A Metamodern Approach to the Analysis of Netflix's English Subtitling of Verbal Humour in *al-Iyāl Kebret [No Longer Kids]*.

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Abstract

Audiovisual translation (AVT) is currently a vibrant field of research due the increasing importance of intercultural communication in the modern era. The emergence of international subscription-based streaming services in the second decade of the third millennium resulted in the increase of subtitled and dubbed AV material. This study focuses on Netflix's English subtitling of verbal humour in *al-Iyāl Kebret [No Longer Kids]* in order to offer an academic investigation of AVT in this new medium.

The study contributes to the field of translation studies by developing a metamodern model of analysis of Arabic AV material that is based on the new movement of metamodernism. Metamodernism in translation seeks to find the balance between the limits of AVT and the freedom necessary to reconstruct the message to convey the meaning and make the text perform its function in the target context. Using a metamodern approach to the analysis of Netflix's English subtitling of verbal humor in *al-Iyāl Kebret*, the study assesses the approaches adopted by the subtitler and the strategies he or she uses to translate the play's verbal humour into English, sheds light on the procedure of "quasi-translation", and offers recommendations regarding subtitling of verbal humor into English.

Keywords: Audiovisual translation, subtitling, verbal humour, subscription-based streaming services, quasi-translation, metamodernism.

Introduction

Audiovisual translation (AVT) is a branch of translation studies that focuses on the transfer of meaning of "multimodal and multimedial" messages/texts/products from one linguistic and cultural system into another (González, 1998, p.13). Baldry and Thibault (2006) state that messages/texts/products are multimodal if they and their interpretation depend on "the combined deployment of a wide range of semiotic resources or 'modes'" (as cited in González, 1998, p. 13). These modes include "language, image, music, colour and perspective" (González, 1998, p.13). Negroponte (1991) clarifies that the messages/texts are multimedial if their presentation to the viewer depends on various media that work in a synchronized way, with the screen playing the main role in the coordination between the media during the presentation process (as cited in González, 1998, p. 13). The translation of audiovisual texts has two main modes: subtitling and dubbing. In this study, I focus on investigating the translation of humour in Netflix's English subtitling of the Egyptian comedy play *al-Iyāl Kebret*[1] [*No Longer Kids*] (al-'Aṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020).

Gambier (2012) observes that AVT has become an academic field of research that received much attention during the past twenty years (p.45); he also states that discussions of AVT have become more familiar with the centenary anniversary of the cinema (1995) which also coincided with the advance in technology (p.45). Recently, AVT has become one of the "most vibrant and rigorous fields in Translation Studies", and it has become more visible in a relatively short period of time due to the increasing number of events, books, and articles dedicated to AVT (Díaz Cintas and Anderman, 2009, p. 8). Iala (2015) attributes the increasing interest in audiovisual translation to "the

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[1] I follow the *IJMES* transliteration system when transliterating Arabic words into English. Exceptions include quotations or the way authors choose to write their own names or the titles of their works.

evolution of the media" which characterizes the age of globalization (p.1).

Because of the constraints of AVT, many people still regard this form of translation as a loss instead of considering it a "creative solution to the problems of international distribution" of audiovisual products (Gambier, 2012,p. 45). It is a form of translation that the world of technology and mass media needs in the era of globalization, and the increasing need for AVT calls for academic investigation.

One of the tools of globalization is subscription-based streaming services which allow their members to watch AV products (programs, documentaries, movies, etc.) on their devices. These can be regarded as new channels of transmitting audiovisual texts. One of these services is Netflix which started in 1997 as a media-streaming and video-rental company and was founded by American entrepreneurs Reed Hastings and Marc Randolph (Hosch, 2020, para.1). It started expanding beyond the United States of America in 2010 by offering streaming services in Canada (Hosch, 2020, para. 4). By 2016, Netflix's services became "available in more than 190 countries and territories" (Hosch, 2020, para. 4).

Netflix now presents movies and programs that were produced by Anglophone as well as non-English speaking countries, and it depends on intralingual and interlingual translations in the modes of subtitling or dubbing to make the productions intelligible to its members. Subtitling has recently been more popular than dubbing because it is quicker and cheaper, and has therefore become the more preferable mode of translation in media production and has become a companion of globalization (Díaz Cintas and Anderman, 2009, p. 4)

In May 2020, Netflix presented a number of popular Egyptian plays with Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and English subtitles as a part of its Eid al-Fitr program. The MSA subtitles target viewers with hearing impairment, while the English

subtitles target viewers who do not speak Arabic in an attempt that seems to aim at attracting new audiences (Kafāfi, 2020, para.2). Due to the gap between the English and Arabic linguistic and cultural systems, as well as the gap between Egyptian colloquial Arabic and MSA, the interlingual and intralingual translations of humour in these subtitled plays led to a considerable loss of meaning and effect which triggered sarcastic responses (Kafāfi, 2020, para.4). The responses which were embodied in posts on social media websites, especially memes, which made fun of Netflix's translations of humour in these plays reflect the difficulty of translating humour in Egyptian AV products and call for academic investigation into Netflix's strategies of subtitling.

The model of translation analysis in this study is based on metamodernism which is a new movement that seeks finding balance "between freedom and restriction" (Alexandrova, 2020, p. 4). The subtitler of an AV product needs to take liberties with the text to incite laughter because humour is a function of the genre of comedy; however, the subtitler's attempts are shackled by the constraints of time and space which are characteristic of AVT.

This study investigates Netflix's English subtitling of verbal humour, and chooses al-*'Iyāl Kebret* [*No Longer Kids*] (al-Aṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020) to be its focus. The study adopts a metamodern approach to the analysis of the subtitles in which the translator's attitude towards the verbal jokes and the translation strategies he or she uses in the subtitles are analysed and assessed. On the basis of the metamodernism-based analysis, recommendations about subtitling verbal humour in AV products are offered.

Subtitling: Definitions, Constraints, and Challenges

Gottlieb (2004) defines subtitling as "the rendering in a different language of verbal messages in filmic media, in the shape of one or more lines of written text, presented on screen in

sync with the original verbal message" (p.15). Subtitles are usually produced and "added to the screen image at a later date as a post-production activity" (Luyken et al., 1991, p. 31). They typically appear at the bottom of the screen, and they can be interlingual or intralingual (González, 1998, p.15). Díaz Cintas (2003) observes that interlingual subtitling provides the viewers with the written translation of the foreign audiovisual text into their language (as cited in González, 1998, p.15). He also observes that intralingual subtitling has increased since the 1970s, and that it was mainly provided for minority viewers such as immigrants who wanted to learn the language of the new community to which they moved and viewers who needed "written support" to understand the AV productions which were produced in "non-standard dialects of their native language" (as cited in González, 1998, p. 15). Now, intralingual subtitling has become mainly produced for people with hearing impairment as accessibility-friendly initiatives and is becoming increasingly popular (González, 1998, p. 15).

Karamitrouglou (1998) states that subtitles are usually done in accordance with commonly accepted spatial limitations which dictate that a maximum of two lines of written text appear on the screen, and that each line contains a specific number of characters (as cited in González, 1998, p. 15). Titford (1982) states that the number of the characters in each line depends on the duration of the speech unit with which it should synchronize (as cited in González, 1998, p.15). In case of Netflix, it allows 42 characters per line ("English Timed Text Guide", 2020, para.4)

According to O'Connel (1998), one of the factors that generate spatial and temporal constraints on subtitles is the fact that people usually speak faster than they read (p. 67). Another factor that Linde and Kay (1999) refer to is that the subtitler has to keep in pace with "the natural flow of speech" (p. 46). The spatial and temporal constraints on subtitles are behind the communicative nature of subtitling as a mode of AVT.

