Analysis of Postmodern Elements in Two Persian Translations of *Slaughterhouse-Five* by Kurt Vonnegut

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Abstract

The present study aimed to analyze the postmodern features of *Slaughterhouse-Five*, authored by Kurt Vonnegut, and its two Persian translations by Bahrami and Abbasi. To this end, Lewis's classification of postmodern features (2011) and Parham's model (2015) were employed. The features investigated in this study were temporal disorder, fragmentation, vicious circles, paranoia, reader involvement, polyvocality, pastiche, and intertextuality. The results indicated that most postmodern features were preserved in both translations. However, the absence of several fragmentations and intertextuality features in Persian translations can imply the translators' unawareness of the significance of translating these features. To translate these features into the target text, translators should be aware of their impacts on the text, content, and audience. To translate postmodern features more precisely, it is suggested that postmodern features be taken into consideration by literary translators and translator trainers. The findings of this research can have implications for literary translators, and literary translation classrooms.

Keywords: Kurt Vonnegut, Postmodern Features, Slaughterhouse-Five, Translating literature

1. Introduction

Kurt Vonnegut (1922), an originally German writer, had tried to keep his connection with Germany throughout his life. Following the First World War, German Americans were asked to break their ties with Germany to prove their loyalty to their new homeland, the United States, since at that time, the United States and Britain were allied against Germany. This anti-German feeling growing in the United States weakened Vonnegut's family business. Hence, this sense of loss frequently appears in Vonnegut's writing. Vonnegut enlisted in the Second World War as a soldier, and during the battle of the bulge, he was captured by the Germans as a prisoner of war. Then he was sent to Dresden, where he was kept in a slaughterhouse. On the night of 13 February 1945, Dresden was utterly destroyed, leaving behind 135000 deaths to mark the largest massacre in European history. Twenty-four years after the Dresden massacre, in 1969, Kurt Vonnegut published *Slaughterhouse-Five*, which was written based on his experiences during the Second World War. As a postmodernist author, Vonnegut writes about a historical event – the firebombing of Dresden by uncovering the minor stories around it. *Slaughterhouse-Five* is a non-heroic, meaningless pilgrimage that combines Western grand narratives in which wars have long been glorified. The present study assumes significance from different aspects. Firstly, postmodernism is a recent term that attracts scholars in various fields and even ordinary people worldwide. Hence, it is worth investigating. Secondly, the first gap in the literature that made the researcher conduct this study was the fact that a few research studies were conducted on the translation of postmodern features. Although postmodernism is a widespread movement, it is still recondite. Thirdly, *Slaughterhouse-Five* is recognized as a significant part of fiction history, and different researchers looked at it from distinctive perspectives. However, it seemed that its translation, especially its postmodern features, needs further research. In addition, Kurt Vonnegut is one of the most distinguished writers whose works are valuable enough to be researched. Finally, this study can assist English translators and English literature students to distinguish postmodern features more precisely. It also may provide acute effects for future research studies on similar topics.

The research questions of this study are as follows:

1. What postmodern features can be found in *Slaughterhouse-Five*?
2. How are these features treated in two Persian translations of *Slaughterhouse-Five*?
3. What are the differences between the postmodern features in the original and the translated versions of the book?

