TRANSLATING ARABIC PROPER NAMES: A FOREIGNISING APPROACH

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ABSTRACT: *The recent increase in random approaches to translating Arabic proper names into English has led to serious discrepancies in their transliterations as well as difficulties and problems in identifying one's identity. This paper is an attempt to shed light on this phenomenon and to investigate the many problems and difficulties encountered in transliterating Arabic proper names in birth, marriage, passport and other personal documents. Venuti's Foreignisation Approach, a theoretical framework for standardisation of the transliteration of Arabic proper names, was used for analysis and discussion. Results of the analysis and discussion of samples in this paper have indicated that there is an urgent need for a mechanism in order to help use a standardised profile for transliterating Arabic proper names all around the Arab world. To achieve this objective, a list of suggestions was made for use by those in authority and those interested in carrying out further research in this field.*

KEYWORDS: Arabic Proper Names, Transliteration, Problems, Domestication, Foreignisation, Authoritative Standardization, Culture

INTRODUCTION

Translating proper names is a remarkable area of translation and a growing area of research. In translating proper names in Russian prose texts, where one name could be given 'multiple variants', Bassnett (1980:127) argues that the translator should consider "the function of the naming system, rather than the system itself" as each language has its own naming system and this might cause some kind of confusion for the Target Language (TL) reader. Nord (2003:183) discusses the forms and functions of translating proper names into five European languages in Children's Literature and suggests that in the translation of proper names, the translator should look at them as "mono-referential but not as mono-functional".

Peter Newmark (1982:70-83), extensively discusses the translation of proper names, as well as institutional and cultural terms, suggesting criteria and procedures for translators to adopt while translating them. For him, the main purpose of proper names is to 'identify rather than to describe' but in terms of fiction ,where the literary name has specific connotations in the Source Language (SL), the translator should provide an explanation of the connotations in 'a glossary and leave the names intact'.

Ahanizadeh (2012) investigates the most common strategies used in translating proper names from English to Persian in children's literature. Basing her research on Van Collie's Model (2006:123), she confirms that foreign proper names should be left unchanged, as this would enhance international communication as well as the understanding of young readers.

However, in non-fiction texts, as in the case with proper names entered in birth, marriage, passport and other personal documents, the translation process of proper names becomes more complicated and could cause problems not only in communication but also in identifying the

person that carries the name. McNamee (1996:8) gives a brief descriptive account of the linguistic, mainly phonological and morphological, features of Arabic proper names which could give rise to interesting problems for translators yet stops short of making any suggestions or proposing any strategies to overcome such problems. This paper, therefore, takes this issue further and suggests using a 'foreignising approach' to translating and/or transliterating Arabic Proper names as expressed below.

Venuti's Domestication and Foreignisation in Translation

Throughout history until the present time, translation methods, approaches and strategies have seemed to be hovering in between each of the following five pairs of emphasis: literal vs. free, formal correspondence vs. dynamic equivalence, semantic vs communicative translation, direct translation vs. indirect translation, and foreignisation vs domestication (Halimah, 2014:122). As the main purpose of this paper is to combat domesticating the translation of Arabic proper names by following a foreignising approach developed by Lawrence Venuti (1995:1-34), it is quite relevant to establish a theoretical framework which could be used throughout this study.

Although Schleiermarcher pointed out in his essay "o*n the Different Methods of Translation"* (1813) that there are only two methods of translation: either the translator brings the TL reader to the SL foreign culture making him feel the linguistic differences or taking the SL text/author/culture over to the TL reader so as the foreign culture is closer to him, Venuti (1995) was the first to rigorously dichotomise translation approaches into two, naming the first a foreignising approach and the second a domesticating approach.

In his book, *"The translator's Invisibility"*, Venuti (1995:3-35) discusses these two approaches in the context of history, society, politics and ideology pointing out that the '*domesticating'* approach has always been used by translators in the Western world where 'fluency in translation' is highly demanded and valued. In fluent translation, the translator tends to emphasise the TL reader's culture and value system. In doing so, the translation tends to be void of any traces of foreignness in terms of linguistic and cultural features and consequently causes the translated text to sound linguistically understandable and culturally acceptable. This approach, however, tends to obscure not only the linguistic features of the SL but also its cultural norms and value-system of its society, politics, economics, ideology and administration.

In response to such a dominating approach in translation, Venuti (ibid.) advocates a foreignising approach where the translator takes the wheel making himself visible by emphasising the SL value system and linguistic features as well as cultural associations in the translated text. Doing so, Venuti tries to denounce the Anglo-American tradition of domesticating translation from and into English as a representation of the western linguistic, cultural, political and economic dominance and superiority. For him, it is a kind of discontinuation of old western colonial ideologies and modern imperialism and a call for "translators and their readers to write and read translated texts in ways that recognise the linguistic and cultural differences of foreign texts." (ibid.:34)

Based on the brief overview of the concept of domestication and foreignisation in translation above, and being a practitioner interested in the translation of Arabic proper names in birth, marriage, passport and other personal documents myself, I am tempted to adopt a foreignising approach to translation. In other words, any translation of Arabic proper names would be accepted only on the condition it carries all its linguistic features with it and respects its cultural norms and value-system. To achieve such an acceptable version of translation for Arabic proper

names, the translated names should achieve maximum approximation in both formal and dynamic equivalence (Nida &Taber1969) and the communicative purpose of the name should be conveyed in an appropriate form, size and shape without violating any graphamatic and acoustic features as well as any cultural association or connotation of the name to be translated. A Translation of this standard should obviously endeavour to transfer into English the linguistic, social and cultural associations and connotations of the original name, in addition to its rhythmic impact on the TL reader or receiver, if possible.