Gottleib (1998) states that the fact that the translator has to synchronise the written subtitles with the speech segments necessitates prioritizing the overall communicative meaning of the speech segments over the meaning of individual words (as cited in González, 1998, pp. 15-16). Therefore, professional translators usually resort to the strategies of omission, condensation, and adaption of speech units of the source text; they also resort to "ironing main-stream identities—and their individual speech styles—out of the translated narrative" (González, 1998, p.16). According to Linda and Kay (1999), empirical evidence shows that subtitling can produce 43% less text than the source AV text (p.46).

Subtitling is challenging because the translator attempts to reproduce the linguistic features of the original text in the subtitles while attempting to create an equivalent effect on the viewers and to reproduce the function of the source text (Iaia, 2015, p. 20). It is also challenging because it is dependent on modality; therefore, the translator should take into consideration extralinguistic details (Aleksandrova, 2020, p. 89). These include not only gestures, but also the reactions of the original audience to some types of AV products, especially plays.

The reaction of the audience is a challenge to the translator who does the interlinguistic subtitling of humourous AV products. In case of subtitled comedy plays, such as *al-Iyāl Kebret*, the target audience can hear the laughter of the play's original audience to jokes. If the translator fails to recreate the joke in the subtitles, the target viewer will be aware of loss upon hearing the laughter of the original audience. The problem is that humour is difficult to reproduce.

Subtitling Humour

Sen (2012) defines humour as any form of communication that can "elicit laughter or generate mirth" (p. 1). It is the "amusing communications that produce positive emotions and cognitions in the individual, group, or organization" (Romero

and Cruthirds, 2006, p.59). Although humour is shared by all nations, each nation has its own sense of humour which is specific to its culture such as religious practices and concepts, political system, traditions, etc. (Hosseini, 2017, p.2). Therefore, humour has been studied for a long time, and some scholars believe that it is nearly impossible to translate it because it is "language-specific" and "culture-specific" (Hosseini, 2017, p.2)

Humour occurs when there is a conflict between what is expected and what is said or done to elicit laughter (Bolaños García-Escribiano, 2007, p.222). It is classified differently according to its purpose and the angle from which it is viewed (Kianbakht, 2015, p.28). Hosseini (2017) states that there are two types of humour: linguistic humour which is related to the language, and cultural humour which is related to components that incite laughter in a particular culture (pp.1-2). Raphaelson-West (1989) classifies humor into three types: linguistic humour, cultural humour, and universal humour "such as the unexpected" (p.130). Schmitz (2002) also classifies it into three types: universal humour, culture-based humour, and language-based humour (p.89). Schmitz (2002) defines universal humour as that which is based on reality, explains that culture-based humour is set in the culture, and states that language-based humour depends on linguistic devices to incite laughter (p. 89)

When discussing linguistic jokes, Attrado (1994) states that there are two types of jokes: referential and verbal (p. 95). Referential jokes are "exclusively based on the meaning of the text and do not make any reference to the phonological realization of lexical items", while verbal jokes are "based on the meaning of the elements of the text" in addition to making "reference to the phonological realization of the text" and thereby focus on "the pragmatic level" (Attrado, 1994, p.95). Humorous language has two "interconnected" levels: denotation and connotation (Bolaños García-Escribiano, 2007, p.225). Denotation involves wordplay, while connotation involves

"semantic problems (tropes) and sociolinguistic-related problems…, which originate in aspects such as linguistic variation and culture-bound references" (Bolaños García-Escribiano, 2007, p.225). Both levels are present in *al-Iyāl Kebret.*

The translation of humour can generally be challenging in two ways: first: humour can be difficult to identify because it is often "provided indirectly and it makes the translator unable to recognize it", second: humour can be culture-specific and the translator may not find an equivalent in the target culture (Hosseini, 2017, p.2). In the case of subtitling humour, the challenge is bigger. Humour is "an inner characteristic" of comedies (Bolaños García-Escribiano, 2007, p. 221), and has a communicative function (Attrrado, 1994, p.213). However, the restrictions that time and space impose on subtitling which result in the reductive nature of this type of translation make it difficult for the translator to make the subtitles generate laughter like the original AV text does, especially when translating wordplay and socio-cultural humour; therefore, the loss of meaning and effect is bigger in subtitles. In case of subtitling comedy plays, the fact that the viewer of the subtitled AV product can hear the laughter of the audience of the ST should make humour easy to detect. Hence, if the translator fails to reproduce the verbal joke in the subtitles, the viewer of the subtitled AV product will be aware of the loss.

Zabalbeascoa Terran (2001) states that when the translator detects the humorous elements, he or she should determine their importance and the function they play in the text and make the translation decisions accordingly (p.256). Zabalbeascoa Terran (2001) differentiates between humorous elements in terms of importance as follows:

a) *[Humourous elements of] high importance* such as TV comedy shows… comedy films…

b) *[Humourous elements of] medium importance* such as adventure fiction… romance with happy endings…and musicals…

c) *[Humourous elements of] low importance such as* parliamentary speeches ornamented with jokes or wit, tragedies of Shakespeare which include wordplays or ironic references. This label does not mean that this type of humourous elements is not important, but it means that it is less important than the other two types which have more priority…

d) *[Humorous elements of] negative importance* or those in which priority is given to the attempt of interpreting them as non-humorous, such as horror stories…, situations which require seriousness or solemnity such as some rituals or types of discourse…, etc. (p.256)[2]

Diaz Cintas and Anderman (2009) state that the translator has to consider several elements when deciding the best translation strategy; these include function, connotation, the expected target audience's knowledge of the source language and familiarity with the source culture, feedback effect, and constraints related to the media (p.29).

Humorous elements are important ingredients of comedy plays and their reproduction in the subtitles has to be a priority because they have a stylistic and communicative function. However, they can be very difficult to transfer due to the fact that subtitlers heavily depend on condensation whether it be "partial (reduction) or total (omission)" (Bolaños García-Escribiano, 2007, p. 225). Because the translator has to convey the meaning of each utterance in a limited space and since the line of the subtitle appears and disappears in synchronization with the utterance, subtitlers omit what they deem to be redundant

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[2] Translation of the quotation from Spanish is mine.

elements of the AV text (Díaz Cintas and Anderman, 2009, p.25).

Since the transfer of language play and culture-based humorous elements requires effort that "is often…felt to be out of proportion to the expected benefits", translators often simplify humorous utterances or omit them completely (Schröter, 2004, p.167). However, the translator should consider the extent to which the text is affected by "the systematic deletion" (Díaz Cintas and Anderman, 2009, p. 25). As Díaz Cintas and Anderman (2009) put it, it is the task of the subtitler to make sure that the AV product "is not bereft of style, personality, [and] clarity" because the ultimate goal "is to retain and reflect in the subtitles the equilibrium between image, sound, and text of the original" (p.29). Since humorous elements are integral components of comedy plays because of the effect that comedies have and because of the essential communicative function these elements play in this type of texts, the translator should reach a balance between the restrictions of time and space and the freedom needed to reproduce humorous elements in the subtitles as far as possible in an attempt to make the AV product perform its function when presented to a foreign audience. Therefore, quasi-translation is a suitable translation procedure for AVT.

