kilpatrick.
2. To compare human and AI (ChatGPT, Gemini, DeepSeek) by evaluating their effectiveness in capturing the source text's meanings, emotions, and cultural references, thus identifying the most accurate rendering in dealing with figurative language, idiomatic expressions, and culturally specific references.
3. To identify and categorize common errors as presented by Nord as pragmatic, cultural, linguistic, and text-specific errors in ChatGPT, Gemini and DeepSeek's translations compared to those of human translators to gain insights into the strengths and weaknesses of AI.

Statement of the Problem

As AI technology advances, its growing application to literary translation raises questions about accuracy and reliability. Tools like ChatGPT Translation (ChT) and Gemini Translation (GT) and DeepSeek Translation (DeST) offer speed but seem to struggle to capture the linguistic, cultural, and emotional depth of Arabic literature. This study examines the gap in research comparing AI and human

translations, exploring how well each preserves the original work's artistic and cultural essence while revealing their respective strengths and limitations.

Significance of the Study

This study establishes its significance by contributing to academic theory, practical industry, and technological development in the field of AI and literary translation. Academically, it critically examines how effectively AI tools handle literary texts, thereby enriching translation studies, comparative literature, and AI research. This evaluation strengthens theoretical understanding and inspires further scholarly inquiry. Practically, it aids the publishing industry in making informed decisions about integrating AI while preserving essential literary nuances. Technologically, the study guides AI developers toward improving tools to handle linguistic and cultural complexities, fostering a deeper, more refined collaboration between human creativity and artificial intelligence in literary translation.

Methodology of the Study

This research employs a descriptive-analytic approach in conjunction with contrastive analysis. It examines a collection of seventeen extracts taken randomly from Ghassan Kanafani's *Men in the Sun*, translated by Hilary Kilpatrick, focusing on linguistically and culturally challenging elements such as proper names, metaphors, idioms, proverbs, collocations, cultural references, and stylistic devices. The same examples were translated using three AI tools ChatGPT (https://chatgpt.com), Gemini (https://gemini.google.com), and DeepSeek (https://chat.deepseek.com) under a controlled prompt that instructed the systems to produce fluent, culturally sensitive English translations while preserving the original literary tone and style e.g.: *Translate the following sentence from Arabic into fluent, high-quality English that preserves its literary style, tone, and cultural nuances. Aim for a translation that feels authentic to the original author's voice and context and avoid overly literal or mechanical phrasing.* These outputs were

compared with the published human translation by Hilary Kilpatrick *Men in the Sun*.

The analysis follows Nord's functionalist model, emphasizing the relationship between the ST and TT functions. Translation errors were identified and categorized into three types: (a) pragmatic and cultural errors merged due to their frequent overlap arising from failures in cultural adaptation or audience orientation; (b) linguistic errors, including deviations in grammar or sentence structure; and (c) text-specific errors involving stylistic or figurative language issues. Finally, the study assesses how well the data translations convey the ST's intended meaning and cultural essence, offering recommendations for improving the quality of renderings across linguistic, pragmatic, semantic, and stylistic levels.

AI and Human Translations

AI has advanced rapidly in recent years and is now widely used in many different industries, including fully automated workshops and unmanned factories. AI is also used in the field of translation, which includes both MT and AI translation. The latter is a subset of MT that makes use of state-of-the-art AI technologies such as Natural Language Processing (NLP) and Neural Machine Translation (NMT). Developed from the Generative Pre-trained Transformer (GPT) family, ChatGPT is an advanced AI model from OpenAI. With the release of ChatGPT-2 in 2019, the model's functionality was extended with GPT-3 and then ChatGPT-4. Because of its extensive training on multilingual datasets, it can produce language that is human-like, allowing for sophisticated and context-aware translations. The Translators Association of China's "China Language Service Industry Development Report" states that machine translation is extensively utilized in the language service sector and that 86.1% of language service demanders acknowledge that using translation technology enhances translation quality, lowers expenses, and boosts productivity. In late 2023, Google DeepMind introduced Gemini, a multimodal tool that can interpret both text and visuals. Gemini is able to offer translations enhanced by visual and contextual hints due to this functionality. It

works especially well in dynamic situations like live subtitling and translating low-resource languages.

Because human translation is a painstaking process that requires a thorough comprehension of the meaning of the original text, cultural quirks, and subject matter expertise, it is still essential despite AI's advances. Traditional human translation is facing serious challenges from the rapid development of AI, as seen by ChatGPT's exponential growth and technological advancements. However, because all published works are still subjected to human involvement, AI's impact on the translation sector is still restricted, highlighting the ongoing need for human translators to ensure translation quality.

ChatGPT, Gemini and DeepSeek in Translation

In recent years, the landscape of machine translation has evolved dramatically, driven by advancements in AI and natural language processing technologies. Among the leaders in this field are ChatGPT, Gemini and DeepSeek, three sophisticated models that offer distinct approaches to translation tasks. Gemini, developed to provide nuanced language capabilities, emphasizes context and cultural relevance in its outputs, aiming to enhance communication across diverse linguistic backgrounds. In contrast, ChatGPT, built on a more general language framework, excels in generating coherent and contextually appropriate responses, though it may sometimes lack the depth that specialized models like Gemini can provide. This likely aims to evaluate the comparative strengths and weaknesses of these three systems, shedding light on their methodologies, performance metrics, and the implications for future developments in translation technology. By understanding these differences, we can better appreciate the evolving role of AI in bridging language barriers.

Features of Gemini in Translation

The Gemini model, developed by Google, shows significant promise in the realm of translation, particularly through its nuanced handling of complex linguistic structures and contextual subtleties. Unlike its predecessors, Gemini is designed to address the inherent challenges posed by ambiguous language, often excelling in translating nuanced or ironic text scenarios. As highlighted in recent studies, Gemini, alongside ChatGPT, demonstrates a capacity for managing ambiguous sentiments in translation across multiple languages, although it is not without its limitations, as bias and performance variability remain prevalent (Buscemi et al.). Furthermore, Gemini's advanced reasoning capabilities allow it to generate translations that retain not only the original meaning but also cultural context, which is essential for effective communication. This distinctive feature positions Gemini favorably in comparison to other models like ChatGPT, emphasizing the need for continuous innovation in AI-assisted translation technologies (Ashrafimoghari et al.).

Gemini integrates advanced techniques, such as neural machine translation (NMT), which utilizes deep learning to improve contextual understanding and fluency in translated texts. Moreover, Gemini incorporates sophisticated prompt engineering strategies to enhance interaction, allowing users to input more nuanced requests for translations. This approach is particularly beneficial for non-experts, as it simplifies the complex process of generating effective prompts, thereby increasing the accessibility of translation services (Chakravarthy et al.). Furthermore, Geminis algorithms are designed to optimize performance across various languages, accounting for linguistic diversity and idiosyncrasies, resulting in more accurate and culturally relevant translations. As evidenced by its innovative design, Gemini's methodologies reflect a concerted effort to advance the efficiency and precision of language translation within an ever-growing global landscape.

Features of ChatGPT in Translation

The capabilities of ChatGPT in translation exemplify the advancements in large language models (LLMs) that have

redefined this domain. Notably, its performance in handling nuanced and ambiguous texts showcases a significant strength, as it often navigates complexities better than many traditional tools. Research indicates that ChatGPT effectively copes with challenges arising from ambiguous scenarios, although it is not without biases and variability in performance across different languages (Buscemi et al.). Furthermore, the tool enhances productivity by facilitating rapid research discovery and summarization, allowing users to access relevant literature efficiently (Glickman and Zhang). Through its ability to synthesize and distill complex information, ChatGPT elevates translation tasks beyond mere language conversion, fostering an understanding that encompasses contextual subtleties. Thus, while ChatGPT presents significant advantages, ongoing improvements are essential for optimizing its efficacy across diverse languages and contexts in the translation landscape.