Furthermore, 'foreignising translation' is also used here to refer to a synchronous process of transliterating and transferring a proper name in Arabic with the utmost accuracy, clarity and naturalness as possible, whilst also retaining the communicative effects and stylistic features of the source name, into a target proper name in English (For more details about these ACNCS criteria, see Halimah, 2015:35). Performing such a challenging task falls on the shoulders of a professional translator who needs to use the aforementioned ACNCS criteria as guidelines for processing and producing a TL proper name that is (orthographically) graphamatically and acoustically SL a binding, culturally acceptable and appropriate in the Source Language.

The scope of this study

Guided by the theoretical background of the study, the major aim of this paper is to investigate a number of problems and difficulties encountered whilst transliterating Arabic names in birth, marriage, passport and other personal documents. This will be achieved by using a sample transliteration of Arabic proper names taken from students' passports, academic record transcripts and a number of marriage certificates.

It is hoped that this study will provide useful information for using a standardised profile of transliteration of Arabic proper names all over the Arabic Speaking world with regard to the following:

A. The need to establish one single Authority, which would standardise and authorise the transliteration of people's proper names.

B. The need for any transliteration of the proper name to presuppose its linguistic and cultural importance for the owner of the name.

C. The need for guiding translators to dictionarise and standardise the transliterations of the Arabic proper names that lack counterparts in the Target Language.

This study does not, however, aim at including all Arabic proper names used by people, but rather at comparing different transliterations of the same proper names in terms of degree of deviation from the normative orthographic and acoustic rules as well as cultural interpretations of the name in question. It is not considered to be an exhaustive study but rather an endeavour to draw attention to the serious phenomenon of transliterating Arabic proper names without constraints.

Research Questions

The following questions were formed to investigate the types of problems and difficulties encountered whilst translating Arabic names into English and the possibility of standardising the mechanism of their transliteration.

1. Is there a standard approach followed in translating Arabic names in birth, marriage and other personal documents?

2. What are the nature and types of problems and difficulties encountered whilst translating Arabic names?

3. Is standardising the transliteration of Arabic names into English possible?

METHODOLOGY

To achieve the aim of this study, a corpus of around 122 Arabic proper names, which tend to lack counterparts in English or tend to cause some difficulty in their translation/transliteration, were collected from student's personal documents. These documents, which consist mainly of birth certificates, passports, university transcripts and marriage certificates, were taken in order to be used as samples for this study. The list of fifty-six female names and sixty-six male names selected are generally used in the Gulf States, which are considered as Anglophonic countries. Only the first and surnames were used though, as they sufficiently represented the major elements of the Arabic proper names and the most problematic features in their transliteration as in the case, with examples, mentioned below and in the misuse of the prefix 'ال' 'Al'. Moreover, so as not to reveal the true identity of the names' owners, all the first and surnames were shuffled up.

As a methodological procedure, Arabic and Islam were first demonstrated as the major constituents of Arabic proper names, by asking five Specialists in Islamic and Arabic Studies at the College of Arts, King Faisal University, to identify the names with religious connotations out of the 122 Arabic male and female samples used in this paper. Following that, the problematic feature in the transliteration of the name was then identified and explained before a foreignising approach to solving the linguistic, religious and cultural, translation problems was applied, leading to a list of conclusions and recommendations.

To standardise the translation and transliteration of Arabic Proper names in this study, and for practical use outside of it, a Pronunciation and Transliteration Chart based on Halimah (2012:23-25) has been used and freely adapted so as to foreignise the transliterations of Arabic proper names in birth, marriage, passport and other personal documents.

Arabic and Islam: the constituents of Arabic proper names

Like any other proper names, Arabic proper names tend to have built-in linguistic, sociocultural and religious elements which play important roles in not only the identification of the person carrying the name, but also in affecting the status they generally occupy in their society and community in particular. With regard to this study, it is quite relevant to demonstrate how Arabic as a language and Islam as a religion interact as major constituents of Arabic proper names in terms of their sound structures as well as socio-cultural and religious connotations.

Arabic uses a different sound structure from that of English. It has 28 letters standing for consonants (أ، ب، ت، ث، ج، ح، خ، د، ذ، ر، ز، س، ش، ص، ض، ط، ظ، ع، غ، ف، ق، ك، ل، م، ن، هـ، و، ي). They are classified into 'qamariah' letters/الأحرف القمرية as in أ، ب، غ،ح، ج، كـ، و ، خ، ف،ع، ق، ي and 'shamsiah' letters/ الأحرف الشمسية as in ت، ث، د، ذ، ر، ز، س، ش، ص، ض، ط، ظ، ل، ن (م، هـ). The former is named 'qamariah' because any word that starts with 'ال', as in the word 'alqamar/القمر', and is followed by one of the aforementioned 'qamariah' letters is written and

pronounced as, جاء البراء/**Al**bara came; while the latter is called '*shamsiah*'in Arabic because any word that starts with 'ال', as in the word ' **ashsh**ams/الشمس', and is followed by one of the aforementioned *'shamsiah'* letters, is written but not pronounced in Arabic yet replaced with a diacritic '**shaddah** / ّ' instead of doubling the letters, which however also tends to make the doubled consonant stressed in the word and the length of the sound doubled in English as for example in:

Male Name: Naseru<u>ddeen</u> came ← ناصرُ دِّين← ناصرُدْدِين← جاء ناصرالدين
Female Name: Qamaruzzaman came ←قمرُ الزَّمَان← قمرُزْزَمان ← جاءت قمر الزمان

It is worth pointing out here that female Arabic proper names tend to consist of one word as in the following: Lubna/لبنى , Salwa/سلوى, and Rawdha/روضة; whilst compound proper names as in Qamaruzzaman/قمر الزمان, Nourulhuda/نور الهدى and Amatullah/أمة الله tend to be quite rare and that the second word tends to act as a genitive rather than as an adjective or proper name.