A Metamodern Approach to the Analysis of Subtitling Verbal Humour

The present study adopts a metamodern approach to the analysis of subtitling verbal humour which is a descriptive approach that analyses the translator's attitude to AVT. Yousef (2017) states that metamodernism is a recent movement that appeared in the 21st century in fields related to human activity such as art, literature, politics, etc. (p.37). He explains that the literary/cultural movement that appeared after postmodernism has been described as metamodernism, and observes that metamodernism, neomodernism, and postmodernism have been used interchangeably in spite of the fact that metamodernism

rejects "postmodernist skepticism" and that it is a "reaction against modernist optimism"(p.37). In other words, metamodernism rejects the extremes of neomodernism and postmodernism.

The main purpose of the metamodern approach to translation is "to find the right balance when oscillating between freedom and restriction, and to reproduce the 'atmosphere' of the original" (Alexandrova, 2020, p. 87). According to Goryunov (2017), oscillation means the combination of opposites in one entity (as cited in Alexandrova, 2020, p. 94), and Turner (2015) states that it is the combination of opposite ideas (as cited in Alexandrova, 2020, p. 94).

One of the main concepts of metamodernism is "Game Change" (Freinacht, 2015, para.1). In metamodernism, the "game" is "fundamental, interactive process by which human beings and other living creatures either become happy or suffer", and the metamodern project attempts to change its rules (Freinacht, 2015, para. 4). There are three attitudes to the game in metamodernism: denial, acceptance, and change (Freinacht, 2015, paras. 1,10,18).

Alexandrova (2020) develops the metamodern aspect of her approach to translation in terms of these three metamodern attitudes to the game (pp.91-92). Game denial happens when there is "complete negation of the game" or failure to understand its rules; it happens when the translator omits the translation unit or substitutes it with a unit that is completely different but "contextually suitable" for the text (Alexandrova, 2020, p. 91). Game acceptance refers to the cases where the translator accepts the game and its rules as proposed and set out by the author and thus resorts to literal translation or direct translation (Alexandrova, 2020, p. 91). Game change happens when the translator attempts to change the rules of the game proposed by the author but also attempts to keep the "author's creative idea"

(Alexandrova, 2020, p. 91); this attitude may thus depend on quasi-translation.

Aleksandrova (2020) describes quasi-translation as "a game in which the translator does not only reproduce the game of signs represented in the ST, but also creates a new one" (p.93). It is a metamodern translation procedure that "assumes changing the game… presented in the SL, when the translator focuses on the author, the message, and the recipient and tries to reproduce its "atmosphere' in the TL" which involves humour and its effect on the audience's emotions (Aleksandrova, 2020, p. 93). It helps the translator to recognize "the common source of the experience of unity" which are the goals of metamodern translation (Aleksandrova, 2020, p. 93) .Quasi-translation focuses on one of the experiences which unite humans across cultures which is humour (Alexandrova, 2020, p. 93).

The framework of quasi-translation involves resorting to transformation and deformation procedures which help the translator reconstruct the verbal joke. These procedures include cultural equivalent which Newmark (1988) defines as the substitution of the ST cultural element with a TL cultural equivalent (pp. 82-83) and equivalence which Vinay and Darbelnet (1958/1995) define as the substitution of an SL statement that is often used in a particular situation with a TL statement that is used for this situation even if there is no semantic correspondence (as cited in Alexandrova, 2020, p. 93).

The procedures of transformation and deformation fall into three types of quasi-translation which are "quasi-localisation","quasi-globalisation", and "quasi-glocalisation." Garbovskiy (2004) states that quasi-localisation is "the intended substitution of the objective situation" while taking into account the target culture in which many factors may affect the translation user's experience (as cited in Alexsandrova, 2020, p.97). Quasi-globalisation is a strategy where neither the utterance is retrieved nor its cultural components preserved

(Alexandrova, 2020, p.98). Quasi-glocalisation is a strategy that attempts to "[adapt] the translation to the target culture and to preserve the culturally marked components of the original" (Aleksandrova, 2020, p. 99). Thus, this strategy strikes a balance between the communicative function of the translation and keeping the original atmosphere of the source AV product. It is a midway strategy between quasi-localisation and quasi-globalisation (Alexandrova, 2020, p. 99).

In this study, I adapt the metamodern aspect of Alexandrova's (2020) metamodern-semiotic approach to pun translation analysis into a metamodern approach to the analysis of English subtitling of verbal humor in the Egyptian play *al-Iyāl Kebret* which is screened on Netflix. The metamodern method of analysis in this study consists of three steps: to identify the humorous element in the play, to identify the translator's attitude to the translation of the verbal joke, and to discuss and assess the translator's attitude and strategy. The descriptive metamodern approach adopted in this study tries to explore the most suitable attitude to subtitling verbal humour in *al-Iyāl Kebret*.

Analysis

The analysis of each selected case of subtitling verbal humour in *al-Iyāl Kebret* (al-'Aṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020) is preceded by explaining the context of the joke, quoting the sentences which include the elements of verbal humour in Arabic, presenting their back translation into English, and providing Netflix's English subtitles. Then, the three-step metamodern method of analysis described in the previous section is applied.

Ramaḍān is a businessman in his 50s who has a wife (Zainab), three sons (Sulṭān, Kamāl, and 'Āṭef), and a daughter (Saḥar). Towards the beginning of the play, Ramaḍān talks to Zainab about their children's troublesome behaviour and asks her to pay more attention to them, reminding her of a famous line

that compares a mother to a school that teaches good manners; then, he says the following:

ST	BACK TRANSLATION	TT
رمضان: يا زينب الأم مدرسة. لعب وفن وهندسة.	Ramaḍān: Zainab… a mother is like a school that teaches sport, art, and engineering.	Ramaḍān: Zaynab, a mother is like a school. With hard work and a bit of play, you rule.

(al-ʿAṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020, 12:46)

The humorous element here resides in the connection that Ramaḍān establishes between the "mom is a school" metaphor, and the chant that the fans of Zamālek—the sport powerhouse of Cairo—sing. The translator keeps the school metaphor; however, he or she does not transfer the chant which is based on a cultural reference. The translator recreates the relationship between the tenor and vehicle by forming two rhyming sentences that compare a mother to a school in terms of discipline methods. Although the translator's attitude leads to reproducing the metaphor, it seems to fail to recreate the verbal humour. In this case, I suggest adapting the joke to the target culture by reproducing a literal translation of the original humourous element and clarifying its meaning to the target audience by adding the phrase "like Zamalek football team."

Ramaḍān then complains to Zainab that their youngest son loves Soād Hosny, a famous Egyptian superstar, whose identity has already been explained in the scene. When Zainab supports ʿĀtef, he tries to repay her kindness by promising to make Farīd Shawqy, a famous film star, love her:

ST	BACK TRANSLATION	TT
عاطف: اهو. قالت لك الواد يتحب أهو. ربنا يخليكي لي يا أمه. حاجيبلك فريد شوقي يحبك ان شاء الله.	'Āṭef: She told you I deserve to be loved. May you live long, mother. I will make Farīd Shawqy love you, God willing.	'Āṭef: She told you I deserve love. Thanks, Mom. I will bring Farid Shawqi to love you.