The natural language processing (NLP) capabilities of ChatGPT exemplify significant advancements in machine learning frameworks, particularly in the realm of contextual understanding. This proficiency enables the model to navigate complex linguistic structures and discern nuanced meanings, which is crucial when addressing ambiguous or ironic text. Research has shown that models like Despite these strengths, challenges persist; inconsistencies in performance and notable biases remain evident, highlighting the need for further refinement in training methodologies and datasets. As generative AI technologies evolve, understanding how ChatGPTs contextual awareness can be leveraged for translation tasks emphasizes its potential for enhancing communication across varied contexts (Abdulai et al.). Thus, while ChatGPT demonstrates remarkable capability, ongoing improvements are essential to maximize its effectiveness in real-world applications.

Features of DeepSeek in Translation

DeepSeek AI, a Chinese startup, has emerged as a rival in the AI landscape, challenging the power of Western technological giants (Brown, 2024). The efficiency and innovation of this open-source AI model are remarkable, and it poses a challenge to the dominance of Western tech titans such as Microsoft, Meta, Google, and OpenAI. DeepSeek AI is an AI company that emerged from High-Flyer, focusing on advancing AI research beyond financial applications. It has disrupted the closed-source dominance of Western genAI giants by introducing open-source tools like DeepSeek Coder and models like DeepSeek LLM and DeepSeek-V2. The company's strategic acquisitions and pricing strategies have enabled it to achieve profitability and position itself as a formidable player in AI development (Sallam et al., 2025). DeepSeek AI consists of DeepSeek V3 and DeepSeek R1. DeepSeek V3 is more cost-effective and efficient for large-scale processing tasks while DeepSeek excels in reasoning and logical tasks due to its RL-first training approach. DeepSeek R1 is better suited for niche coding tasks and provides faster and more accurate results in tasks like prime factorization. DeepSeek V3, on the other hand, is better for content generation, multilingual translation, and real-time chatbot responses. Users should carefully assess their requirements to choose the most suitable AI model for their needs (Analytics Vidhya, 2025).

DeepSeek has launched, and more research is needed to showcase how these newly introduced AI-driven tools work, compared to ChatGPT. Albuhairy and Algaraady (2025) compare the performance of DeepSeek and ChatGPT in various linguistic areas, highlighting their complementary strengths. DeepSeek was noted for its focus on rule-governed language errors, while ChatGPT excels in contextual and communicative effects. Both models have complementary strengths. More empirical evidence is required to support the proclaims that DeepSeek outperforms ChatGPT in technical tasks such as logical reasoning, coding, and solving mathematical problems. Users have reported more satisfactory outputs from DeepSeek for these types of inquiries compared to ChatGPT, which excels in conversational and creative

contexts. Mashable (2025) maintains that DeepSeek is more affordable than ChatGPT, with pricing starting at $0.14 per million tokens, making it a cost-effective option for users and developers alike.

Previous Studies

Recent advancements in AI-assisted literary translation have renewed scholarly focus on the linguistic, stylistic, and cultural capabilities of generative models. Research increasingly highlights the role of large language models (LLMs) like ChatGPT and Gemini in handling complex literary tasks, particularly for under-represented language pairs. Theoretical frameworks, such as Nida's Functional Equivalence, provide lenses to analyze how these tools emulate or alter traditional translation workflows. Concurrently, studies advocate for balanced pedagogical methodologies that merge AI-generated output with essential human interpretive engagement. This evolving landscape sets the stage for the present study, which offers a genre-specific, comparative analysis of DeepSeek and ChatGPT for Arabic-English literary translation.

Literary translators face profound challenges, including the need for near-native fluency in both source and target languages to accurately convey stylistic and semantic subtleties. A more significant hurdle is cultural knowledge; insufficient exposure can lead to a loss of meaning. For instance, the Arabic term "barakah," denoting a divinely infused blessing, is often reductively translated as "good luck," stripping it of spiritual resonance. Such issues are acute in classical Arabic poetry, known for its dense lexical cohesion. Furthermore, translators, especially students, grapple with exhaustive time constraints, as the process demands meticulous research and detail-oriented analysis.

To enhance productivity, translators increasingly turn to AI tools. However, while AI has revolutionized machine translation, it still struggles with literary nuance. AI algorithms rely on statistical patterns, often failing to capture an author's unique style or the creative intuition required for literary work. Previous research has largely centered on tools like Google Translate, noting their limitations in pragmatics, lexical choice, and preserving artistic essence. Although recent studies on ChatGPT and Gemini show promising performance gains, they also reveal ongoing difficulties with linguistic diversity and cultural nuance, especially for Arabic dialects with limited datasets.

Despite this growing body of work, a significant gap remains: few studies have conducted a comparative analysis of newer generative models like DeepSeek and ChatGPT specifically for Arabic-English literary translation. This study addresses that gap by critically examining the capabilities and limitations of these advanced AI platforms, with a focused evaluation on their accuracy, fluency, cohesion, and lexical fidelity in translating literary works.

Ghassan Kanafani, His Work and Background

Born in Acre in 1936, Ghassan Kanafani was exiled during the 1948 Nakba. He later settled in Beirut, where he wrote seminal novellas like *Men in the Sun* and *Returning to Haifa*. As prominent Palestinian writer and PFLP spokesperson, his work masterfully analyzes the Palestinian condition. Though more recognized as a political figure in his lifetime, his sophisticated narrative techniques, influenced by global literature, have since earned him posthumous international acclaim as a foundational modern Arabic fiction writer. His cultural capital ensured his powerful literary legacy eventually transcended his political identity.

His Work in English

Ghassan Kanafani formally entered the literary scene in the early 1960s, yet there was a significant delay before his major works were translated into English (Jayyusi 28). While his short story *The Death of Bed No. 12* was translated in the 1970s by Johnson-Davies, his first English publication was the political monograph The 1936-39 Revolt in Palestine in 1972 (Johnson-

Davies 78). This suggests his political writings were initially prioritized over his literary art, which only began appearing in English eight years later with *Men in the Sun* in 1978.

This delay can be attributed to the English literary field's initial resistance. Kanafani's work, deeply rooted in the Palestinian experience, did not align with dominant Western interests. Furthermore, his identity was often obscured; one American publisher even misidentified him as Jordanian, a decision Johnson-Davies explicitly contested in his author notes (Johnson-Davies 78). This mischaracterization reflects an "institutional habitus" that likely resisted acknowledging a Palestinian writer, particularly one who was a prominent member of the PFLP (Khoury 86). This political affiliation often overshadowed his literary genius in the West, complicating his reception.

Despite these barriers, Kanafani's works eventually found a place due to the dynamic nature of cultural production (Hanna 5). His novels, such as Returning to Haifa, are celebrated for their piercing realism and emotional depth. Kanafani himself stated, "In my novels I express reality, as I understand it, without analysis" (Kanafani 13). His commitment to realism is what distinguishes his work, moving beyond simplistic sympathy to capture the full complexity of Palestinian life.