2. Review of the Related Literature

2.1 Postmodernism and fiction

Nowadays, postmodernism has turned into a widespread movement that is traced in different majors and areas. However, according to Nicol (2009), postmodernism is an indefinable term. Similarly, Hutcheon (2004) states that postmodernism is the most "under-defined" term in the contemporary world. According to Hutcheon, "postmodernism is a contradictory phenomenon, one that uses and abuses, installs and then subverts" (2004, p.3). One of the essential concepts of postmodernism lies in "the presence of the past" (Hutcheon, 2004, p.4). This concept refers to a critical reworking, not a nostalgic return (Hutcheon, 2004, p.4). Postmodern fiction can be considered as a response to socio-historical changes. For example, Larry McCaffrey (1986) states that after assassinating President J. F. Kennedy on 22 November 1963, postmodernism officially came into existence in the United States, "since that was the day that symbolically signaled the end of a certain kind of optimism and naivete in our collective unconsciousness, the end of certain verities and assurances that had helped shape out the notion of what fiction should be" (McCaffrey, 1986). Nicol (2009, p. 22) states that postmodern fiction is strongly influenced by "the response of a range of writers and critics from the mid-1950s to the early 1970s", especially "in their inability to conceive of realism without some degree of suspicion or disbelief." According to Lewis (2011), postmodernism has two waves. The first wave includes the texts published between 1960 and 1990. The second wave consists of a large proportion of writing published after 1990. The first wave of postmodernist writers has more common aims than the second wave. Some features of both waves of postmodern fiction are as follows: temporal disorder, pastiche, fragmentation, looseness of association, paranoia, and vicious circles (Lewis, 2011, p.171). All these features can be seen as symptoms of the language disorders of postmodernist fiction (Lewis, 2011, p.179). Nicol (2009) indicates that the early postmodern writers of the 1960s and 1970s were mainly associated with this question of creating newer artistic forms in their writings. As Nicol (2009, p.50) states, they believe that "the novel is effectively exhausted as a literary form." What it means by exhaustion, according to Barth (2002), is this sense that "certain forms or certain possibilities in fiction are used up" rather than a kind of "physical, moral, or intellectual decadence." Barth (2002, p.140) states that the problem of this exhaustion is how to produce something new which can still be called a "proper" novel that is "technically up-to-date."

According to Nicol (2009, p.19), postmodern fiction is in disbelief towards realism, "a state of mind which does not necessarily conclude that representing the postmodern world accurately, realistically, is no longer desirable." Sarraute (1963, cited in Nicol, 2009) mentions that in postmodernism, a fundamental shift happened from "*confidence* to *suspicion*." As quoted by Nicol (2009), according to Robbe-Grillet (1989), the function of the novel is changed in the twentieth century. The book no longer informs us about reality; instead, it constitutes

reality. It means that the novel creates a world that is separated from the real world (Nicol, 2009). However, Nicol (2009) clarifies that postmodernism cannot be considered the 'opposite' of realism. In other words, postmodern fiction is related to how readers read rather than how authors write. It demands readers to 'read in a new way' (Nicol, 2009).

2.2 Postmodernism and Literary Translation

Lotman (1976, p.339) writes that "any verbal text which is capable, within the limits of the culture in question, of fulfilling an aesthetic function can be counted as literature." According to Delabastita (2010, p.199), literature is a particularly intense and heightened form of discourse that uses all the potentialities of language. As a result, literary language has become self-referential. There is no doubt that this kind of language is a difficult challenge for those who translate it and those who study these translations (Delabastita, 2010). Delabastita (2010) explains that canonized texts (referred to as literature) have something in common with sacred texts, and these texts are often found in other cultures as well. Therefore, these texts are suitable for "interesting comparisons to be made between retranslations and even between translations across the centuries and in totally different languages and target cultures" (Delabastita, 2010, p.200). Delabastita (2010) further adds that there is "an established (but questionable) hierarchy of values in society which regards canonized literature as a superior form of culture." Texts written for soap operas and instruction manuals of commercials do not have the same value as literary text e.g., written by Virgil, Goethe, or Kundera (Delabastita, 2010). Not surprisingly, these valuations influence the overall research priorities in a culture.

However, postmodern views have started to change these values in society. According to Delabastita (2010, p.200), postmodern taste "sets a high value on all kinds of genre-bending, genre-blending, and intermediality." So, research into the translation of advertising, children's literature, comics, science fiction, etc., has found a space to develop. On the other hand, although the literary translation is an essential area within translation studies, translation has remained a neglected area within academic studies (Delabastita, 2010). One of its reasons is the translators themselves. Literary translators usually keep a low profile. Delabastita (2010: 204) explains that "they usually adapt their versions of the original to the dominant linguistic, aesthetic and ideological norms of the receiving culture." Literary fiction has always been a central area in the studies of translation. Wittman (2013, p. 438) states that "literary translation is best understood as the product of a translator who takes the literary nature of the original seriously and translates intending to produce a text that will have literary merit of its own." According to Wittman (2013, p.439), in the late 20th century, there was an increase in the research studies in which multiple translations of a literary text are compared to "determine the ideological, contextual and cultural factors that

account for translational choices."