(al-'Aṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020, 35:07)

The translator accepts the humourous element by transliterating Farid Shawqy's name. However, the target audience is not expected to know who Shawqy is. Acceptance thus fails in recreating the verbal joke. Therefore, I suggest changing the game and using quasi-localisation by keeping the idea and substituting Shawqy's name with a cultural equivalent such as the name of a Hollywood superstar.

In another scene, Ramaḍān prays that bad things happen to his children, and 'Āṭef responds as follows:

ST	BACK TRANSLATION	TT
عاطف: بتدعي علينا في مولد النبي يا رمضان؟	'Āṭef: You are praying bad things happen to us on the religious holiday of the Prophet's Birthday, Ramaḍān?	'Āṭef: You're cursing us on a holiday, Ramadan?

(al-'Aṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020, 37:06)

It is a belief among Muslims that prayers are answered on religious occasions such as the holy month of Ramaḍān or certain religiously celebrated nights. The humourous element here is that 'Āṭef regards the Prophet's Birthday or Mawlid—which is a celebrated day in Egypt—as a religious occasion on which prayers are answered, although it is not regarded so by scholars and laymen alike. The translator's attitude is one of game change

and he or she resorts to quasi-globalisation; he or she keeps the concept of the importance of a holiday, but turns prayers to cursing. The translation succeeds in reproducing the humourous element in the TT by making 'Āṭef believe that cursing on holidays is significant.

Later, Sulṭān attempts to convince Ramaḍān to allow Saḥar to work at a cabaret and explains to him that the family will be rich when she dances and opens bottles of wine for the customers:

ST	BACK TRANSLATION	TT
رمضـان: زباين ايه يا ولد؟ سلطان: اللي حانفتح لهم. حانسيب البت تفتح لوحدها ولا ايه؟ لازم الأسرة كلها تروح تفتح مع البت!... احنا مش في عصر انفتاح ولا ايه؟ ولا أنت ضد الانفتاح يا استاذ؟... انت قاسم السماوي ولا مين؟	Ramaḍān: What guests?! Sulṭān: The guests whose bottles we will open. We should not let the girl open the bottles alone. The whole family should open bottles with her. Are not we living in an age of openness? Are you against openness? Who are you? Qassem al-Semāwy?	Ramaḍān: What guests? Sulṭān: The guests whose bottles she will open. We let her open by herself? The whole family should open with her…This is the age of openness, right? Or are you against openness? Who are you? Kassem Elsemmawy?

(al-'Aṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020, 58:44)

The first element of verbal humour here is the pun "openness" which exploits the economic and political meaning that the word had in the late 1970s in Egypt; it refers to President Sadat's *"Infitaḥ"* or the open-door policy for investments. The translator accepts this joke and translates it directly into English. However, the economic and political meaning that is obvious to the Egyptian audience is not expected to be clear to the target

audience. Changing the game through using quasi-glocalisation may be a better solution as one may keep the idea of "*Infitah*" but make necessary changes to explain the socio-political joke to the TT audience. I suggest the following translation of the sentences which refer to *Infitah*:

Sulṭān: … Should not we open the door for opportunities?
Are you against the President's open-door policy?

The second element of humour is Qassem al-Semāwy, who is a fictional character that was created by cartoonist Aḥmad Bahgat. Bahgat portrayed al-Semāwy as a government official who envied people for success or wealth and never wished them well. The translator's attitude towards the joke is that of acceptance; therefore, he or she transliterates the name. However, the name of al-Semāwy and its significance is not expected to be familiar to the Anglophone viewers and is not expected to incite laugher. Therefore, I suggest changing the game by substituting the name of al-Semāwy with a cultural equivalent. The cultural equivalent here can be an envious character that is known to the Anglophone audience, such as Cinderella's step-mother.

In another scene, Ramaḍān talks with his oldest son, Kamāl, and criticises his son's generation, and Kamāl responds that his is the vanguard generation, a title that was given to this generation by President Sadāt:

ST	BACK TRANSLATION	TT
كمال: احنا لا جيل خايب ولا جيل بايظ كمان. احنا جيل الطلائع. رمضان: طلائع؟ على الطلائع ما انتوا نافعين في حاجة أبدا. كمال: عليك الطلائع! بتحلف على ماما بالطلائع؟	Kamāl: We are not a failed or lost generation. We are the vanguard generation. Ramaḍān: Vanguard? I swear by vanguard that you are good at nothing.	Kamāl: We're not lousy or lost. We're the vanguard generation. Ramaḍān: Vanguard? I swear with vanguard, you're a bunch of losers.

	Kamāl: Swearing by vanguard? Are you swearing by vanguard to divorce mother?	Kamāl: Are you swearing with vanguard? Are you swearing at me with vanguard?

(al-'Asfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020, 01:05:39)

In the Egyptian culture, particularly among some Muslim men, a man may swear by divorce (talāq) to show that he is so sure of what he says and that he is even ready to divorce his wife if proven wrong. The humourous element is wordplay as "طلائع"/"ṭalā'e'" (vanguard) and "طلاق"/ "ṭalāq" (divorce) sound partially similar. The translator accepts only one part of the joke, but denies the other. He or she keeps Ramaḍān's swearing by vanguard but does not recreate the joke to keep the effect that resides in the partial phonemic similarity. A better attitude towards the joke would be game change by trying to preserve the culturally-marked component of the original. A translator may keep the wordplay and divorce idea without sticking to the wording of the original joke. For example, I suggest reconstructing the verbal joke to make Kamāl confuse his father's word with another one:

Kamāl: We are the generation of force.

Ramaḍān: Generation of force? I swear by force that you are good at nothing.

Kamāl: Divorce? Are you swearing to divorce mother?

When Kamāl discovers a love letter in Ramaḍān's briefcase, Kamāl asks Sulṭān to read the letter out, but Sulṭān claims that he cannot read the Arabic letter because he can only read German and tries to showcase his linguistic skills:

ST	BACK TRANSLATION	TT
سلطان: Yes. Give me Hamburger. كمال: Give me	Sulṭān: Yes. Give me hamburger. Kamāl: "Give me	Sulṭān: Yes. Give me hamburger. Kamāl: Is this

Hamburgerدا ألماني؟ سلطان: آه... ألمانيا الشرقية. أصلها تفرق بين ألمانيا الشرقية وألمانيا القمح.	hamburger" is German? Sulṭān: Yes, East German. There is a difference between East Germany and Minya al-Am'.	German? Sulṭān: Yes, East German. There is a difference between East German and Wheat German.

(al-'Aṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020, 01:14:06)

The verbal humour here arises from the wordplay in "ألمانيا"/ "Almānia" (Germany) and "منيا" in "منيا القمح"/ "Minyya al-Amḥ" (a town in Egypt's Delta) which sound partially similar. The translator keeps the idea of Germany, but changes the wordplay to recreate the joke in accordance with the target culture (East Germany and Wheat Germany instead of West Germany). The game change attitude succeeds in recreating verbal humour.

Sulṭān continues to read the letter out to 'Āṭef and Saḥar:

ST	BACK TRANSLATION	TT
سلطان: مون شيري. طب وعهد الله أنا لو حد قالي شيري وشي يحمر. عاطف: شريط ايه بس يا سلطان...أبوك حايركب شريط ليه بقى؟	Sulṭān: "Babe"… I swear I would blush if someone calls me "babe." 'Āṭef: What IUD, Sulṭān? Why would your father use an IUD?	Sulṭān: "Babe"…If someone called me "babe", I would be shy. 'Āṭef: Your father is having a baby, Sultan?