A key achievement in Returning to Haifa is its groundbreaking humanization of Jewish characters, connecting the Holocaust to the Palestinian plight (Ashur 145). This nuanced empathy demonstrates that Kanafani was "against indiscriminate violence" (Nasr 65). Kanafan has been praised by critics like Edward Said and compared to Joyce and Faulkner, but his recognition in English remains specialized. Thus, it is the powerful realism and enduring human dimension of his work, particularly in his "masterpiece" Returning to Haifa, that continues to render his literature profoundly impactful today (Mansur 16).

Men in the Sun

Ghassan Kanafani's *Men in the Sun* (1963) is a foundational work of Palestinian literature, offering a searing allegory of the refugee experience post-1948. It follows three Palestinians: Abu Qais, As'ad, and Marwan, representing different generations who hire a smuggler, Abul-Khaizuran, to transport them to Kuwait in a desperate search for work.

The story's devastating climax occurs when the three men suffocate silently inside the truck's empty water tank while the driver is delayed at the border. Their failure to knock for help becomes the novella's central, haunting metaphor. It indicts the political silence, helplessness, and perceived complicity that defined the Palestinian plight and the inaction of the Arab world.

Through stark symbolism — the scorching sun, the lethal tank, the complex driver — Kanafani transforms a simple story of migration into a profound critique of betrayal, exile, and existential despair. The novella condemns the paralysis that trapped a people between the memory of a lost homeland and the brutal struggle for survival, cementing its status as a masterpiece of modern Arabic literature.

Hilary Kilpatrick: The Translator

Hilary Kilpatrick is a preeminent scholar and translator of Arabic literature, whose decades-long career bridges classical and modern eras. With a PhD from Oxford, her intellectual journey has progressed from modern Egyptian narratives to classical works and Ottoman-era poetry, often focusing on neglected areas. A major scholarly project involves creating a critical edition of the 18th-century Christian poet Nīqūlāwus al-Ṣā'igh's Dīwān. Her rigorous, archival work seeks to reposition this hybrid poetry within the broader Arabic literary tradition. Simultaneously, Kilpatrick's translation of Ghassan Kanafani's *Men in the Sun* introduced this Palestinian literary cornerstone to the English-speaking world. While her "domesticating" approach, which aimed to highlight Kanafani's universal artistry over his political identity, has drawn some critique, it was crucial in establishing his international presence. As both a scholar reconstructing forgotten texts and a translator mediating modern voices, Kilpatrick acts as a vital architect of literary dialogue and a custodian of cultural memory.

Data Analysis

ST	"لا يمكن أن تمطر السماء الآن **إلا قيظاً وغباراً**! أنسيت أين أنت؟ أنسيت؟"(8)
HT	"The sky now could rain nothing but scorching heat and dust. Have you forgotten where you are? Have you forgotten?" (21)
CHT	"The sky can bring nothing now but scorching heat and dust! Have you forgotten where you are? Forgotten?"
GT	"The sky can rain down now nothing but searing heat and dust! Have you forgotten where you are? Have you forgotten?"
DeST	(8) "The sky can rain nothing but scorching heat and dust now! Have you forgotten where you are? Have you forgotten?"

The HT establishes the benchmark with its high degree of linguistic accuracy, fluency, and contextual appropriateness. It adeptly renders the metaphor of the sky "raining" (تمطر) heat and dust, a potent image for oppressive weather, and captures the accusatory, rhetorical tone of the repeated "أنسيت" "Have you forgotten?". All AI translations successfully convey the core meaning, but nuanced differences in lexical choice and error classification reveal their varying alignment with the HT. Linguistically, the HT's choice of "scorching heat" is mirrored effectively by ChT and DeST, while GT's "searing heat" is equally appropriate, introducing a stylistic synonym. However, ChT commits a **text-specific translation error** by truncating the final rhetorical question to a single word, "Forgotten?", which, while stylistically concise, disrupts the rhythmic parallelism and emphatic tone of the original and the HT. In terms of syntax, GT produces a **linguistic translation error** with the awkward collocation "rain down now nothing but," creating a non-idiomatic word order that slightly compromises fluency. DeST offers a translation nearly identical to the HT, differing only in the placement of "now," and commits no discernible errors, making it the most accurate and fluent of the three AI translations. From a **pragmatic and cultural** standpoint, all translations, including the HT, successfully re-orient the text for an English-speaking receiver by preserving the core metaphor without causing cultural misunderstanding.

ST	"ضحك الطفل وأجاب هامساً:" "- **تيس**!" (9)
HT	"The child laughed and replied in a whisper: "Idiot!" (22)
CHT	The child laughed and whispered in response: "—A goat!"
GT	The child laughed and whispered in reply, "A goat!"
DeST	The child laughed and answered in a whisper: "Tays!"

The HT establishes the benchmark by accurately rendering the Arabic expletive "تيس" as "Idiot!" a pragmatic and culturally appropriate choice that correctly interprets the term as a common Arabic insult rather than its literal zoological meaning that is "male goat". This demonstrates perfect receiver orientation, as the HT prioritizes the intended communicative function (an insult) over literal meaning. In contrast, both ChT and GT commit significant **pragmatic and cultural translation errors** by translating the term literally as "A goat!", fundamentally misrepresenting the speaker's intent and creating semantic nonsense in the target context; this failure stems from inadequate cultural adaptation of a culture-specific insult. As for DeST, it commits a **text-specific translation error** by transliterating the source word as "Tays!", preserving the original lexeme but failing to convey any meaningful semantic content to the target audience, thereby rendering the exchange stylistically opaque. Linguistically, all AI translations maintain the narrative structure accurately, with the HT's "replied in a whisper" offering slightly better **fluency** than ChT's slightly awkward "whispered in response" through more natural collocation.

ST	"- كان أستاذ كتاب، أنا أستاذ مدرسة.." (10)
HT	"He was a teacher in a Quran school, but I teach in a secular school." (23)
CHT	"- He was a book teacher; I am a school teacher…"
GT	"He was the master of the book; I am the master of the school."
DeST	"He was a master of the Book, I am but a master of the school…" (10)

In this example, the HT effectively decodes the culturally specific Arabic terms

rendering them "أستاذ كتاب" and "أستاذ مدرسة", with high contextual appropriateness as "a teacher in a Quran school" and "teach in a secular school" to clarify the semantic nuance for the English reader and establish a clear contrast. In contrast, the ChT commits a significant **pragmatic/cultural error** by translating "كتاب" (book) literally into (book), resulting in the nonsensical and misleading "book teacher," which fails the receiver orientation by not adapting the source-culture convention of "kuttab" (Quranic school). Gemini's output contains a similar **pragmatic/cultural error** with "master of the book," which, while less awkward than ChT, remains culturally opaque and stylistically implies a possessive mastery rather than a teaching role. DeST demonstrates greater cultural awareness by capitalizing "Book," a convention that suggests the Islamic scripture, yet its lexical choice of "but a master" transmits a sense of modesty, a sense that is not suggested by the source text, constituting a **text-specific (stylistic) error**. Linguistically, both the GT and DeST are accurate and fluent, but their core failure is pragmatic.