As for vowels, Arabic has six diacritics for pure vowels; Three short unstressed vowels; **fathah / a َ /** as in حمَد /Hamad (m) and قمر/Qamar (f), and **kasrah / i ِ** / as in سيراج/Siraj (m) and رحاب/Rihab (f) and **dammah** / ُ **u** / as a shorter version of *oo* as in مراد/Murad (m) and لبنى/Lubna (f)) and three long (/**u:/oo** as in أيوب / Ayyoob (m) and شروق Shurooq(f) **,** **/a:/ aa** as in سالم /*Saalim* (m) and ساجدة/Saajidah (f) and **/i:/ ee** as in سعيد/Saeed (m) and ريم/Reem (f); and two diphthongs (/**aw, au**/) as in فوزي/Fawzi(m) /روضة/Rawda (f) and سعود/Saud (m)/ Masaudah/مسعودة (f) and (/**ay, ai, ei**/) as in صياح /*Sayyah* (m)/ ميادة/Mayyadah (f), صهيب /Suhaib (m)/ زينب/Zainab (f) and Zein/زين (m) /زينة/Zeinah (f) respectively**.** It is also important to mention the diacritic **'sukoon /ْ/'** where no vowel sound between consonants or at the end of the word exists as in   أبو بكْر /*bu Bakr (m)/* حفْصة /*Hafsah (f). (S*ee Appendix No. 1 for Pronunciation and Transliteration Chart).

Islam as a religion is undoubtedly a major constituent of Arabic Proper names. Appendix No. 2 shows that out of 122 of the sample names used in this study, around 55 (45%) were found to have explicit or implicit religious themes or connotations. They either refer to their associations with the name of Allah, Prophet Muhammad or the Prophet Muhammad's companions. Any name, which starts with the stem **'Abd-عبد'**, for example, has a religious connotation because it constitutes one part of God's ninety-nine great names or attributes, as in "Abdullah, Abdurrahman and Abdulaziz- عبد الله- عبد الرحمن- عبد العزيز". Names of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions, and the followers of his companions, are like "Abu Bakr, Omar, Othman**,** Ali**"** and many others. The proper name becomes like part of one's identity and probably even their nationality. It may also carry a connotation of the first person that carried the name as in the Name "Omar", which is a symbol of many things such as justice, bravery and power. Names like Khalid ibn Alwalid and Abu Obaida ibn al-Jarrah, like many others represent similar symbols.

In addition to the sound structure and religious elements, writing Arabic proper names tends to have a structure of a trilogy in terms of their sequence and order. This sequential order has been observed by Islamic and Arabic tribal heritage customs. Table No. 1 below shows examples of the normal order of writing proper names:

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Table No. 1 Standard Sequence and Order of Writing Arabic Proper Names

Surname or Nickname/ اسم العائلة أو اللقب	Middle Name/أسم الأب	Name / الأسم
الطرطوسي اسماعيل	محمد	وليد
النجار مسعود	عبد الله	أحمد
Attartousi Ismail	Muhammad	Waleed
Annajjaar Masaud	Abdullah	Ahmad

Some translation problems connected with Arabic proper names

Arabic and English belong to two different linguistic and cultural systems. These differences tend to cause the following types of problems in transliterating Arabic proper names in birth, marriage, passport and other personal documents:

Linguistic Problems

Linguistically, Arabic and English have two different sound structures which tend to cause problems in transliterating Arabic proper names into English. With regard to vowels , Arabic has six diacritics for pure vowels; three short unstressed vowels; fathah **/a ـَ/** as in حمد / **H**amad (m) and قمر/**Qa**mar (f), and kasrah **/ i ـِ /** as in سيراج/**Si**raj (m) and رحاب/**Ri**hab (f) and dammah **/u ـُ/** as a shorter version of *oo* as in مراد/**Mu**rad (m) and لبنى/**Lu**bna (f)) and three long; **/u:/oo** as in أيوب/**Ayyoo**b (m) and شروق **Shuroo**q(f), **/a:/ aa** as in سالم/ *Saalim* (m) and ساجدة/**Saa**jidah (f) and **/i:/ ee** as in سعيد/**Saee**d (m) and ريم/**Ree**m (f); and two diphthongs; **/aw, au/** as in فوزي/**Faw**zi(m) /روضة/**Raw**da (f) and سعود/**Sau**d (m)/Ma**sau**dah/مسعودة (f) respectively and **/ay, ai, ei/** as in زين/**Zai**nab (f) and Ze**in**/زينب/**Zai**nab (f) and Ze**in**/زين Ze**in**/صياح/**Say**yah (m)/ميادة/**May**yadah (f), صهيب/**Suhai**b (m)/زينب/**Zai**nab (f) and Ze**in**/زين (m) /زينة/**Zei**nah[1] (f) respectively. The length of time and oral configuration used in pronouncing these vowels are the determining factors whereas in English only the oral configuration is the determining factor where English speakers tend to distinguish between **o** from **u**, **e** from **i** and **a** as in **fat** from **a** as in **car**. These distinctions are not made in Arabic.

There are also two more diacritics; **'shaddah /ـّ/'** which is a doubled consonant stressed in the word, where the length of the sound is also doubled as in شدّاد بن أوس / Sha**dd**ad ibn Aws; and **'sukoon /ـْ/'** where no vowel sound between consonants or at the end of the word exists as in أبو بكْر /Abu Ba**kr** *(m)*/حفْصة/Ha**f**sah (f).