A dissertation submitted in Allameh Tabataba'i University by Fatemeh Parham entitled 'Postmodernism and Translation Studies: From Theory to Practice' states that "These features were found to manifest themselves at an extra-sentential level and were more or less transferred intact in the translation process" (Parham, 2015). In another research entitled 'A Study of Postmodern Literature in Translation as Illustrated through the Selected Works of Thomas Pynchon,' the researcher "attempts to define of translation for analysis of literary translation" (Barcinski, 2016). Another research conducted with a postmodernist approach is 'Culture Strategy in Translating Postmodern Literary Text.' In this study, the researcher states that culture strategy is the key point in translating a postmodern literary text (Babelyuk, 2017). Its focus is on the cultural aspects of the translation by working on a postmodern, postcolonial literary text. The researcher states that "The key point in translating postmodern literary texts is culture strategy due to its hybridity and the special lingua-cultural layer, which reflects the cultural identity of a multilingual author" (Babelyuk, 2017). 'Perspectives on postmodernism and the historical fiction is another research conducted in this area that investigates postmodernism in general and postmodernist literary theory in particular. After defining and analyzing 'postmodernism' and 'historical fiction,' it is concluded that everything (including these two terms) is relative in postmodernism. According to the author, postmodernist literature does not look at history as "an objective science that offers people the historical fact without the shadows of a doubt" (Chirobocea, 2017). And finally, a research entitled 'Postmodernism in English Intersemiotic-Intralingual Translation: From Fiction to Movie' is conducted in Allameh Tabataba'i University. According to the researcher, this study "aimed to investigate how postmodern characteristics of the novels were transferred into their corresponding movies to see the changes occurring due to the medium shift in the process of intersemiotic-intralingual translation" (Savadkoohi, 2018). Regarding the results of this study, all postmodern characteristics of the novels could be translated or compensated for in the visual world of the films by some techniques such as mise-en-scene and editing.

2.3 Postmodern features

Lewis's classification of postmodern features is one of the models applied in this study to find these features in *Slaughterhouse-Five* and its two translations. As mentioned above, the first feature of this classification is temporal disorder. It refers to the disruption of time. For example, anachronism disrupts temporal order by showing significant inconsistencies of detail or setting (Lewis, 2011, p.172). The temporal disorder includes two types: 1) Kairos: a disorder of the linear coherence of narrative by influencing the sense of time, and 2) Chronos: the dull passing of ordinary time (Lewis, 2011, p.172). The next feature is pastiche which

is originated from the Italian word pasticcio means a medley of various ingredients. According to Lewis (2011, p.172), however, it is not unique in postmodern writing. It has existed even before that. By the year 2000, pastiche began to be considered acceptable since widespread plagiarism could be noticed by some technologies. Contemporary artists are faced with the fact that everything has been done before, and many stylistic possibilities have already been used. Hence, postmodern writers started to use pastiche (Lewis, 2011, p.173). Lewis (2011) states that the genres popular among postmodern writers are the Western, science fiction, and detective genres. By using pastiche, postmodern writers attempt to combine these genres.

According to Lewis (2011), fragmentation is another feature of postmodern fiction. The postmodern writer did not trust the wholeness and completion regarding the traditional stories. They wanted to create other ways of structuring narrative. One way was the multiple ending in which different possible endings for a plot are suggested (Lewis, 2011, p.174). Lewis (2011) also explains that the postmodern writer addresses the reader and even steps into the story himself. They break the text into short fragments or sections, separated by space, titles, numbers, or symbols. Even some authors go further and add illustrations, typography, or mixed media (Lewis, 2011, p.174). The next feature is the looseness of association. It refers to welcoming chance into the compositional process (Lewis, 2011). According to Lewis (2011, p.175), some techniques are used among writers regarding the opportunity:

1. The cut-up: placing separate sentences from different texts into a hat, shaking them, then matching together the pieces of paper which are picked out at random.
2. The fold-in: in which a page is folded vertically and then matched with another page. It gives the writer the option of repeating passages in a specifically musical way.

Paranoia is the next feature categorized by Lewis (2011). It is the threat of total surrounding by somebody else's system, which is felt by many of the characters of postmodern fiction (Lewis, 2011, p.176). According to Lewis (2011), paranoid anxieties are shown in many ways, such as the distrust of fixity, being restricted to any particular place or identity, a belief that society is conspiring against the individual, the increase of self-made plots to prevent the plots of others. Finally, vicious circles are classified. It occurs when text and world are inseparable and has two forms: 1) short circuits: when the author steps into the text, and 2) double binds: when real-life historical figures appear in fiction (Lewis, 2011, p.178). The texts of postmodernism were self-reflexive, playful, and aware of the medium of language to give a new life to the novel form (Lewis, 2011, p.169). Polyvocality and reader involvement are two other features that are taken from Parham's model in her dissertation.