ST	وفرت على نفسك الذل والمسكنة وأنقذت شيخوختك من العار.. **يا رحمة الله عليك يا أستاذ سليم..** " (11-12)
HT	"You saved yourself humiliation and wretchedness, and you preserved your old age from shame. The mercy of God be upon you, Ustaz Selim." (23-24)
CHT	"You have spared yourself humiliation and poverty and rescued your old age from shame… May God have mercy on you, Professor Saleem…"
GT	"You spared yourself humiliation and abject poverty, and rescued your old age from shame... May God's mercy be upon you, Professor Salim..."
DeST	"You spared yourself the indignity and wretchedness, and saved your old age from disgrace... God have mercy on you, Mr. Salim..." (11-12)

The HT establishes the benchmark for accuracy, fluency, and contextual nuance, against which the AI translation demonstrate varying degrees of alignment, with their primary divergences being manifest in lexical choice. Linguistically, all AITs are grammatically sound, but they differ in their

semantic precision. For "الذل والمسكنة," HT's "humiliation and wretchedness" is effectively mirrored in the output by DeST, while ChT's "humiliation and poverty" and GT's "humiliation and abject poverty" commit a text-specific translation error by replacing "wretchedness" (a state of misery) with "poverty" (an economic condition), misinterpreting the abstract, moral despair for a material one. For "أنقذت," HT's "preserved" is subtly more idiomatic for "old age" than the more dramatic "rescued" selected by ChT, GT or "saved" by DeST, the latter constituting a minor linguistic translation error in terms of collocation. In terms of pragmatic and cultural appropriateness, the invocation "يا رحمة الله عليك" is rendered with near-identical fluency across HT ("The mercy of God be upon you"), ChT ("May God have mercy on you"), and GT ("May God's mercy be upon you"), whereas DeST's "God have mercy on you" is slightly more archaic and less fluid. The most significant pragmatic and cultural choice involves the title "أستاذ," which HT incorrectly transliterates as "Ustaz," a culturally specific term of respect for a teacher or learned man. In contrast, ChT and GT's "Professor" and DeST's "Mr." beautifully render the term in pragmatic-cultural translation; "Professor" correctly elevates the academic rank, while "Mr." conveys the respect inherent in the source, thus HT misrepresenting the social dynamic.

ST	ـ " طيب! وماذا يهمني أن أعرف ذلك أو أن لا أعرفه، **هل ستقوم القيامة؟** " (12)
HT	"All right. And what does it matter whether I know it or not; is it the end of the world?" (24)
CHT	"Fine! And what does it matter to me whether I know that or not? Is the Day of Judgment about to come?"
GT	"Fine! And what difference does it make to me whether I know that or not—will the Day of Judgment arrive any sooner?"
DeST	"Very well! And what concern is it of mine whether I come to know this or not? Will it make the heavens fall?" (12)

All AITs correctly interpret the core meaning, but their alignment with the HT varies significantly based on lexical choices affecting tone and cultural resonance. The HT's use of "All right" and "the end of the world"

effectively captures the speaker's dismissive tone in a common English idiom. Conversely, both ChT and GT opt for a more literal and theologically specific "Day of Judgment." This constitutes a pragmatic/cultural error; while not factually incorrect, it misjudges the target-culture convention, as the ST's use of "القيامة" (al-qiyamah) in this context is hyperbolic and idiomatic, not a genuine theological inquiry. The HT and DeST correctly interpret this pragmatic function. DeST's output, "Will it make the heavens fall?", is a different but equally valid text-specific (stylistic) choice, employing a classic English idiom of exaggeration that mirrors the original's intent, though it differs lexically from the HT. Linguistically, GT's phrasing, "will the Day of Judgment arrive any sooner?", is perfectly fluent but introduces a comparative element ("any sooner") not present in the ST, a minor linguistic error in precision. DeST's "what concern is it of mine" is slightly more formal than the HT's "what does it matter," but both are accurate.

ST	"كان رأسه ما يزال يطن مثل الخلية وصاح بملء رئتيه:" "- أبو العبد.. يلعن أبوك.. يلعن أصلك.." (27)
HT	"His head was still humming like a beehive, and he cried with all his strength:" "Abul-Abd, damn your father, damn your forefathers!" (32)
CHT	His head still throbbed like a beehive as he shouted at the top of his lungs: "Abu al-Abed… damn your father… damn your very existence…"
GT	His head was still abuzz, like a hive, and he roared at the top of his lungs: "Abul-'Abd... damn your father... damn your very roots!" (27)
DeST	His head was still buzzing like a beehive, and he shouted with all his might: "Abu al-Abd... Damn your father! Damn your very bloodline!" (27)

Here, all translations, including the HT, effectively render the simile " كان رأسه ما يزال يطن مثل الخلية " with high linguistic accuracy, using "humming/ buzzing/ throbbed/ abuzz" for "يطن" and "beehive/hive" for "الخلية," and demonstrating strong handling of this text-specific element. However, significant divergence occurs in the translation of the

culturally-loaded insults. The HT's "damn your forefathers!" is a fluent and contextually appropriate choice, conveying the original's depth of insult by cursing the addressee's lineage. ChT opts for "damn your very existence," which, while linguistically sound, constitutes a pragmatic/cultural error; it shifts the curse from a collective, lineage-based insult to an individual, existential one, losing the cultural weight of the original. GT uses "damn your very roots!" a creative and stylistically strong choice that metaphorically aligns with the concept of lineage, making it a beautiful translation in this instance. DeST employs "damn your very bloodline!" which is semantically precise, culturally resonant, and stylistically forceful, most closely mirroring the HT's intent and impact. In the initial name transliteration, "أبو العبد," the HT's "Abul-Abd" and GT's "Abul-'Abd" reflect a common contracted form, while ChT's "Abu al-Abed" and DeST's "Abu al-Abd" offer more phonetically explicit renderings, with none constituting an error.

ST	"يا إله الشياطين! من الذي قال له أنه يريد أن يتزوجها؟ من قال له أنه يريد أن يتزوج أبداً؟" (28)
HT	"O God of devils! Who told him that he, Assad, wanted to marry her? Who told him that he ever wanted to get married?" (33)
CHT	"Oh, God of demons! Who told him he wanted to marry her? Who ever said he wanted to get married at all?"
GT	"Good God! Who told him he wanted to marry her? Who told him he wanted to marry *at all*?"
DeST	"O, demon-gods! Who told him he wanted to marry her? Who told him he ever wanted to marry at all?" (28)

The HT establishes a high standard for rendering the ST's impassioned, rhetorical Arabic questions into English, a standard against which the AITs are measured with varying degrees of success. The HT's strategic choices "O God of devils!" and the clarifying insertion "he, Assad," demonstrate a nuanced approach, preserving the exotic flavor of the invocation while ensuring textual clarity for the target reader. In contrast, the AITs exhibit distinct deviations. Gemini's "Good God!" commits a significant pragmatic/cultural error;

it replaces a foreignizing, mythologically specific term with a common English expletive, completely erasing the source culture's semantic frame and altering the tone from a specific invocation to a generalized outburst. Linguistically, ChT and DeST handle the core questions fluently, but their lexical choices for the divine invocation differ: "demons" by ChT is a semantically accurate and common translation for `"الشياطين"`, while DeST's "demon-gods" is a more literal, compound rendering that, while potentially jarring, avoids the pragmatic/cultural error of domestication seen in Gemini. A key differentiator lies in the translation of `"أبداً"` in the final clause. The HT and ChT's use of "ever" perfectly captures the semantic nuance of absolute negation ("not... ever"), a subtlety missed by Gemini's simpler "at all," albeit a minor linguistic error in precision rather than a grave fault. DeST successfully mirrors this with "ever... at all," creating a slightly more emphatic but equally correct construction.