As for consonants, Arabic has a substantial number of consonants which do not have counterparts in English and tend to cause problems in translation and transliteration. One of these consonants is ق as in the names قاسم and قمر which are normally transliterated either as **K**asim or **Q**asim/**k**amar or **Q**amar, the former is pronounced like **k** (which Arabic also has ك) but further back in the mouth or like **q** as in **q**ueue. Another difficult consonant to pronounce is the ع/**ai**n as in the name عادل which has various transliterations as in the following: عمر، عيسى، علي Omar or Umar, Eesa and Ali respectively. The consonants ض and د as in نضال and دلال are transliterated as **dh** in Nidhal and **D**alaal respectively. The consonants ط and ت as in طلال (m)/ طيبة (f) and تامر are transliterated as **t** in **T**alaal/**T**aibah and **T**amer respectively. The consonants س and ص as in صالح and سالم (m)/سلوى and أصالة (f) are transliterated as **s** in **S**aleh and **Saa**lem/ **S**alwa and **A**salah respectively. The following three consonants ح, خ and غ whose pronunciation is characterised as "guttural" also give rise to some kind of ambiguity when

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[1] The spelling of this name is based on its common pronunciation rather than its correct grammatical pronunciation.

. حاتم/ غسان/ خالد و حليمة/ خديجة/ غادة : pronounced or transliterated as in the following examples They are usually transliterated as in Hatim/Khalid/Ghassan (m) **H**alimah, **Kh**adijah and **Gh**adah (f) respectively. Problems in pronunciation and transliteration into English are also faced with regard to consonants ظ ، ث، ذ as in أبو ذر، ثعلبة، ظلال **Z**ilaal , Abu **Th**arr and **Th**alabah.

Inability to distinguish between the pronunciation of short and long vowels in Arabic tends to give rise to people using different and wrong spellings in English. In transliterating the Arabic names, محمد، و سعيد may have **M**o**h**ammad and S**a**id or **Mu**hammad and Sa**ee**d respectively. Because they don't tend to have their diacritics on them, they are pronounced and spelt wrongly. The correct variants are **Muhammad** and **Saeed.** (See below for more examples).

Moreover, in transliterating Arabic names, for example, diacritics are dropped out especially in birth, marriage and passport documents. Translators tend to fill these vowels in different ways which result into variations in the spelling of the transliterated name as for example in عبدالله Abd**u**llah or Abd**a**lla. Here, the translator's familiarity with how Arabic names are pronounced pays off. The first variation is the correct one because it is pronounced as عبدُالله not as عبدَالله.

The problems of translating Arabic names become more aggravated when the name is written (i.e. transliterated) into English because the Arabic writing system functions differently from that of English. If the name to be transliterated is handwritten, the probability of spelling it incorrectly is quite high due to the letters د،ر،و usually proving not to be easy to read and distinguish in handwriting.

Cultural Problems

When there is a cultural focus, there is a translation problem due to the cultural 'gap' or 'distance' between the SL and TL. (Newmark, 988:95). This is evident in the translation/transliteration of proper names which tends to emphasise cultural features, be they social, historical or religious references more than the identity of the person carrying the name. The name خالد **Khalid**, for example, is a proper name which has the following types of features: religious, historical, social and cultural. In other words, the carrier of this name is a reminder of the name of خالد بن الوليد **Khalid bin Alwaleed** who was the companion of the Prophet Muhammad (ρ), and a great warrior who never lost a battle. How the translator can transfer such untold cultural references or suggestions that the name might have implied in its cultural context and historically, in terms of time and space, is discussed below.

Although the **"ال"** '**al**' as in الشهري / **Alshehri** is the definite article in Arabic and the equivalent of **'the'** in English, which is a linguistic prefix that usually precedes the surname, it is used as a sign of social prestige where the **'al'** indicates that the person is well-known and respected. Due to this, it is a very important part of the name and tends to have some repercussions in the spelling /transliteration of Arabic proper names. Some use it as a prefix; others use it as an integral part of their names and obviously tend to transliterate it accordingly. In these cases, **'al'** is transliterated as follows: **Al-**Shehri, **al-**Shehri, **Al**Shehri, **Al**shehri. These kinds of variations in transliteration tend to be rather problematic as they would cause problems not only in identifying the nationality of the person, but also in violating the linguistic rules and social values that are associated with the name in question.

Therefore, if the translator prefers to emphasise the target language audience in transliterating Arabic names, he is then bound to cause variations in the spelling/transliteration of the proper name in terms of its identifying functions and associated socio-cultural/historical connotations.

Having different spellings for the name of عبدُالله, for example, as in the following (**Abdullah, Abdulla, Abdalla, Abed Allah, Abdul, Abdo**), may be acceptable in English and encouraged, due to it being easier for the target reader to pronounce, yet could cause and give rise to serious problems not only in identifying the identity of the person in official situations but also in violating the source socio-cultural prestigious connotations associated with the name.

Foreignising the translation/transliteration of Arabic proper names in official documents as in birth, marriage, passport and other personal documents.

In spite of the common convention that "there are no rules for the translation of proper names" (Nord, 2003:182), the type of problems discussed above seem to indicate and prove that there is an urgent need to standardise the manners by which Arabic proper names are transliterated into English. Given the concept of foreignization explained before, and the nature and function of translating Arabic proper names in official documents, a foreignising approach is suggested to bring to light the foreignness of the linguistic and cultural differences of Arabic Proper names whilst transliterating them into English. This could be illustrated at the following levels.

At linguistic level

At this level, the problem is manifested in violating the phonetic rules of the Arabic names, as in the phoneme '**o** and **u**' shorter version of **oo** and short **o** respectively like in the spelling of the name, '**M**o**hammad or M**u**hammad**', for example. The correct spelling is the latter one as it has the exact length of time and oral configuration used in pronouncing these vowels in Arabic. Similar vowel pronunciation examples are like '**a** and **e**', as in the transliteration of the name أحمد Ahm**a**d and Ahm**e**d, the correct transliteration being the former because it is pronounced in Arabic like the **a** in b**a**d and not the **e** in b**e**d respectively. Another problematic vowel is the letter ي in the name حبيب which is confusingly transliterated as either Hab**i**b or Hab**ee**b. The latter is the correct one because it owns a long **e** as in b**ee**f and s**ee**. It is not an unstressed vowel like a schwa as in علي which is undebatably transliterated as an **i** in Al**i** and pronounced like a shorter version of **ee**.