3. Method

3.1 Corpus

For the present study, an American Novel, *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1969), is selected. The novel is written by Kurt Vonnegut (1922-2007), an American author, who has played an essential role in the postmodern movement. His book, *Slaughterhouse-Five* or the *Children's Crusade: A Duty-Dance with Death*, is considered one of the best through this movement. The main character of *Slaughterhouse-Five* is a man called Billy Pilgrim, whose experiences in World War II and his journeys through time, are shared.

Two Persian translations of the novel by A. Bahrami and T. Abbasi are selected. A. Bahrami (1940-) is an Iranian translator who had studied English literature in Shiraz and then English teaching in Sydney, Australia. He has translated several books into Persian, and *Slaughterhouse-Five* is his most popular translation. T. Abbasi (1980-) is also an Iranian translator. The researcher could not find any further information about this translator, and it seems that she only has this published book in the market. These two translations were published by *Roshangaran* and *Yoruban* publishing companies with a length of 263 and 232 pages, respectively. In both translations, the novel is translated into Farsi as سلاخ
خانه ی شماره ی پنج.

3.2 Procedure

The present study had three phases. First, the researcher studied the novel very carefully to identify the postmodern features of the novel. These features are based on Lewis's classification of postmodern features (2011) and Parham's model (2015), which are temporal disorder, pastiche, fragmentation, looseness of association, paranoia, vicious circles, polyvocality, and reader involvement. Among these features, six elements applied to this study: temporal disorder, fragmentation, paranoia, vicious circles, polyvocality, and reader involvement.

According to Parham (2015), the sub-features of the six main features and their descriptions are specified as follows:

I. Temporal disorder
   A. Apocryphal history: unreal or false accounts of famous events
   B. Anachronism: disruption of temporal order by apparent inconsistencies of detail or setting
   C. The blending of history and fantasy: combining the arrangements of verifiable historical events with unsubstantiated anecdotes
   D. The abundance of incidents: the abundance of incidents occurring over a single night that distends time beyond recognition

II.   Fragmentation
    A. Theme attenuation: challenging to consider the story to be 'about' such and such
    B. Multiple endings
    a. Offering numerous possible outcomes for a plot
    b. Leaving the story open-ended
    C. Segmentation
    a. Breaking the text into fragments or sections separated by numbers, symbols, titles, or spaces
    b. Fragmenting the fabric of the text with illustrations, typography, or mixed media
    c. Printing the story on pages that come in several different colors
    d. Using multiple typefaces, fonts, and characters as well as numerous arrangements for pages, footnotes, and columns
III.   Vicious circles
    A. Short circuits: when the author appears in his fiction
    B. Double binds: the presence of real-life historical figures in fiction (usually in ways that are inconsistent with or contradictory to verifiable public records)
IV.   Paranoia
    A. Paranoid character
    a. Postmodern heroes find themselves confined to their plots by authorities.
    b. Postmodern protagonists suspect that they are trapped in the center of a conspiracy.
    B. Non-linear plot: the plot is pounded into small slabs of event and circumstance
V.   Reader involvement
    A. Direct address to the reader
    B. Open acknowledgment of the fictional nature of the events being described
VI.   Polyvocality: several narrators recounting the story

After finding these features in the original text, two translated texts were studied to investigate the translations of the researched postmodern features and see how they were treated in the Persian translations. In addition to the researchers, two raters were involved in finding, investigating, and comparing postmodern features of the selected novel. Two raters with expertise in both English and Persian languages and familiarity with postmodern features rated the obtained data. After rating, an inter-rater reliability score was calculated. The inter-rater reliability was estimated as 70%. Since postmodernism and its components are subjective and abstract, the inter-rater reliability score is not so high, and it is pretty natural in this case. Finally, the two translated texts were compared and analyzed to investigate postmodern features and how the translators have treated them.