ST	"- هل أنت موظف؟ " "- موظف؟ ها! أن الشيطان نفسه تأبي عليه براءته أن يكون موظفاً.. كلا يا صديقي.. أنا سائح.." (31)
HT	"Do you work in an office?" "Work in an office? Ha! The devil himself is too innocent to be employed in an office. No, my friend, I'm a tourist." (34-35)
CHT	"- Are you an employee?" "- An employee? Ha! Even the devil himself would refuse to let me claim such innocence. No, my friend… I am a traveler."
GT	"Are you an employee?" "An employee? Ha! Even the Devil himself would find his innocence too great a burden to be an employee... No, my friend... I am a tourist." (31)
DeST	"- Are you an office worker?" "- An office worker? Ha! The devil himself, in all his innocence, would refuse to be one.. No, my friend.. I am a traveler.." (31)

In this example DeST demonstrates the highest degree of alignment, effectively mirroring the HT's nuanced approach to linguistic accuracy, fluency, and contextual appropriateness. The primary divergence lies in the initial lexical choice for "موظف": while HT and DeST correctly interpret the cultural context by specifying "office worker" or "work in an office," ChT and GT opt for the more

literal and semantically narrower "employee," which constitutes a Pragmatic-Cultural Translation Error by failing to adapt the source-culture convention of "موظف" as a specific, often derided, type of bureaucratic employment, thus misrepresenting the speaker's scorn. Furthermore, the core figurative expression reveals significant stylistic differences. The HT's "the devil himself is too innocent to be employed in an office" masterfully preserves the original's tone of ironic hyperbole. DeST's rendition, "the devil himself, in all his innocence, would refuse to be one," is a beautiful translation that captures the semantic nuance and stylistic flair, closely aligning with the HT's intent. In contrast, ChT's "Even the devil himself would refuse to let me claim such innocence" commits a Text-Specific Translation Error by fundamentally altering the metaphor's subject from the devil's imagined innocence to the speaker's, thereby distorting the original meaning. GT's "Even the Devil himself would find his innocence too great a burden to be an employee" is conceptually closer but is marred by a Linguistic Translation Error; the phrasing "too great a burden" is stylistically awkward and imprecise, weakening the ironic force. Finally, the choice between "tourist" (HT, GT) and "traveler" (ChT, DeST) for "سائح" highlights a subtle semantic nuance; "tourist" more accurately reflects the likely recreational context, making "traveler" a minor Pragmatic-Cultural misstep.

ST	"- بارك الله فيك، ولكنني تعب قليلا.. هذا كل ما في الأمر.. هل سيتأخر إعداد الرحلة؟" (32)
HT	"You're very kind. But I'm a little tired, that's all there is to it. Will the preparations take long?" (35)
CHT	"- God bless you, but I'm a little tired… that's all there is to it. Will the trip preparations be delayed?"
GT	"God bless you, but I'm just a little tired... that's all it is. Will the arrangements for the journey be delayed?" (32)
DeST	"May God bless you, but I am somewhat weary.. that is all.. Will the preparations for the journey be delayed?" (32)

The three AITs demonstrate the highest degree of alignment, primarily due to its superior lexical choices and contextual

sensitivity. The HT adeptly converts the culturally embedded expression "بارك الله فيك" into the idiomatic and pragmatically equivalent "You're very kind," thereby shifting the focus from a literal religious blessing to the function of expressing gratitude, a decision that avoids a pragmatic-cultural error present in the more literal renderings of ChT ("God bless you"), GT ("God bless you"), and DeST ("May God bless you"). While all three engines commit a similar pragmatic misstep, DeST's choice of the slightly more formal "May God bless you" and "weary" over the neutral "tired" lends a stylistic nuance that is closer to the potential tone of the original, though "tired" remains the most accurate and fluent. In terms of linguistic accuracy, all translations correctly handle the core message, but the rendering of the final question reveals a key distinction. The HT's "Will the preparations take long?" is a natural and contextually appropriate interpretation. In contrast, ChT, GT, and DeST all use "be delayed," a more literal translation of "يتأخر" that introduces a potential text-specific error by implying a schedule slippage rather than a simple question of duration, thus narrowing the interpretative scope of the original query.

ST	"- تريد أن تشكوني إلى الشركة يا ابن الـ... " (36)
HT	"You want to complain to the police about me, son of a . . ." (36)
CHT	"- You want to report me to the company, you little—"
GT	"You wanna report me to the company, you son of a b—?"
DeST	"Are you going to report me to the company, you son of a...?" (36)

The evaluation of the three AITs outputs against the HT reveals significant differences in their alignment, primarily stemming from pragmatic-cultural and text-specific errors. The most critical divergence is the translation of "الشركة" (al-sharika), where HT correctly renders it as "the police," a common colloquialism in some Arab countries. This pragmatic-cultural error is committed by all three machine translations (ChT, GT, DeST), which translate it literally as "the company," fundamentally misrepresenting the situational context and potentially confusing the target

reader about the speaker's threat. Furthermore, the handling of the insult "يا ابن الـ..." demonstrates varying degrees of text-specific and stylistic success. The HT and DeST effectively mirror the source text's abrupt truncation with an ellipsis, preserving the original's implication of a withheld vulgarity. GT's use of " you son of a b—?" is stylistically effective, using a dash to achieve a similar euphemistic effect, though it is more explicit than the HT. In contrast, ChT's "you little—" commits a text-specific error by altering the specific nature of the insult, losing the semantic weight of "son of a..." and thus failing to fully convey the original's offensive tone. In terms of fluency and register, GT's use of the contraction "wanna" introduces an informal, potentially Americanised tone not present in the ST or HT, which could be considered a minor stylistic misstep, while ChT and DeST maintain a more neutral register.

ST	"وقال له أبوه: " "- وفقك الله يا مروان يا سبع. "(50)
HT	"His father said to him: "May God send you success, Marwan, you brave boy." (44)
CHT	His father said to him: "May God guide you, Marwan, you lion."
GT	His father said to him, "May God grant you success, Marwan, my lion."
DeST	His father said to him: "May God grant you success, Marwan, O lion." (50)

Here, the primary point of divergence lies in the text-specific and cultural-pragmatic rendering of the vocative "يا سبع" which the HT aptly translates as "you brave boy." This choice effectively navigates a significant cultural-pragmatic challenge: while "سبع" (lit. lion/hyena/beast) is a potent term of endearment and praise for courage in Arabic, a direct translation risks sounding unnatural or overly literal in English. The HT's "brave boy" successfully transfers the core semantic meaning (courage) into a stylistically natural and receiver-oriented English idiom, preserving the father's affectionate and encouraging tone. In contrast, the AITs outputs all opt for a more literal, "lion." While this is

not a linguistic error, it constitutes a text-specific translation error as it fails to adequately adapt the culture-bound figure of speech. ChT's "you lion" is the most starkly literal, while Gemini's "my lion" and DeepSeek's "O lion" introduce slight stylistic variations; the possessive "my" adds a layer of endearment, and the archaic vocative "O" lends a slightly formal, literary tone. A secondary, minor distinction is the opening benediction "وفقك الله" : is most accurately rendered as "May God grant you success" (GT, DeST) or the HT's beautiful translation, "May God send you success," which carries a similar meaning with slight stylistic variation. ChatGPT's "May God guide you," however, introduces a linguistic translation error at the semantic level, as "guide (هدى) "distorts the intended meaning of "success" or "prosperity (وفق). "