With regard to the two diacritics "**shaddah/ـّ/** and **sukoon/ـْ/"**, they should also be foreignised in transliteration if an Arabic proper name contains either of them. Any Arabic proper name with a '**shaddah**' should have the stressed consonant in the name doubled as in شدّاد or عمّار "Sha**dd**ad or A**mm**aar" respectively. As for the **"sukoon"**, like, for example, in the name أبو بكْر, the transliteration of the name should not have a vowel sound between the consonants, especially when it occurs at the end of the word as in أبو بكر، بدر، أبو الفضل Abu Ba**kr,** Ba**dr,** Abulfa**dl.**

The following table takes into consideration the recommendations mentioned in the rest of this paper and could be used as a guideline for transliterating Arabic proper names that have diacritical marks:

Table No. 2 Diacritical marks (tashkeel):

Name of mark	Pronunciation	Transliterated form with examples
fathah / a /َ	very short 'a' or schwa	/a/ حَمَد / **Ha**mad (m) – هَلا / **Ha**la (f)
kasrah / i /ِ	shorter version of ee or schwa (unstressed vowel)	/i/ هِشام /**Hi**sham (m) – هِبة /**Hi**bah (f)
dammah / u /ُ	Shorter version of oo	/u/ صُهيب /**Su**haib (m)- سُليمى / **Su**laima (f)
shaddah /ّ/	a doubled consonant is stressed in the word, and the length of the sound is also doubled.	double letter حمَّاد / Ha**mm**ad (m)- ميّادة Ma**yy**adah
sukoon /ْ/	no vowel sound between consonants or at the end of a word	absence of vowel. فهْد / Fa**hd** (m)- حمْدة Ha**md**ah (f)

When it comes to transliterating Arabic proper names with consonants, the problem becomes more evident because Arabic has a substantial number of consonants which do not have counterparts in English. Due to lack of space, only the most problematic consonant sounds will be addressed. The consonant ق as in the name قاسم, for example, is wrongly transliterated as **K**asim, which is pronounced like **k** similar to the Arabic ك. This form deprives the name carrier of the semantic connotation their name carries which means 'الموزِّع، المُعطي، الحسن الوجه،he who distributes, or gives away or with a pleasant look on his face', respectively. Therefore, the use of **q** as in   **Q**asim like **q** as in 'queue' is more appropriate because it is the nearest to a corresponding phonetic sound in English and it acoustically reflects its aforementioned foreign semantic meanings in Arabic.

Another difficult consonant to transliterate is the ع/**ain** as in the name عمر , which doesn't have a counterpart in English. In most literature where an Arabic name starts with ع the English version always starts with a "U', to signify the sound of ع as for example in '**Umar**. In official documents, this form of transliteration is awkward and confusing not only in writing but in pronouncing too. Therefore, the ع should be transliterated on the basis of the diacritical mark it has on it. If it starts with dammah /**u**/ـُ as in the name عُمر, it is transliterated as **U**mar or **O**mar. If it starts with kasrah /**i**/ـِ as in the name عِيسى, it is transliterated as **Ee**sa. If it starts with fathah /**a**/ـَ as in the name of عَلي, it should be transliterated as in **A**li. If أ /**a** comes after ع , it is doubled as in the names of **Aa**mer /**Aa**ref/ **Aa**del عامر/عارف/عادل .

Similarly, the consonants ض ,ص, and ط as in نضال , صالح and طلال respectively don't have corresponding equivalent sounds in English. To differentiate them from the consonants د , س and ت as in   دلال ,سالم and تامر the consonant ض is transliterated as **dh**, ص as **s** with a dot underneath it and ط as **T** with a dot underneath it. Again this is not appropriate in names recorded in official documents like in passports, birth certificate, identity cards and other personal documents. Therefore, in order to avoid both awkwardness in their orthography and to signify the foreignness of the names, the translators could use the following corresponding consonant sounds respectively as in Ni**d**aal or Ni**dh**aal , **S**aleh and **T**alaal.

The following three consonants خ ،ح and غ, whose pronunciation is characterised as "guttural", also give rise to some kind of ambiguity when pronounced or transliterated into English. They are usually transliterated as **kh, h** and **gh** as in "**Kh**alid, **H**atim **and Gh**assan" (خالد، حاتم، وغسَّان) respectively.

With regard to consonants, like ذ ، ث ، ظ ، as in ظافر، ثعلبة، أبو ذر , they also cause problems in their pronunciation and transliteration into English. The consonant ظ in the name ظافر does not have an exact corresponding equivalent in English, which is why it tends to be wrongly transliterated as 'Dafer, Dhafer or Thafer', for example. The nearest acceptable form in English without causing too much of violation to the Arabic rules and the foreignization of the name would be "Dhafer or Zafer". The Arabic consonant ث in the name ثعلبة has its acceptable corresponding counterpart in English. This is "th" as in "thing" not as in "this". Thus, the Arabic rule of pronunciation and orthography is observed and the foreignness of the name is maintained as in "Thalaba".