4. Results

As shown in table 1, the most frequently found feature was disruption of temporal order by apparent inconsistencies of detail or setting, which is one of the sub-features of temporal disorder. The following frequent feature was a non-linear plot – the sub-feature of paranoia –used by the author in 48 cases. On the other hand, the multiple endings feature, categorized under the feature of fragmentation, was used only once.

Table 1
Postmodern features in the original text

Postmodern features found in the original text	Frequency
Temporal disorder → Apocryphal history: unreal or false accounts of famous events	4
Temporal disorder → Anachronism: disruption of temporal order by apparent inconsistencies of detail or setting	50
Temporal disorder → Blending of history and fantasy	32
Temporal disorder → Abundance of incidents	13
Fragmentation → Multiple endings: offering numerous possible outcomes for a plot	1
Fragmentation → Segmentation: breaking the text into fragments or sections separated by numbers, symbols, titles, or spaces	32
Fragmentation → Segmentation: fragmenting the fabric of the text with illustrations, typography, or mixed media	2
Fragmentation → Segmentation: using multiple typefaces, fonts, and characters	20
Vicious circles → Short circuits: when the author appears in his fiction	43

Vicious circles → Double binds: the presence of real-life historical figures in fiction	9
Paranoia → Paranoid character	5
Paranoia → Non-linear plot	48
Reader involvement → Direct address to the reader	4
Reader involvement → Open acknowledgment of the fictional nature of the events being described	8
Polyvocality → several narrators recounting the story	20
Pastiche	30
Intertextuality	23

The treatment of postmodern features in the first translation, translated by A. Bahrami, is illustrated in the following table:

Table 2
Treatment of postmodern features in the first TT

ST postmodern features	Total number	Preserved	Removed
Temporal disorder → Apocryphal history: unreal or false accounts of famous events	4	4	-
Temporal disorder → Anachronism: disruption of temporal order by apparent inconsistencies of detail or setting	50	50	-

Temporal disorder → Blending of history and fantasy	32	32	-
Temporal disorder → Abundance of incidents	13	13	-
Fragmentation → Multiple endings: offering numerous possible outcomes for a plot	1	1	-
Fragmentation → Segmentation: breaking the text into fragments or sections separated by numbers, symbols, titles, or spaces	32	31	1
Fragmentation → Segmentation: fragmenting the fabric of the text with illustrations, typography, or mixed media	2	-	2
Fragmentation → Segmentation: using multiple typefaces, fonts, and characters	20	-	20
Vicious circles → Short circuits: when the author appears in his fiction	43	43	-
Vicious circles → Double binds: the presence of real-	9	9	-

life historical figures in fiction			
Paranoia → Paranoid character	5	5	-
Paranoia → Non-linear plot	48	48	-
Reader involvement → Direct address to the reader	4	4	-
Reader involvement → Open acknowledgment of the fictional nature of the events being described	8	8	-
Polyvocality → several narrators recounting the story	20	20	-
Pastiche	30	30	-
Intertextuality	23	22	1
Sum	344	320	24

As illustrated in table 2, most postmodern features were preserved in the first translation, except for 23 cases of fragmentation feature and one case of intertextuality.

The treatment of postmodern features in the second translation, translated by T. Abbasi, is illustrated in the following table:

Table 3
Treatment of postmodern features in the second TT

ST postmodern features	Total number	Preserved	Removed
Temporal disorder → Apocryphal history: unreal or false accounts of famous events	4	4	-
Temporal disorder → Anachronism: disruption of temporal order by apparent inconsistencies of detail or setting	50	50	-
Temporal disorder → Blending of history and fantasy	32	32	-
Temporal disorder → Abundance of incidents	13	13	-
Fragmentation → Multiple endings: offering numerous possible outcomes for a plot	1	1	-
Fragmentation → Segmentation: breaking the text into fragments or sections separated by numbers, symbols, titles, or spaces	32	3	29
Fragmentation → Segmentation: fragmenting the fabric of the text with illustrations,	2	-	2

typography, or mixed media			
Fragmentation → Segmentation: using multiple typefaces, fonts, and characters	20	-	20
Vicious circles → Short circuits: when the author appears in his fiction	43	43	-
Vicious circles → Double binds: the presence of real-life historical figures in fiction	9	9	-
Paranoia → Paranoid character	5	5	-
Paranoia → Non-linear plot	48	48	-
Reader involvement → Direct address to the reader	4	4	-
Reader involvement → Open acknowledgment of the fictional nature of the events being described	8	8	-
Polyvocality → several narrators recounting the story	20	20	-
Pastiche	30	30	-

Intertextuality	23	20	3
Sum	344	290	54

According to table 3, more postmodern features have been removed in the second translation. Fifty-one cases of fragmentation feature and 3 cases of intertextuality feature were not preserved in the second translation.