ST	"- لقد اختلفنا إذاً قبل أن نبدأ، هذا ما كنت أخشاه.. عشرة دنانير لا تنقص فلساً.. **السلام عليكم.**" (54)
HT	"So we're disagreeing before we've started. That's what I was afraid of. Ten dinars, and not a penny less. Good-bye." (46)
CHT	"- So we disagree before even starting—just as I feared… Ten dinars, not a single fils less. Peace be upon you."
GT	"So, we've disagreed then, even before we began. That is what I feared... Ten dinars, not a single *fils* less. Farewell."
DeST	"Then it seems we are at odds before we have even begun. This is what I feared. Ten dinars, not a fils less. Peace be upon you." (54)

The HT establishes the benchmark with its high fluency and a pragmatic choice to culturally adapt the final salutation to the natural English "Good-bye," a decision that aligns with the speaker's clear tone of finality. All AITs demonstrate strong linguistic accuracy in conveying the core meaning, but they diverge in contextual appropriateness and lexical nuance. For the opening, both HT ("So we're disagreeing") and DeST ("we are at odds") effectively capture the nuanced conflict, whereas ChT and GT's "we disagree" is more abrupt. The key divergence lies in the final phrase. The HT's "Good-bye" is a pragmatic-cultural masterstroke, perfectly conveying the speaker's frustration and ending the interaction. In contrast, ChT and DeST's literal "Peace be upon you" constitutes a cultural translation

error; while semantically accurate for "السلام عليكم," it is jarringly incongruent with the confrontational context, sounding more like a pious greeting than a curt dismissal. GT's "Farewell" strikes a middle ground, being archaic yet contextually more appropriate for a parting. Regarding the currency, all AITs correctly use the culture-specific "fils," but the HT's "not a penny less" is a superior text-specific adaptation, replacing the source-culture dinar/fils system with the functionally equivalent target-culture pound/penny system to preserve the idiomatic force for an English reader.

ST	"- اسمع يا أبا الخيزران.. أنا **رجل درويش** ولا أفهم بكل **هذه التعقيدات**.. ولكن قصة رحلة القنص تلك، لم تعجبيني.." (60)
HT	"Listen, Abul Khaizuran, I'm a simple man and I don't understand all these complications. But that story of the hunting expedition… I didn't like it. (49)
CHT	"—Listen, Abu al-Khaizuran… I am a simple man, a dervish; I do not grasp all these complications. But that story of the hunting trip… it did not sit well with me."
GT	"Listen, Aba al-Khayzuran, I'm a simple dervish of a man and I don't grasp all these complexities... but that story of the hunting trip didn't sit right with me."
DeST	"- Listen, O Father of Reeds… I am a dervish, a man unaccustomed to such complexities… But that story of the hunting trip—it did not sit well with me." (60)

In the AI translations, the ChT emerges as the output that most effectively mirrors the quality and intent of the HT. All AITs ChT, GT, DeST correctly interpret the core meaning, but they diverge in their handling of linguistic accuracy, fluency, and contextual nuance. Linguistically, the translation of "درويش" as "simple man" in the HT establishes a clear, accessible character voice. ChT aligns closely by rendering it as "a simple man, a dervish," preserving the cultural term while immediately clarifying its meaning for the English reader, a decision that enhances clarity without sacrificing cultural texture. In contrast, GT's "simple dervish of a man" is slightly less fluent, and DeST's choice to omit "simple" entirely "a dervish, a man unaccustomed..." constitutes a text-specific translation error, as it fails to fully capture the speaker's self-effacing tone, which

is a key stylistic element of the source text. The lexical choices for "لم تعجبيني" further illustrate these differences. The HT's "I didn't like it" is direct and emotionally authentic. Both ChT and GT's use of the idiom "did not sit well with me" is contextually appropriate and fluent, conveying a sense of moral unease. However, DeST's translation of the proper name "أبا الخيزران"as "O Father of Reeds" is a serious pragmatic-cultural translation error; while semantically literal, it disregards the translation brief's requirement for receiver orientation, as the name "Abul Khaizuran" used in HT and ChT is established as a proper name in the context of the original novel, and translating it confuses the reader and disrupts character consistency.

ST	"ـ له! له! يا قيس.. من الذي أوهمك أنك عجوز إلى هذا الحد؟ ربما أم قيس! له! يجب أن تأتي معنا.." (63)
HT	"Aha! Ah, Abu Qais, who's given you the idea that you're so old? Umm Qais, perhaps? You must come with us." (51)
CHT	"- Ha! Ha! Qais… who ever made you believe you're so old? Maybe your mother, Qais! Ha! You have to come with us…"
GT	"Lah! Lah! Qais! Who has put this ridiculous notion in your head that you're so old? Perhaps Um Qais! Lah! You absolutely must come with us."
DeST	"- No, no! O Qais... who has convinced you that you are so old? Perhaps Umm Qais! Come now, you must join us..." (63)

In the AI-provided translations as opposed to the HT, the outputs from ChT, and DeST exhibit varying degrees of alignment in linguistic accuracy, fluency, and contextual appropriateness. The HT adeptly renders the Arabic exclamation "له!" as "Aha! Ah," capturing its conversational, chiding tone rather than its literal meaning, and correctly interprets "يا قيس" as "Abu Qais," a culturally specific kunya (an honorific meaning 'father of Qais'). In contrast, ChT commits a significant Cultural Translation Error by translating "يا قيس" merely as "Qais" and misinterpreting "أم قيس" (Umm Qais, the mother) as "your mother, Qais," a phrasing that distorts the original's cultural nuance and intent. GT, while accurately translating "أم قيس" as "Um Qais," makes a Text-Specific Translation Error with its lexical

choice "ridiculous notion" for "أوهمك," which introduces a judgmental tone that is absent in the source text (ST), thereby altering the speaker's gentle mockery into a harsher critique. DeST demonstrates the highest fidelity to the HT's quality, beginning with the contextually apt "No, no!" for " له! له!", which effectively conveys a dissuasive or reassuring tone. Its phrasing, "who has convinced you," is a precise and neutral rendering of "أوهمك," and the invitation to "join us" possesses a collaborative nuance that mirrors the HT's contextual appropriateness more closely than ChT's "come with us" or GT's "absolutely must come."

ST	"فمن سقط عن السراط ذهب إلى النار، ومن اجتازه وصل إلى الجنة.. أما الملائكة هنا فهم رجال الحدود!" (66)
HT	"If anyone falls he goes to Hell, and if anyone crosses safely he reaches Paradise. Here the angels are the frontier guards." (52)
CHT	"Whoever falls from the Sirat descends into Hell, and whoever crosses it reaches Paradise… As for the angels here, they are the guardians of the boundaries!"
GT	"Whoever falls from the Path goes to the Fire, and whoever crosses it reaches Paradise... As for the angels here, they are the border guards!"
DeST	For he who falls from the Path goes to the Fire, and he who crosses it reaches Paradise. As for the angels here, they are the border guards! (66)

The HT establishes the benchmark for a fluent, idiomatic, and pragmatically-oriented translation, which the AITs approach with varying degrees of success. The HT's rendering of "سقط عن السراط" as "if anyone falls" and "اجتازه" as "if anyone crosses safely" demonstrates a high degree of pragmatic and cultural intelligence; it omits the culturally specific term "Sirat" for the broader concept of "the path" and explicitly adds "safely" to clarify the theological implication, thereby perfectly orienting the message for a non-specialist English receiver. In contrast, ChT commits a cultural translation error by retaining "Sirat" without explanation, assuming the target audience's familiarity with Islamic eschatology, while GT and DeST correctly adopt "the Path," aligning with the HT's

strategy. For "النار," the HT's "Hell" is a conventional, impactful choice, whereas GT's and DeST's literal "the Fire," while semantically accurate, lacks the same doctrinal weight in English, constituting a minor text-specific/stylistic weakness. The most significant divergence lies in the final metaphor. The HT's "frontier guards" is a masterful pragmatic and cultural choice, evoking a modern, tangible image of control. ChT's "guardians of the boundaries" is semantically accurate but stylistically ponderous, and GT's/DeST's "border guards," while closer, carries a more secular, geopolitical connotation than the HT's "frontier," which better captures the metaphysical "boundary" between damnation and salvation.