(al-'Aṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020, 01:15:56)

The element of humour here is wordplay as 'Āṭef confuses the French term "chéri" which means "dear" with the Arabic word "شريط"/ "sherīt" which means "IUD" in Egypt. The translator changes the game; he or she recreates the humorous wordplay related to the term "chéri" by making Sulṭān read it as "babe" and 'Āṭef hears that their father is having a baby. The translator's attitude helps recreate the verbal joke in the TT.

The four siblings continue to discuss their plans to stop their father from eloping with his lover. As they do, 'Āṭef and Sulṭān argue, and Kamāl asks 'Āṭef to respect their oldest brother, but 'Āṭef refuses:

ST	BACK TRANSLATION	TT
عاطف: أخونا الكبير ايه؟ أخونا الكبير المفروض يكون حدوة لينا. كمال: المفروض يكون ايه؟ عاطف: حدوة. كمال: حدوة؟ عاطف: ايوه حدوة. سلطان: سامعة العالم الحمير؟ قال حدوة. اسمها ندوة يابني آدم. كمال: اسمها قدوة سلطان: ايه؟ كمال: قدوة سلطان: والله انت حمار, لان القدوة دي... دي القدوة.	'Āṭef: Our oldest brother? Our oldest brother should be our horse shoe. Kamāl: Should be our what? 'Āṭef: Horse shoe. Kamāl: Horse shoe?! 'Āṭef: Yes, horse shoe. Sulṭān: See how ignorant they are? Horse shoe! It is called "seminar". Kamāl: It is called "idol" Sulṭān: What? Kamāl: "Idol". Sulṭān: I swear you are ignorant, because the "idol" is here… this is the "idol"	'Āṭef: Our eldest brother should be our ibol. Kamāl: What? "ibol"? 'Āṭef: Yes, ibol. Sulṭān: He's so dumb. "Ibol"? It's called "island", idiot. Kamāl: Actually, it's called "ideal"! Sulṭān: You don't know shit! No because there's a bone here called "ideal".

(al-'Aṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020, 01:39:20)

The humorous element here is the confusion that results from the fact that the word "حدوة"/ "ḥedwa" (meaning "horse shoe"), "قدوة"/ "qodwa" (meaning "idol"), and "ندوة" / "nadwa" (meaning "seminar") sound partially similar in Arabic. The use of their direct equivalents in English would not reproduce the humorous

effect that the verbal joke has in Arabic. The translator accepts the idea of confusion but changes the words in order to reproduce the humorous effect in the TT. Therefore, he or she resorts to quasi-localisation because he or she chooses utterances which are partially similar in terms of sound in the target language and thus substitutes the objective situation with a different one that takes into consideration language as a tool of expression in the target culture. Although one of the utterances is meaningless, the "game change" attitude which leads to the recreation of the verbal joke in English reproduces the funny confusion.

Similarly, the translator changes the game when translating the next sentences in which Sulṭān clarifies that he cannot understand Kamāl's big words:

ST	BACK TRANSLATION	TT
سلطان: [احنا] ناس مانفهمش الكلام المجعلص اللي انت بتقوله دا ... جاي تقول لي القطة الخمسينية! في قطة خمسينية؟ في قطة بلدي وقطة سيامي. ايه القطة الخمسينية دي؟	Sulṭān: We do not understand the big words you say. A "fifties cat"? Is there a cat called "a fifties cat"? There are the "street cat" and the "Siamese cat". What is the "fifties cat"?	Sulṭān: We can't understand these big words you're saying…And you're telling me about a five-year plan? What's the five year plan? I only know dinner plans and party plans.

(al-ʿAṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020 01:55:02)
The element of humour is that Sulṭān does not understand "الخطة الخمسية/"al-khotta al-khamsiyya" (five-year-plan) and thinks that he hears another phrase "القطة الخمسينية" / "al-otta al-khamsiniyya" which can literally be translated as "fifties cat" and which he thinks is one of the types of cats that he does not know, and the verbal joke about the other types of cats he knows is built on this confusion. The translator accepts the "five-year plan" as the main idea behind the verbal joke but resorts to quasi-localisation and

changes the verbal joke in order to recreate it in accordance with the target linguistic/cultural system. Thus, the translator makes the joke based on Sulṭān's ignorance or indifference instead of confusion and succeeds in recreating the joke which shifts the focus from types of cats to dinner and party plans.

In another scene, ʻĀṭef goes out to spy on Ramaḍān as planned by the four siblings. When ʻĀṭef returns, Kamāl is surprised by the outfit ʻĀṭef chose to wear which ʻĀṭef believes to be the outfit of secret agents:

ST	BACK TRANSLATION	TT
كمال: هو سيادتك مخبر؟ عاطف: آه مش باين علي ولا ايه؟ كمال: لا باين عليك طبعا. مخبر في المخابرات ولا المباحث؟ عاطف: لا أنا في المخابرات. كمال: سيادتك في المخابرات؟ عاطف: آه أنا في المخابرات آه. أنا زميل صلاح نصر على طول.	Kamāl: Are you a detective? ʻĀṭef: Yes. Is not it obvious? Kamāl: It's obvious of course. Do you work for the Intelligence or Investigation? ʻĀṭef: Intelligence. Kamāl: Intelligence?! ʻĀṭef: Yes, Intelligence. I work directly with Ṣalāh Naṣr.	Kamāl: Are you an informant? ʻĀṭef: Yes. Isn't that obvious? Kamāl: Yes, it's obvious. You work for Intelligence or Investigation? ʻĀṭef: Intelligence. Kamāl: Intelligence? ʻĀṭef: Yes. I work directly with Salah Nasr.

(al-ʻAṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020, 02:00:24)

The element of humour in this verbal joke is reference to Ṣalāh Naṣr who was the infamous head of the Egyptian General Intelligence Directorate in the 1950s and 1960s. The translator's attitude of acceptance which leads to the transliteration of Naṣr's name fails in inciting laughter because it is expected that the average Anglophone viewer is not familiar with Ṣalāh Naṣr. A

better attitude towards the joke is to change the game while taking into consideration the target culture through the use of quasi-localisation. In order to incite laughter, the translator may keep the main idea of 'Āṭef saying that he works directly with an important figure in the realm of spies, but may replace the name of Naṣr with a cultural equivalent such as the name of a familiar spy in the Anglophone culture (even if a fictional one such as James Bond).

Kamāl then asks 'Āṭef about how fruitful his mission was:

ST	BACK TRANSLATION	TT
كمال: جبت لنا الأخبار؟ عاطف: مالقتش الأخبار جبت لك الأهرام جوا.	Kamāl: Did you get any news? 'Āṭef: I have not found al-Akhbar newspaper. I brought al-Ahrām newspaper.	Kamāl: Did you bring any news? 'Āṭef: Yes, I brought the newspaper.

(al-'Aṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020, 02:02:36)

The element of humor resides in the fact that "الأخبار"/"al-akhbār" generally means "the news" in Arabic, but is also the name of a newspaper. In the source text, 'Āṭef does not understand which meaning Kamāl intends and responds by saying that he bought another newspaper. The translator's attitude to the pun is one of change. He or she keeps the news as the main idea behind the verbal joke, and uses quasi-globalisation by substituting al-Ahrām which is not expected to be familiar to the target viewers with a generic term "newspaper".