5. Discussion

Slaughterhouse-Five, which is mainly filled with death and destruction, is an anti-war novel. In this novel, Vonnegut illustrates the effects of war on human beings. As a postmodern novel, *Slaughterhouse-Five* has no obvious beginning, middle, or end as well as plot and setting. This novel has dominant themes such as time, death, war, fantasy, free will, innocence, cruelty, and survival. Some of these themes are related to the real world and the Second World War, especially to Dresden, where Vonnegut himself survived its bombings. On the other hand, some of its themes are related to an imaginary world. According to Aleyamma (2013, p.33), "Kurt Vonnegut has been categorized as a science fiction writer, satirist, black humorist as well as a postmodern writer." Therefore, the postmodern features of fiction are easily noticeable in *Slaughterhouse-Five*. The postmodern features in this study are based on Lewis's classification of postmodern features (2011) and Parham's model (2015), which are temporal disorder, fragmentation, vicious circles, paranoia, reader involvement, polyvocality, pastiche, and intertextuality.

In *Slaughterhouse-Five*, time is not shown as a single reality. It shifts between the past, the present, and the future. The main character of the novel, Billy Pilgrim, has come 'unstuck in time', which means he is free from the concept of time. That is why Billy Pilgrim experiences several time-travels during the novel. However, according to Kimblad (2014), Billy has Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) which has been presented through his time traveling and alien encounters. Considering what has just been mentioned, Vonnegut uses temporal disorder, the prominent feature of postmodern fiction, to disrupt the temporal order of events. As shown in tables 2 and 3, all 99 cases of temporal disorder, which are divided into four sub-features, were preserved in both translations. Additionally, the plot of the story does not follow the conventional linear structure. As a result, it does not have a usual timeline throughout the story. This is another feature of postmodern fiction that is categorized under the paranoia feature. Another sub-feature of paranoia is paranoid characters. Billy Pilgrim seems to be a paranoid person who has no control over his life: "Billy is spastic in time, has no control over where he is going next, and the trips aren't necessarily fun. He is in a constant state of stage fright, he says, because he never knows what part of his life is going

to have to act in next" (Vonnegut, 1969, p. 14). As stated in the results, 53 cases of paranoia were found in the novel, and all of them were preserved in both translations.

Vonnegut applies another technique in his novel, which is 'personal authorial involvement.' He creates several narrators in the story. There are two main narrators in *Slaughterhouse-Five*: the one who is the author himself (Vonnegut), and the impersonal one who is the omniscient narrator. This technique leads to polyvocality and vicious circles (short circuits), which are other postmodern features found in this novel. Twenty cases of polyvocality and 43 cases of short circuits were found in the novel, which were all preserved in both translations. There is another type of vicious circle, which is referred to as double binds. All nine cases of it were preserved in both translations as well. There are also other narrators in the story created through direct quotations, which is called intertextuality in postmodern fiction. As stated in the results, intertextuality usually leads to polyvocality. According to tables 2 and 3, twenty-three cases of intertextuality were found. Except for 1 case in the first translation and 3 cases in the second translation, the rest were preserved.

In the first chapter of *Slaughterhouse-Five*, which is narrated by Vonnegut himself, readers are directly addressed. Vonnegut explains the procedure of writing the book and the difficulties he had on his way. He openly acknowledges the fictional nature of the text in the very first sentence: "All this happened, more or less. The war parts, anyway, are pretty much true" (Vonnegut, 1969, p. 5). Furthermore, he even explains the climax of the story:

> "'I think the climax of the book will be the execution of poor old Edgar Derby,' I said. 'The irony is so great. A whole city gets burned down, and thousands and thousands of people are killed. And then this one American foot soldier is arrested in ruins for taking a teapot. And he's given a regular trial, and then he's shot by a firing squad.'" (Vonnegut, 1969, p.6).