ST	"هذا كل شيء، **ضربة شمس**! هذا صحيح، من الذي سماها ضربة؟ ألم يكن عبقرياً؟"(90)
HT	"That was all, sunstroke. It was quite right. Who called it "sunstroke"? Wasn't he a genius?" (65)
CHT	"That's all there is to it—a sunstroke! True enough, but who named it that? Wasn't he a genius?"
GT	"That's all it is, sunstroke! That's right, who was it that named it a 'stroke' anyway? Wasn't that a stroke of genius?"
DeST	"That's all it is—sunstroke! How true. And who was it that called it 'sunstroke'? Was he not a genius?"(90)

In this example the HT establishes a concise and idiomatic benchmark, against which the AITs exhibit varying degrees of alignment, with their differences most evident in lexical choices and their resulting stylistic implications. The primary translation challenge in the ST is the pun on "ضربة شمس" (sunstroke) and the implied "ضربة" (stroke) of genius, a stylistic problem that the HT handles with a straightforward, declarative tone. ChT demonstrates high fluency and linguistic accuracy with its choice "True enough," but this phrase introduces a concessive tone that is not present in the ST or HT, slightly altering the speaker's affirming intent. In contrast, GT commits a significant pragmatic-cultural error by explicitly attempting to recreate the pun with "Wasn't that a stroke of genius?" This choice, while creative, misinterprets the original's

rhetorical structure; the ST's genius refers to the naming of the condition itself, not to the name being a clever pun, thereby distorting the original intent. DeST most effectively mirrors the quality of the HT. Its lexical selection, "How true," perfectly captures the reflective, affirming tone of the original, and the phrasing "And who was it..." seamlessly connects the clauses, enhancing both fluency and contextual appropriateness.

ST	"أي **كوكب وأي بطيخ**! دعني أمضى قبل أن يطردني الحج.." (97)
HT	"What's all this rubbish about Kawkab? Let me go before Haj Rida gives me the sack." (68)
CHT	"What planet, what watermelon! Let me go before the pilgrim chases me out…"
GT	"Planets and **watermelons**! Let me get going before the Hajji throws me out..."
DeST	"**What a farce, what a mess! Let me be on my way before Hajj throws me out...**" (97)

This sentence reveals that "كوكب" (Kawkab) is a girl's name, the primary failure across all AITs shifts to a severe Text-Specific Translation Error, as they all misinterpret a proper noun, though their handling of the subsequent idiom "وأي بطيخ" further differentiates their quality. HT correctly identifies "Kawkab" as the subject of discussion and masterfully renders the entire exclamation "أي كوكب وأي بطيخ" as "What's all this rubbish about Kawkab?" This brilliantly resolves the text-specific problem by treating "كوكب" as a name and reinterpreting the idiomatic "بطيخ" (watermelon) into the pragmatic function of "rubbish," conveying the speaker's dismissive frustration. In stark contrast, ChT and GT commit a double error: first, by mistranslating "كوكب" as "planet" (a fundamental Linguistic Translation Error stemming from a failure to disambiguate the word), and second, by literally translating "بطيخ" as "watermelon," a Cultural/ Pragmatic Error that produces nonsense. DeST, while also missing the proper noun, makes a superior pragmatic choice. Its translation, "What a farce, what a mess!", correctly interprets the function of the Arabic idiom as an expression of contempt for a ridiculous situation. Although it errs in not naming Kawkab, it successfully

captures the original's tone and intent, making it the most contextually appropriate of the three. Regarding "الحج," the HT's contextual interpretation as "Haj Rida" remains the gold standard, while the AITs' generic "the pilgrim," "the Hajji," or "Hajj" represent another Text-Specific Error.

Conclusion

The analysis of 17 examples demonstrated that the human translation's superiority is not merely a matter of preference but is rooted in a fundamentally different process. Kilpatrick's translation embodies a deep, interpretive engagement with the source text, prioritizing **receiver orientation** and **cultural adaptation**. Her solutions such as rendering "الشركة" (the company) as "the police", "يا سبع" (O lion) as "you brave boy", or "بارك الله فيك" (God bless you) as "You're very kind" are not linguistic translations but *cultural and contextual interpretations*. This ability to grasp the *function* of an utterance rather than just its semantic components allows the HT to preserve the original's artistic and cultural essence.

In contrast, the AI models, despite their sophistication, consistently failed at this pragmatic level. All three models, including the high-performing DeepSeek, literally translated "الشركة" as "the company," an error that fundamentally distorts the scene's tension. Similarly, ChT and GT's literal translation of the insulting term "تيس" as "A goat!" reduced a moment of human conflict to absurdity. These are not minor errors; they are critical failures in comprehension that disrupt the narrative, misrepresent character, and flatten cultural-specific meaning.

Among the AI models, DeepSeek was the clear outperformer, aligning with preliminary research suggesting its "complementary strengths". Its outputs were often lexically superior, demonstrating a more nuanced and "literarily resonant" vocabulary. However, its successes were primarily linguistic and stylistic. It still succumbed to over-literalism (e.g., "on wheels" for "in a hurry") and shared the same cultural blind spots as its competitors.

This suggests that its advanced model, while better at language, has not solved the core problem of AI's lack of true-world, cultural, and historical understanding.

This research has significant implications for the field of translation. It tempers the debate on AI's impact by suggesting that for high-stakes, creative, or culturally-rich texts, AI is not a replacement for human translators. The "ongoing need for human translators" is affirmed. Instead, the findings support a model of **"machine-assisted translation"**. An AI tool like DeepSeek could produce a highly fluent and stylistically strong first draft, but a human translator would be essential to review, edit, and correct the inevitable and critical cultural and pragmatic errors.

Thus, this study reinforces the idea that humans excel in tasks requiring "intellect and thought". Literary translation, as demonstrated by Kilpatrick's work, is not a bureaucratic task of word replacement but a humanistic art of cultural and emotional mediation. While AI has mastered the language, it has not yet mastered the human experience that language seeks to convey.

Results

This study is focused on the analysis of human and AI English translations of Ghassan Kanafani's *Men in the Sun*, comparing Hilary Kilpatrick's translation (HT) to AI translations (AITs) produced by ChatGPT Translation (ChT), Gemini Translation (GT), and DeepSeek Translation (DeST). The analysis yielded significant qualitative and quantitative results. The analysis was guided by Nord's error typology, focusing on pragmatic, cultural, linguistic, and text-specific errors.

1. The analysis of the 17 selected examples reveals a clear hierarchy in translation quality. The human translation was consistently used as the benchmark for high-quality, culturally-nuanced output. When the AI outputs were judged on their ability to mirror the quality, fluency, and contextual appropriateness of the HT, a clear winner emerged.