Similarly the Arabic 'shshamsi' consonant ذ in the name أبو ذر has its generally acceptable corresponding counterpart in English it being "th" as in "this" and not as in "thing". Thus, the Arabic rule of pronunciation and orthography is observed and the foreignness of the name is maintained like in the translation of "Abu Tharr or Abu Zarr" not wrongly transliterated as "Abu Darr"! As for in Arabic, the 'shamsi' consonant ز in the names نزار/ زهراء , tends to have its generally acceptable corresponding counterpart in English. The letter "z" as in "zoo" would do the job well and be correctly used in this example. Thus the names are nicely transliterated as "Nizar/Zahraa".

Arabic does not have the English consonant sound p as in Peter. Therefore, the Arabic "qamari" consonant ب as in بلال , tends to be transliterated comfortably as "b" in Bilaal, maintaining the Arabic accurate pronunciation and signifying the foreignness of the name in English, which does not work vice versa because an English proper name like 'Paul' tends to be transliterated in Arabic as 'بول', that is the 'b' consonant sound is used.

At Cultural level

In addition to signifying the foreignness of the linguistic features of Arabic proper names in their transliteration into English, the translator needs to also signify their cultural dimensions. This tends to include the historical, religious and social references normally associated with Arabic proper names.

Misspelling or having variations in transliterating Arabic proper names with historical references would violate the historical significance implied in the proper name and consequently would cause some kind of personal offence to the owner of the name as well as the people hearing the name pronounced in front of them. Therefore, names with historical references as in the names listed in Table No. 3 below, should also be foreignisingly transliterated in order to maintain the source language features and cultural emphasis inviting the target audience to make an effort to appreciate not only the external phonetic features of the name but also the implicatures and allusions generally carried with names. When a Muslim hears the name khalid called, for example, he or she immediately associates it with the name Khalid ibn Alwaleed, the Prophet Muhammad's warrior who was never defeated in a battle, and was given the title 'The Sword of Allah' by Prophet Muhammad.

Table No. 3 Sample Names with Historical References

Name	Associated with	Arabic Name
Khalid	Khalid ibn Alwaleed	خالد بن الوليد
Saalim	Azzeer Saalm	الزير سالم
Zannoobya	Queen of Palmira	ملكة تدمر
Hatim	Symbol of kindness and generosity	حاتم الطائي
Alkhansaa	The mother of four martyrs	الخنساء
Belqees	Queen of Sheba	ملكة سبأ

With regard to using a random domesticating approach in transliterating religiously loaded Arabic proper names into English, the problem becomes more aggravated as it tends to offend the religious beliefs of the owner of the name. In transliterating the Arabic name محمد, for example, with so many different spellings as in the following (**Muhammad, Mohammad, Muhammed, Mohammed, Mouhammad, Mohamad, Mohamed, Mohd, Mo),** the translator is violating the source language religious connotations associated with the name, given that the name is the name of Prophet Muhammad who came in 610 CE to deliver the Message of Islam. The name is fully loaded with semantic, orthographic, acoustic, religious and cultural connotations and associations that govern the use of the name in theory and in practice. Therefore, names with religious references, as shown in Table No. 4 below, should also be foreignisingly transliterated to maintain the source language features and cultural emphasis inviting the target audience to make an effort to appreciate not only the external phonetic features of the name, but also the Islamic connotations and associations carried with it.

Table No. 4 Sample Names with Religious References

Not recommednd	Recommended	Arabic Name
Mo/ Mohd/ Mohamed/ Mohamad/ Mouhammad/ Mohammed/ Muhammed/ Mohammad/	Muhammad	محمد
Abdo/ Abdul/ Abed Allah/ Abdalla/ Abdulla/	Abdullah	عبد الله
Abdul-Rahman/ Abdurahman/	Abdurrahman	عبد الرحمن
Abdu Raheem/ Abdul-Raheem/	Abdurraheem	عبد الرحيم
؟Umar/ Omer/	Omar or Umar	عمر
Kadija/ Kadiga/ Khadiga	Khadijah	خديجة
Aysha/ Eisha/	Aishah	عائشة
Fatmah/ Phatma/ Fatima/	Fatimah	فاطمة
Thilaal/ Dhilaal/ Zilal	Zilaal	ظلال
Noor Alhuda/	Noorulhuda	نور الهدى

One of the gravest repercussions of mistransliterating Arabic proper names is the issue of identity identification in the database or archives used by authorities in education, security and work. In other words, if there is more than one variation of the spelling of the proper name, there is potentially a problem in identifying the carrier of the name as for example in the event of a criminal offence being committed or a socio-cultural norm being violated like in the case of different spellings being used in the example name عبدُالله mentioned above. To safeguard against any misidentification of the person with the name of **Abdullah**, in the case of him committing any criminal offence or violating the socio-cultural aspects implicitly carried in the proper name, a foreignising spelling of the name would neither interfere with the identifying function of the name nor violate the linguistic or socio-cultural criteria associated with it.

Therefore, a standardised spelling for a name such as عبدُالله would be 'Abdullah' and not any of the other variants to be used in official documents like passports, birth, marriage and other personal documents.

The Arabic definite article **"ال"/"al"** as in الشهري / **Al**shehri , is a linguistic prefix that precedes surnames/nicknames most of the time and is the equivalent of **"the"** in English. This prefix tends to cause problems in transliterating Arabic proper names and is mainly used with surnames in order to refer either to the place where someone's ancestors were born, as in عمر عبدالله **السعودي**/ أبو عمر الفاروق/ Omar Abdullah **Al**saudi, or as a marker of praise or slander as in مسيلمة الكذاب/Omar **Alfarooq**/Abu Musailamah **Alkazzab** meaning **Omar the Just** and **Abu Musailamah the Liar** respectively. It also could indicate to the profession of the person as in صالح الخباز Saleh **Alkhabbaz**, Saleh the baker.