Thus, the reader is involved in the story. As illustrated in tables 2 and 3, in both translations, the translator kept this feature and involved the readers as the author does. Some postmodern features are form-related and are categorized under fragmentation feature. These features include spacing and paragraphing style, separating text with numbers, symbols, and spaces, using illustrations and typography, and using multiple typefaces, fonts, and characters. In *Slaughterhouse-Five*, Vonnegut italicizes direct quotations. In addition, he carefully arranges the paragraphs to specify time-changings or to write about a new subject in the story. In both translations, multiple font styles are lost. However, the first translator was more faithful to the original text by making direct quotations bold as well as italic. In the first translation, spacing and paragraphing style of the original text were also kept in the translated text, except

in one case. By contrast, the second translator mostly ignored this feature.

Pastiche is another feature examined in this study. Although *Slaughterhouse-Five* can be categorized as autobiographical fiction, it is also a science-fiction novel. In other words, Vonnegut combines these two genres and applies the elements of both genres in his book. There are many autobiographical details in the book. For instance, Vonnegut attended the University of Chicago and worked for the Chicago City News Bureau and the General Electric Company in Schenectady. These are mentioned in the first chapter of the novel: "I went to the University of Chicago for a while after the Second World War. I was a student in the Department of Anthropology… While I was studying to be an anthropologist, I was also working as a police reporter for the famous Chicago City News Bureau for twenty-eight dollars a week" (Vonnegut, 1969, p.8), "And I became a public relations man for General Electric in Schenectady, New York, and a volunteer fireman in the Village of Alplaus, where I bought my first home" (Vonnegut, 1969, p.9). On the other hand, in this novel, Vonnegut speaks of time-traveling, another planet named Tralfamadore, and being kidnapped by aliens, who all are proofs of the science-fiction genre. The pastiche feature was perfectly preserved in both translations.

The collected data made it evident that all postmodern features investigated in this study are above sentence-level, and as Parham (2015) states in her dissertation, they are at an 'extra-sentential' level. It seems that translators had no choice but to transfer these features to the target texts. Also, it can be concluded that translators may not even be conscious of these features. However, in some cases of intertextuality and fragmentation, their ignorance of postmodern features led to the removal of these features in the target texts. In addition, most of these removed postmodern features in both translations are related to the form of the text rather than the content. Hence, it can be concluded that both translators ignored the formal features of the original text as a result of a lack of knowledge of the postmodern features, which are related to the form of the text. Furthermore, as stated in the results, most postmodern features were kept in both translations. Therefore, it can be concluded that despite the complexity and rarity of postmodern concepts in Iran, the postmodern novels can be translated into Persian, and their postmodern features can be preserved in the target text. Another conclusion reached in this study is that translating postmodern literature into Persian can be a tremendous help to Iranian writers to be informed about postmodernism and its features. By comparing these two translations, it becomes abundantly clear that the first translator was more faithful to the original text and its postmodern features. He observed the format and the content of the original text with more caution. Also, he might be familiar with the postmodernism movement and its features. However, as mentioned in the limitations of the present study, the researcher found no way to be contacted with the translators. Therefore, it cannot be assured whether the translators were conscious of

postmodern features when translating this novel or not. On the other hand, in the second translation, more removed postmodern features were found, especially the standard features. It can be said that this translator was not knowledgeable enough about postmodern fiction. She ignored carelessly the font changes, spacing, and paragraphing style of the original text. Since this study investigated the postmodern features above the sentence level, for further research, another model is required to analyze the translations of postmodern fiction in more detail and at more minor levels.

6. Conclusion

The data indicate that translating a postmodern novel into another language – in this case into Persian – is possible. And even by training translators to deal with the postmodern features and know their functions, they can perform their roles as translators in a better way. The findings of the present study illustrate that the majority of postmodern features were preserved in the translations since they show up at an extra-sentential level (Parham, 2015). The translators' lack of knowledge or attention led to the removal of some cases of intertextuality and fragmentation in the target texts. To preserve these features in the target text, translators should be aware of their effects on the text, content, and audience. Moreover, regarding the temporal disorder, including apocryphal history, blending of history and fantasy, anachronism and abundance of incidents, all cases were kept in both translations. To compensate for the translation shortcomings, it is suggested that postmodern features be taken into consideration by literary translators and translator trainers. Finally, the results of the present study can be utilized by researchers interested in literary translation and postmodern fiction to develop more comprehensive models to investigate and analyze the translation of postmodern features.

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