2. Out of 17 examples, DeepSeek was judged to most effectively mirror the HT's quality in 9 instances. ChatGPT was the most effective in 2 instances, and Gemini in 2 instances. In 4 instances, all three AI models failed to overcome a significant pragmatic or cultural challenge that the human translator successfully navigated,

Translation Model	Times Judged Closest to Human Translation (HT)	Percentage (%)
DeepSeek	9	53%
ChatGPT	2	12%
Gemini	2	12%
All AI Inferior to HT	4	23%

rendering the HT qualitatively superior to all machine outputs.

3. A frequency count of identified errors highlights distinct performance patterns. Pragmatic and cultural errors were the most common and most severe of all error categories across all three AI models, confirming the study's premise that AI struggles with the "cultural depth" and "emotional subtleties" of literary texts.

4. **ChatGPT** and **Gemini** produced a comparable number of total errors, with both struggling significantly with pragmatic/cultural failures. Gemini also displayed a slightly higher tendency to committing linguistic errors, such as awkward phrasing or non-idiomatic word order.

5. Although having committed the fewest total errors, **DeepSeek** was not totally immune to cultural blindness. Its errors were more evenly split between pragmatic/cultural and text-specific (stylistic) categories, suggesting a stronger linguistic engine but a weaker contextual understanding.

Performance Ranking Across 17 Examples

DeepSeek outperformed the other two AI systems, matching the Human Translation's quality in more than half of the analyzed examples. However, in nearly a quarter of the cases (23%), all the three AI models failed to reach acceptable accuracy or contextual appropriateness, which appears to confirm persistent human superiority in literary translation. DeepSeek clearly comes first in alignment with HT quality, followed by ChatGPT and Gemini, but all the three AI models failed completely in four cases.

Times Judged Closest to Human Translation (HT)

%١٢
%١٢
%٣٥
%٥٣
%٢٣

■ DeepSeek
■ ChatGPT
■ Gemini
■ All AI Inferior to HT
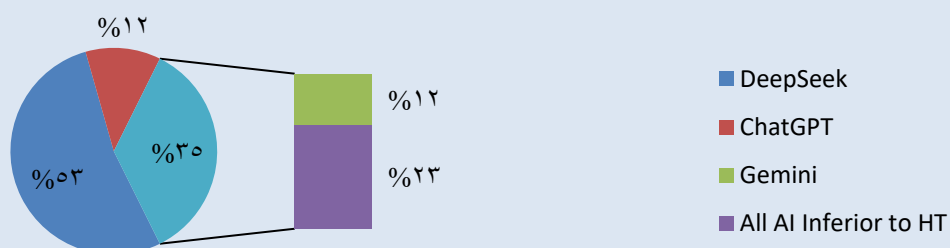
Error Distribution by Type

Error Type	ChatGPT	Gemini	DeepSeek
Pragmatic / Cultural	10	9	7
Linguistic (grammar, syntax, idiom)	3	5	2
Text-specific (stylistic, metaphorical, idiomatic)	4	3	3
Total Errors	**17**	**17**	**12**

Text-specific (stylistic, metaphorical, idiomatic)

%۱۷
%۲٥
%۲٥
%٥۸

- ChatGPT
- Gemini
- DeepSeek

Pragmatic / Cultural

18%
23%
23%
59%

- ChatGPT
- Gemini
- DeepSeek

Linguistic (grammar, syntax, idiom)

%۲۹
%۱۸
%۱۸
%٥۳
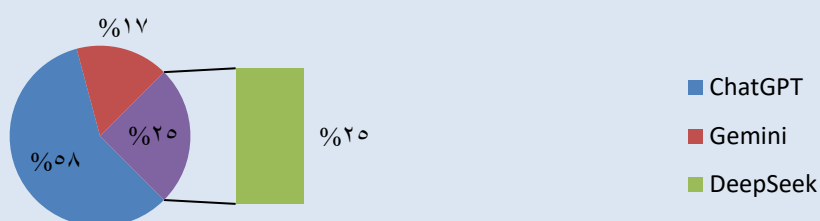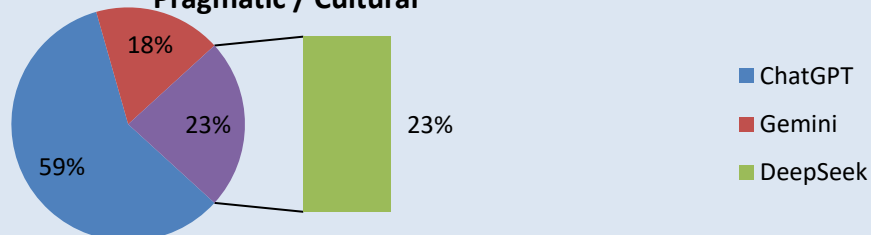
- ChatGPT
- Gemini
- DeepSeek
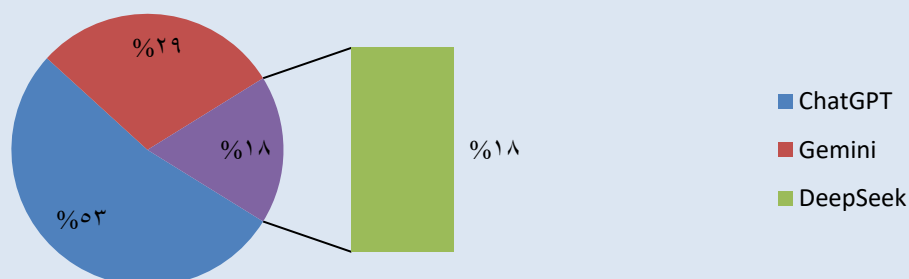
The quantitative findings reveal that DeepSeek committed the fewest total translation errors (12), followed by Gemini (17) and ChatGPT (17). Pragmatic and cultural errors dominate across the outputs of all AI models, accounting for approximately 55% of all detected errors. These errors primarily stem from literal renderings of culturally embedded expressions (e.g., 'تيس' was translated into 'goat' instead of 'idiot'). Linguistic errors were most noticeable in the output by Gemini, while text-specific errors such as stylistic inconsistency and disrupted idiomatic rhythm were observed in the outputs of all the models, but were least severe in DeepSeek.

Recommendations for Further Studies

Based on the findings and the acknowledged limitations of this study, the following areas are recommended for future research:

1. As the present study was confined to one novella by Ghassan Kanafani, future research should analyze a broader range of literary works. A comparative study focusing on classical or modern Arabic poetry, which relies more heavily on dense metaphor and lexical cohesion, would provide a more rigorous test of AI's ability to handle stylistic devices.

2. Given the rapid evolution of the AI landscape, this study was limited to

specific versions of ChatGPT, Gemini, and DeepSeek. Therefore, further research is needed to track the performance of updated versions of these models, as well as new and emerging generative AI tools, to assess whether "specific areas that require enhancement" (particularly cultural context) are being addressed.

3. The findings highlight challenges specific to Arabic-English translation, such as dialectal nuance and deep cultural-religious references. Comparative studies involving different and "less-represented" language pairs would be valuable to determine if these AI failures are universal or specific to languages with significant cultural distance from the AI's training data.

4. This study utilized a single, controlled prompt designed to elicit high-quality literary output. Future studies could explore the impact of different prompting strategies, such as iterative prompting (where the user refines the translation over several attempts) or providing the AI with explicit contextual and cultural glossaries to see if its pragmatic performance can be improved.

5. This study's assessment of the quality of the data AI translations was based on a descriptive-analytical framework as well as the researcher's personal judgment. A valuable next step would be to conduct reception studies, presenting the different translations (human and AI) to a sample of target-language readers to empirically measure and compare their assessments of fluency, accuracy, and cultural appropriateness.

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