The four siblings decide to be nicer and more polite when they meet their father, hoping that he would not leave the house if they change their behaviour. They express their well wishes for him at every action he takes, but they sometimes get confused and say something that is completely different; an example is the following scene where they get confused and end up wishing bad things happen to him after he drinks his coffee:

ST	BACK TRANSLATION	TT
في صوت واحد: هنيا يا بابا. سلطان: مطرح مايهري يهري. كمال: مطرح مايسري يمري. سلطان: مطرح ما يمشي يمشي. كمال: مطرح مايسري يمري. سلطان: مطرح ماقاطع تذكرة ينزل. كمال: مطرح ما...! سلطان: مطرح مايحط راسه يحط رجليه بقى!	All four siblings: Enjoy it Dad. Sulṭān: May it give you pain. Kamāl: "May it give you health"! Sulṭān: May it walk anywhere. Kamāl: "May it give you health" Sulṭān: May it leave at the destination it booked the ticket for. Kamāl: "May it…" Sulṭān: May it does whatever it wants to do!	All four siblings: Cheers, Dad… Sulṭān: Drink your drink. Kamāl: "Enjoy your drink." Sulṭān: Have your drink. Enjoy, have, drink, whatever. Kamāl: That's not what we're… Sulṭān: Enjoy, have, drink, whatever!

(al-'Aṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020, 02:19:37)

One of the courtesies that people use in Egypt to wish eaters or drinkers health is "مطرح ما يسري يمري"/ "maṭraḥ ma yesri yemri" which literally means "may it benefit you wherever it goes [in your body]", and the humour in the scene results when Sulṭān fails to remember the sentences and says other sentences which have the same rhyme in Arabic but completely different meanings. The translator's attitude towards this verbal joke is one of change. He or she accepts confusion caused by Sulṭān's inability to remember the rhymed words in the sentence as the reason behind humour, but he or she does not make rhyme part of the problem that leads to the confusion. He or she resorts to quasi-localisation in an attempt to reconstruct the situation to

reflect the confusion in accordance with the target language which is part of the target cultural system.

Sulṭān continues to praise his father by stacking rhyming words:

ST	BACK TRANSLATION	TT
سلطان: يا أجمل أب, يا أعظم أب, يا أحن أب, يا سفن أب.	Sulṭān: The most beautiful dad, the greatest dad, the kindest dad, the 7 Up.	Sulṭān: The best dad, the greatest dad, the kindest dad, the badass dad.

(al-ʿAṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020, 02:22:18)

As Sulṭān tries to stack praise words for his father, he ends up calling his father by the name of a soft drink brand simply because it rhymes with other praise words although the word is meaningless in the context. The translator changes the game. He or she accepts using a rhyming word that does not praise the father as a basis of humour, but changes the word since 7 Up would not rhyme with previous phrases which all end in dad. Therefore, he or she uses quasi-localisation by employing words that are considered quite inappropriate when addressing a father to create the rhyme in the target linguistic system, and recreates the verbal joke by making use of misbehavior that is characteristic of Sulṭān in this play.

Like Sulṭān, Kamāl attempts to be polite by stacking nice words, but ends up inventing meaningless phrases:

ST	BACK TRANSLATION	TT
كمال: بابا. رمضان: نعم. كمال: نعم الله عليك يا حبيبي. ربنا يخليك لينا ومانتحرمش منك يارب. ... كمال: بابا.	Kamāl: Dad. Ramaḍān: Yes. Kamāl: God bless you. May God bless you and never deprive us from you. …	Kamāl: Dad. Ramaḍān: Yes. Kamāl: God bless your yes. May God bless you and protect [you] for us. …

رمضـان: أيوا.	Kamāl: Dad.	Kamāl: Dad
كمـال: أيوا الله عليك يا حبيبـي.	Ramaḍān: Yea	Ramaḍān: Yea
رمضـان: هي أيوا فيها أيوا الله رخرا؟	Kamāl: God yea you.	Kamāl: God bless your yea.
كمـال: أيوه الله عليك.	Ramaḍān: "God yea you" also?! Is there such a response to yea?	Ramaḍān: "Yea" also?
...	Kamāl: God yea you.	Kamāl: I'm praying for you.
كمـال: حضرتك يا بابا عارف ان الشباب في سني من السهل ينضحك عليه.	…	…
	Kamāl: Dad, you know that young men my age are easy to deceive.	Kamāl: Dad, you know that young guys in my age are naïve and easy to deceive.
رمضـان: طيب.	Ramaḍān: Okay.	Ramaḍān: Okay.
كمـال: طيب الله عليك يا حبيبـي.	Kamāl: God okay you.	Kamāl: God bless your okay.

(al-ʿAṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020, 02:30:10)

In Egypt, one of the courtesies is to respond to "نعم"/ "naʾam" (yes) with "نعم الله عليك" "naʾam Allah ʾaleik" (from "أنعم الله عليك"/ "anʿam Allah ʿalaik" which means "God bless you"). The element of humour in the verbal jokes here is that Kamāl tries to form new derivatives from his father's responses and to invent new courtesies, but he ends up saying meaningless utterances. The translator changes the game to recreate the verbal jokes; he or she accepts Kamāl's attempt to create new courtesies as the basis of the verbal jokes, but he or she resorts to quasi-localisation as he or she changes the way Kamāl does so while taking the target language into consideration. Instead of transferring the meaningless utterances, the translator makes Kamāl bless each and every word Ramaḍān says, and these blessings sound awkward and that is why Ramaḍān's surprise at

their use is understood in the TT. The translator thus succeeds in recreating the humorous scene.

In another scene, the four siblings claim that their youngest brother has been kidnapped. They call their father, change their voices, and claim that they are the gang that kidnapped their brother, radio and TV presenters following the incident, or even famous singers. In one of these calls, Sulṭān pretends to be a caller from Beirut:

ST	BACK TRANSLATION	TT
سلطان: القاهرة؟ رمضان: أيوه القاهرة. ... سلطان: الأستاذ...الأستاذ... رمضان أبو سرة. رمضان: قصدك الأستاذ رمضان السكري يا محترم. سلطان: يا سيدي أهو كله برتقال.	Sulṭān: Cairo? Ramaḍān: Yes, Cairo. … Sulṭān: Mr…Mr… Ramaḍān Abu-Sorra. Ramaḍān: You mean Ramaḍān al-Sokary, sir. Sulṭān: They are all types of orange.	Sulṭān: Cairo? Ramaḍān: Yes. Mr. Ramaḍān Abo Sorra? Ramaḍān: You mean Ramaḍān Elsokary, sir. Sulṭān: They're all kinds of orange.

(al-'Aṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020, 02:43:09)

The humourous element in the verbal joke is the fact that Ramaḍān's surname is also the name of a sweet type of orange in Arabic, and that Sulṭān confuses it with another sour type which is called "أبو سرة"/ "abu-surra" in Egypt. The translator accepts the joke and transfers it as it is without making any changes; the translator seems to depend on the context to clarify that both transliterated terms are types of orange. In the short time during which the subtitles appear on the screen, the Anglophone viewer might not have the time to understand the significance of the transliterated terms. Therefore, I suggest changing the game by reconstructing the verbal joke while taking the target cultural and linguistic system into consideration as follows:

Sulṭān: Mr… Mr…Mr. Ramaḍān Sour.

Ramaḍān: Ramaḍān al-Sokkary… from sokkar or sweet sugar

Sulṭān: Sweet or sour. They are all types of orange!