Looking at another dimension shows that it is used as a sign of social prestige where the **'al'** indicates that the person is well-known and respected. So it is a very important part of the name and tends to have some repercussions in the spelling /transliteration of Arabic proper names. Some use it as a prefix whilst others use it as an integral part of their names and obviously tend to transliterate it accordingly. In these cases, **"al"** is transliterated as follows: **Al-**Shehri**, al-**Shehri**, Al**Shehri**, Al**shehri**.** This kind of variation in transliteration tends to be problematic as this would cause problems in identifying the nationality of the person! Therefore, I suggest that only one form is used which is the integrated one as in **Alshehri, Alsaudi, Alfarooq, Alkhabbaz.** Where "**al**" is followed by a 'asshamsi letter', then the **'al'** should not be written as it is not pronounced in Arabic, yet the following letter is doubled like, for example, in أحمد النجار /Ahmad **Annajjar** and عبد الله الشهري/Abdullah **Ashshehri** . It is linguistically and grammatical correct and it looks more pleasant and more readable!

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The above brief discussion of some of the problems that arise when transliterating Arabic proper names has shown that there is not a standard approach followed in transliterating them in birth, marriage, passport and other personal documents but rather a variety of parameters. At the linguistic level, for example, the Arabic consonant letters ظ/ ض/ ذ give rise to serious problems in transliterating as they do not have exact or even near corresponding equivalents in English and so result in being translated differently. That is why the translator reluctantly tends to give us a combined approach of 'foreignisation and domestication' when necessary as in ظلال/ **Z**ilaal not **Dh**ilal , نضال Ni**d**aal not Ni**dh**aal and أبو ذر/Abu **Th**arr or Abu **Z**arr" not **"Abu Da**rr or Abu **Dh**arr"!.

At a social-cultural level, the results indicate that a serious violation of the religious and historical connotations or references implied or associated with Arabic proper names occur when transliterating them without taking into consideration such parameters as in the names of عبد الله/ محمد Abdullah /Muhammad and many others mentioned above.

The Arabic definite article **"ال"/"al"** as in الشهري / **Alshehri** , is yet another example of the social dimension associated with the name as it is considered a sign of social prestige where the **'al'** indicates that the person is well-known and respected. It is suggested that only the integrated form is used as in **Alshehri, Alsaudi, Alfarooq, Alkhabbaz** where the "**al**" is necessary, however, when followed by a 'asshamsi letter', the **'al'** is not written due to it not

being pronounced in Arabic as in, for example, أحمد النجار /**Ahmad Annajjar and** عبد الله /**Abdullah Ashshehri** الشهري .

In spite of all the problems and difficulties mentioned above, standardising the transliteration of Arabic proper names into English is still possible if individuals and governmental authorities take this issue on board and put it into practice. Therefore, we would like to recommend for them the following guidelines:

1. The Arabic acoustic letter dichotomy of 'alqamariya' letters and 'ashshmasiya' letters as the governing criteria for spelling and transliterating Arabic proper names into English should be strictly used.

2. The use of diacritic symbols or dots or dashes between, below or above the letters of the names should be avoided because it is not necessary.

3. There is no harm in doubling letters in the case of a diacritic symbol provided that consistency is maintained.

4. The surname or nickname that starts with the Arabic definite article **"ال"**/**"al"** as in أحمد العلي / Ahmad **Alali** should be written as an integral part of the name which starts with a capital letter **'A'** only. It should neither have a dash nor two capital letters . However, when it is followed by a 'asshamsi letter', then the **'al'** should not be written due to it not being pronounced in Arabic as in, for example, أحمد النجار /Ahmad Annajjar.

5. Governmental authorities, especially those who deal with issuing passports, birth certificates and marriage certificates, should adopt a standardised formula with the transliteration of Arabic prober names based on foreignising the name and not domesticating it for the reasons explained above.

Last but not least, since English and Arabic belong to two different linguistic and cultural entities, the translator has to manage all the constraints involved in the process of transliterating a proper name.

It is hoped that this approach can also be explored and used by those who are interested in not only the transliteration of Arabic proper names, but also other name types, such as institutional, organisational and religious places names.

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Appendix 1 Pronunciation and Transliteration Chart