After calling their father from another room, Kamāl, Saḥar, and Sulṭān return to their parents and urge Ramaḍān to pay the ransom to get 'Āṭef back, reminding him that money is not more important than his son, and Sulṭān starts crying:

ST	BACK TRASNLATION	TT
سلطان: قول له بس انت... رمضان: خلاص بقى يا ولا انت ماتعملش زي المعددة كده...	Sulṭān: Just tell him. Ramaḍān: That's enough, kid. Stop acting like bewailing woman…	Sulṭān: Tell him. Ramaḍān: That's enough.

(al-'Aṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020, 02:45:44)

The translator denies the verbal joke in which Ramaḍān likens Sulṭān's crying to "المعددة"/ "al-me'adeda" (a woman whose profession is to cry and mention the virtues of diseased people at funerals) and does not translate it. The translator thus fails to reproduce the cultural verbal joke. When the viewers hear the laughter of the audience, they will be aware that they missed the joke. Therefore, I suggest resorting to quasi-glocalisation by adapting the joke to the target culture while preserving the original atmosphere by using the definition "bewailing woman at funerals" as an equivalent and transferring the rest of the joke.

Saḥar attempts to make her father believe that she wants to commit suicide in order to prevent him from leaving, and explains her motives by quoting known lines from old Egyptian movies:

ST	BACK TRANSLATION	TT
سحر: الدنيا مسرح كبير يا والدي.	Saḥar: All the world's a stage, Dad.	Sulṭān: Life is a big stage, Father.

رمضان: ليه يا يوسف بيه في ايه بس فهمني؟	Ramaḍān: Why, Youssef Bey? Just tell me what is wrong?	Ramaḍān: Why, Mr. Youssef? Explain to me.

(al-ʿAṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020, 02:52:59)

The humorous element here is the cultural reference to famous Egyptian film star Youssef Wahbi, for Ramaḍān likens Saḥar to Wahbi when she quotes his famous serious lines. The translator accepts the verbal joke and reproduces it without a change regardless of the target viewer's expected unfamiliarity with Wahbi. Game change would be a better solution here. The translator can reconstruct the verbal joke and substitute Wahbi with a quasi-equivalent such as William Shakespeare whose very words were quoted by Wahbi and are quoted here by Saḥar.

As the four siblings try to think of possible women with whom their father may elope, Sulṭān guesses that she is Saḥar's piano teacher, goes to her house to intemidate her, but meets her husband who turns out to be a boxing champion:

ST	BACK TRANSLATION	TT
سلطان: قلت له اسمع يا أستاذ عبد الواحد. سحر: هو اسمه عبد الواحد؟ سلطان: دا اسمه عبد ال ٧٨٠, عبد ال ٨٠١٩!	Sulṭān: I told him "Listen, Mr. Abdul-Wahid" Saḥar: His name is "Abdul-Wahid"? Sulṭān: His name must be "Abdul-780" or "Abdul-8019"	Sulṭān: I told him, "Listen, Mr. Abdul Wahid?" Saḥar: His name is Abdul Wahid? Sulṭān: He was supposed to be called Abdulqawi.

(al-ʿAṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020, 03:00:26)

It is common practice in Arabic to form male names by using "Abdul", which means "worshipper of", followed by one of the names of Allah. The name Abdul-Wahid means "Worshipper of the One [God]". Sulṭān tries to reflect how huge this Abdul-Wahid, who beat him up, is by multiplying the number in his

name. The translator changes the game and uses another attribute of Allah which is ‏‏"القوي"‏/ "al-Qawi" (the Strong). However, the meaning cannot be expected to be understood by an Anglophone viewer. The change should be done in accordance with the target language and culture. Therefore, I suggest employing quasi-localisation. I suggest likening Abdul-Wahid to a symbol of power in the Anglophone culture and using a cultural equivalent such as the Hulk.

The four siblings gather again to discuss their problems and Saḥar expresses her concern that Kamāl too may leave them and elope with a woman he used to love:

ST	BACK TRANSLATION	TT
سحر: تضحك عليك واحدة اسمها سونة أجدع ناس. كمال: هي اسمها "سونة اجدع ناس"؟ سحر: لا يا كمال. هو أبوها اسمه "أجدع" و... جدها اسمه "ناس". كمال: يا سلام! أبوها اسمه اجدع وجدها اسمه ناس! عاطف: آه وامها اسمها "اسكندرية".	Saḥar: You will be seduced by a woman called "Sona Is the Best of All". Kamāl: Her name is "Sona Is the Best of All"?! Saḥar: No Kamāl. Her father's name is "Is" and her grandfather's name is "the Best of All" Kamāl: Really? Her father's name is "Is" and her granfather's is "the Best of All"? ‘Āṭef: Yes, and her mother's name is "Alexandria".	Saḥar: Sona Is The Best will seduce you. Kamāl: Her name is Sona Is The Best? Saḥar: No. Her father's name is IS The and her grandfather's name is Best. Kamāl: Wow. Her father's name is Is The and her grandfather's name is Best? ‘Āṭef: Yes, and her mother's name is Alexandria.

(al-‘Aṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020, 03:11:31)

There are two verbal jokes in this scene. The first is when Saḥar believes that the phrase that seems to be circulated when referring to Sona is her full name. The second verbal joke is based on the connection 'Āṭef establishes between the phrase that Saḥar mistakenly believes to be Sona's full name and a line from a popular song in which the phrase is used "يا اسكندرية يا اجدع ناس" /"Ya Iskendiriyya ya Agda' Nās" (O Alexandria... your people are the best of all). The translator also accepts the two verbal jokes and translates them directly without a change. Although direct translation may succeed in generating laughter in the case of the translation of the first joke because it reflects the silliness of Saḥar's belief, it fails to reproduce laughter in the case of the second joke since the viewers are not expected to be familiar with the connection between what Saḥar says and Alexandria. Therefore, a game change is recommended in this case, and I suggest resorting to quasi-localisation and using a cultural equivalent, which can be an English city and its nickname, as follows:

> Saḥar: You will be seduced by a woman called "Sona of a Thousand Trades".
>
> Kamāl: Her name is "Sona Of a Thousand Trades"?
>
> Saḥar: No Kamāl. Her father's name is "Of" and her grandfather's name is "a Thousand Trades"...
>
> 'Āṭef: Yes, and her mother's name is "Birmingham".

While discussing their problems, Sulṭān mishears Kamāl twice:

ST	BACK TRANSLATION	TT
سحر: يعني مفيش فايدة عاطف: اه, يا خسارتك يا بابا كمـال: لا لا لا لا... أنا اعتقد... سلطان: تعتقل مين	Sahar: Have we lost all hope? 'Āṭef: Yes. We lost our dad. Kamāl: No, no, no, no... I believe...	Saḥar: Have we lost all hope? 'Āṭef: Yes. We lost our dad. Kamāl: No. I think…Wait, I'm

ياخويا؟ كمال: يابني استناني يا حبيبي... استناني بافكر يا أخي. اعتقد ان أبوكوا راجل عاقل... سلطان: آه كمال: لايمكن يحسسنا بأي فراغ سلطان: كمان حاياخد الفراخ؟ كمال: يا ابني انت بتسمع ازاي؟! سلطان: الفراخ! كمال: فراخ ايه...؟ باقولك لا يمكن يسيب البيت ويحسسنا بأي فراغ سلطان: آه الفراخ! الفراخ! اللي هي الجِجاج... الجِجاج... ألذ ألذ, مع مرق الكوسة العجيب.	Sulṭān: Arrest whom? Kamāl: Just wait! I am thinking, brother! I believe that your father is a wise man. Sulṭān: Yes Kamāl: He will never make us suffer from emotional emptiness. Sulṭān: He will take the chicken too? Kamāl: How on earth did you hear that? Sulṭān: Chicken. Kamāl: What chicken? I said he would never leave us and make us struggle with emptiness. Sulṭān: Yes, chicken! Chicken, which is "jajaj"… very delicious with wonderful aubergine sauce!	thinking. Sulṭān: Who's thin? Kamāl: I think that Dad is a reasonable person and he would never leave the house and us with nothing Sulṭān: Shit! Is he taking the chicken with him? Kamāl: How the hell did you hear that? Sulṭān: Chicken. Kamāl: What chicken? I said he would never leave the house and us without nothing. Sulṭān: Yes, chicken. Chicken or chickens. "chicken, it's so tasty…with amazing zucchini soup."

(al-'Aṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020, 03:21:53)

The elements of humour in the verbal joke are wordplay and mispronunciation. Sulṭān confuses Kamāl's "اعتقد"/" a'taqed" (think) with "اعتقل"/"a'taqel"(arrest) and confuses "فراغ"/"farāgh" (emptiness) with "فراخ"/"frakh" (colloquial Egyptian term for chicken). Then, Sulṭān mispronounces the MSA equivalent of

"frakh" which is "دجاج"/"dajāj" (chicken) and refers to a famous TV advertisement to elucidate what he means. The translator changes the game and reconstructs the entire situation by resorting to quasi-localisation as he or she sees suitable in accordance with the target language and culture. He or she reconstructs the humorous scene by recreating wordplay, choosing the words "leave us with nothing" which makes Sulṭān's fear that he would lose food too understood, substituting Sulṭān's mispronunciation of "دجاج" with a grammatical mistake, and then translating the rest of the joke using the cultural equivalent "zucchini soup". The translator's attitude of accepting the main ideas behind the verbal jokes while changing the game in accordance with the target culture and language seems to be the best attitude when subtitling verbal humour in this scene.

Sulṭān decides to meet Abdul-Wahid again to apologize, but Abdul-Wahid beats him up again, tears up his clothes, and Sulṭān returns to his house wearing a dress to the surprise of his mother:

ST	BACK TRANSLATION	TT
زينب: ايه اللي انت لابسه دا؟ سلطان: أبدا يا حبيبتي. دا أنا كنت معدية, قلت آخد الجمعية.	Zainab: What on earth are you wearing? Sulṭān: Nothing honey. I was passing by and I decided to collect the money of the saving group.	Zainab: What the hell are you wearing? Sulṭān: Nothing, honey, I was passing by, so I thought I would say hi to you.

(al-ʿAṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020, 03:32:20)
The element of humour is that Sulṭān talks like women because of the dress he's wearing, and he mentions saving groups which are usually female in Egypt. The translator seems to depend on Sulṭān's tone and body language which the audience can still hear and see, but he or she denies the verbal joke and does not translate "الجمعية"/"al-gamʿiyya" (the saving group). I suggest that

a better approach would be using a procedure of quasi-glocalisation by adapting the cultural joke into the target culture and keeping the atmosphere of the original text. Therefore, I suggest translating "الجمعية" as "the female saving group" because the actor's tone and body language alone cannot guarantee inciting laughter which is the main function of the genre.

In the final scene, the four siblings convince their father not to leave and the family reunites. As Zainab comes down the stairs to wish Ramaḍān a happy birthday, Sulṭān expresses his surprise at his mother's unusual appearance:

ST	BACK TRANSLATION	TT
سلطان: ماما, ماما لابسة خنافس.	Sulṭān: Mom! Mom is dressed like the Beatles!	Sulṭān: Mom! She's wearing a beautiful dress!

(al-'Aṣfūry and al-Sheikh, 1979/2020, 03:55:26)

The element of humour is that Sulṭān compares his mother's hip dress to the attire of the well-known English band, the Beatles. In fact, saying that someone is "خنفس"/ "khonfes" (a beatle) used to be popular way to describe someone as hip (and sometimes in a negative way, as it sometimes meant to imply that the person being described was too immersed in following the trends to be responsible). The translator denies the verbal joke and does not translate it, but the viewer can still hear the laughter and feel the loss. Therefore, I suggest the use of quasi-glocalisation and recommend that the translator adapts the joke, which is based on the Egyptian use of "خنافس", into the target text. In this context, direct translation can be a suitable strategy since the Anglophone viewers are expected to be familiar with the Beatles.

Conclusion

The study investigates Netflix's English subtitling of verbal humour in *al-Iyāl Kebret [No Longer Kids]* using a metamodern approach to the analysis of AVT. It presents an academic investigation of the subtitling strategies of humour in the play

screened on Netflix which is a tool of Globalization in the fast-changing realm of media and communication and whose translations seem to influence its viewers as reflected in responses to these translations in social media platforms. The study also contributes to the field of translation studies by adopting the new metamodern approach in investigating the English subtitling of Egyptian AV products that targets an Anglophone audience.

On the basis of the metamodern approach to the analysis of verbal humour in AVT, the study generally recommends adopting the "game change" attitude towards subtitling verbal jokes and also finds the different kinds of the quasi-translation procedure to be the most suitable strategies for subtitling verbal humour in most cases as they may help the translator to strike the balance between restrictions and freedom and to make the TT perform its function as a comedy. For future studies, the study recommends employing the metamodern approach in the analysis of subtitling more genres of AV texts.

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ملخص

تعد الترجمة السمعية-البصرية حاليا مجالا بحثيا حيويا نظرا لزيادة أهمية التواصل بين الثقافات في العصر الحديث. وقد أدى ظهور خدمات البث الدولية القائمة على الاشتراك في العقد الثاني من الألفية الثالثة إلى زيادة المواد السمعية-البصرية المدبلجة أو المعنونة. تركز هذه الدراسة على الترجمة الانجليزية للفكاهة اللفظية في عنونة نيتفليكس الانجليزية لمسرحية العيال كبرت وذلك لبحث الترجمة السمعية-البصرية في وسيلة الاتصال الجديدة تلك بحثا أكاديميا.

وتسهم تلك الدراسة في مجال دراسات الترجمة بوضع نموذج ميتاحداثي لتحليل ترجمة المواد السمعية-البصرية العربية والذي يقوم على حركة الميتاحداثة الجديدة. وتسعى الميتاحداثة في الترجمة لايجاد التوازن بين قيود الترجمة السمعية-البصرية والحرية الضرورية لإعادة بناء الرسالة من أجل نقل المعنى ولكي يؤدي النص وظيفته في السياق المستهدف. باستخدام النهج الميتاحداثي لتحليل عنونة نتفليكس الانجليزية للفكاهة اللفظية في مسرحية العيال كبرت, تقوم تلك الدراسة بتقييم نهج واستراتيجيات الترجمة التي يستعملها المترجم في ترجمة الفكاهة اللفظية إلى الانجليزية, كما تلقي الضوء على استراتيجية "شبه الترجمة", و تقدم اقتراحات بخصوص عنونة الفكاهة اللفظية عند ترجمتها إلى الانجليزية.

كلمات مفتاحية: ترجمة سمعية-بصرية, عنونة, فكاهة لفظية, خدمات بث بالاشتراك, شبه ترجمة, ميتاحداثة.