Arabic Script	Pronunciation	Transliterated Form & Example male /female in English & Arabic
أ	Short 'a', as in *cat*	a → **A**hmad / **A**mal أحمد / أمل
آ- ى	Longer 'a', as in *cab* (not as in *cake*)	aa → **Aa**mer /**Aa**dilah عامر/ عادلة
ب	/b/ as in *bell*, *rubber* and *tab*	b → **B**ilaal / **B**udoor بلال / بدور
ت	/t/ as in *tap*, *mustard* and *sit*	t → **T**amir / **T**asneem تامر/ تسنيم
ة-	Takes the sound of preceding diacritical mark sometimes ending in h (when in pausal form): ah, ih, or ooh; or atu (n), ati (n) when uninterrupted	h or t (when followed by another Arabic word) → Hisham Halim**ah** هشام حليمة
ث	/th/as in *thing* , *math* and *wealth*	th → **Th**aer/ **Th**awab ثائر/ ثواب
ج	/j/ as in *jam*, *ajar* and *age*	j →**J**amaal / **J**awahir جمال / جواهر
ح	a 'a harsher' sound than the English initial /h/, and may occur medially and in word-final position as well.	h → **H**amzah / **H**abibah حمزة / حبيبة
خ	as in *Bach* (in German); may occur initially and medially as well.	kh → **Kh**alid / **Kh**awlah خالد / خولة
د	/d/ as in *do*, *muddy* and *red*	d → **D**awood / **D**alaal داود / دلال
ذ	as in *this*, *father* and *smooth*	th or z →**Th**arr/**Th**ikrayaat ذر/ذكريات
ر	/r/ as in *raw*, *arid* and *war*; may also be a rolled 'r', as pronounced in Spanish	r → **R**ashid / **R**azan راشد / رزان
ز	/z/ as in *zoo, easy*, and *gaze*	z → **Z**akaria / **Z**ahraa زكريا / زهراء
س	/s/ as in *so, messy* and *grass*	s → **S**ulaiman / **S**alwa سليمان / سلوى
ش	as in *ship, ashes* and *rush*	sh → **Sh**akir / **Sh**ahd شاكر / شهد
ص	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /sw/ or /s/ farther back in the mouth.	s → **S**alaah / **S**afa صلاح / صفاء
ض	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /d/ farther back in the mouth.	**dh** → **Dh**aigham or **D**aigham/ **Dh**uha or **D**uha ضيغم/ ضحى
ط	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /t/ farther back in the mouth.	t → **T**alib / **T**ahirah طالب / طاهرة
ظ	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /the/ farther back in the mouth.	**dh** → **Dh**afer/ **Z**afer **/ Z**ilaal ظافر / ظلال
ع	no close equivalent in English, a guttural sound in the back of the throat.	→ **O**mar / **Ee**sa/ **A**li/ **Ai**dah/ Aishah عمر / عيسى / علي / عايدة /عائشة
غ	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it like the French /r/ in 'rouge'	gh → **Gh**alib / **Gh**aidaa/ **Gh**adah غالب / غيداء / غادة
ف	/f/ as in *fill*, *effort* and *muff*	f → **F**aisal / **F**atin فيصل / فاتن
ق	no close equivalent in English, but may be approximated by pronouncing it as /k/ farther back in the mouth	q → **Q**asim / **Q**amar قاسم / قمر
ك	/k/ as in *king*, *bucket* and *tack*.	k → **K**areem / **K**awthar كريم / كوثر
ل	/l/ as in lap, halo, in the word Allah, it becomes velarized as in ball.	l → **L**aith / **L**ubn ليث / لبنة
م	/m/ as in *men, simple* and *ram*	m → **M**uhammad / **M**aha محمد / مها
ن	/n/ as in net, ant and can	n → **N**abeel / **N**adia نبيل / نادية
هـ-ه-ة	/h/as in hat; unlike /h/ in English, in Arabic /h/ is pronounced in medial and word-final positions as well.	h → **H**abeeb / **H**anaan حبيب / حنان
و	as in wet and away	w → **W**ael / **W**edad وائل / وداد
و	long 'u', as in boot and too	oo → Daw**oo**d / Shur**oo**q داود / شروق
ي	as in yard and mayo	y → **Y**aser/ **Y**asmeen ياسر / ياسمين
ي	long 'e', as in eat, beef and see	ee → Sa**ee**d / Mun**ee**rah سعيد/ منيرة
ء	glottal stop: may be closely approximately by pronouncing it like 't' in the Cockney English pronunciation of butter, bu'er, or the stop sound in uh-oh!	(omitted in initial position) → Wa`el / Safa وائل / صفاء

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Diphthongs:

Arabic Script	Pronunciation	Transliterated form	
أو، ـَو	Long 'o', as in boat and go	Au, aw → **Sau**d/**Aw**s	سعود/ أوس
أي، ـَي	Long 'a', as in aid, rain and say	Ay. Ai, ei **Ay**man/**Ai**dah/**Ze**inah أيمن/ عايدة/ زينة	

Diacritical marks (tashkeel):

Name of mark	Pronunciation	Transliterated form	
fathah / a /ـَ	very short 'a' or schwa	a → **Sa**lwa	سلوى
kasrah / i /ـِ	shorter version of ee or schwa (unstressed vowel)	i → **Hi**bah	هبة
dammah / u /ـُ	Shorter version of oo	u → **Su**laima	سليمى
shaddah / ـّ/	a doubled consonant is stressed in the word, and the length of the sound is also doubled.	double letter Ha**mm**ad / Ruq**ayy**ah	حمّاد / رقيّة
sukoon /ـْ/	no vowel sound between consonants or at the end of a word	absence of vowel. → Fa**hd** / Ha**fs**ah	فهْد / حفْصة

Appendix 2   List of around 122 Arabic Male/Female Proper Names used in this paper with their correct Transliterations only

Transliterations	56 Female Names	Transliterations	66 Male Names
Amal/Amatullah/ Asala /lkhansaa	1. أمل / أمة الله * / أصالة / الخنساء	Ahmad /Ayyoob/ Abu Bakr / Abulfadl/ Abu Tharr/ Ayman/Aws	1. أحمد*/ أيوب*/ أبو بكْر*/ أبو الفضل*/ أبو ذر* /أيمن*/ أوس
Belqees / Budoor	2. بلقيس * / بدور	Bilaal/Albara/Badre/	2. بلال* / البراء*/ بدر *
Tasneem	3. تسنيم*	Tamir	3. تامر
Hala	4. هَلا/هبة*	Hisham	4. هشام
Thawab	5. ثواب*	Thalaba/Thaer	5. ثعلبة / ثائر
Jawahir	6. جواهر	Jamaal	6. جمال
Habeeba/ Hamdah / Hafsah/ Hanan / Halimah	7. حبيبة */ حفْصة*/ حمْدة / حنان، حليمة*	Hamza /Hamad / Hatim /Habeeb/ Hammad	7. حمزة* / حمد */ حاتم /حبيب / حمّاد*
Khawla / Khadija	8. خولة / خديجة*	Khalid,	8. خالد
Dalaal	9. دلال	Dawood	9. داود*
Thikrayaat	10. ذكريات	Tharr or Zarr	10. ذر *
Razan / Reem/ Rihab/ Rawdha/Ruqayyah	11. رزان/ ريم/رحاب* /روضة/رقيّة*	Rashid	11. راشد*
Zahraa/ Zainab/Zeina	12. زهراء*/ زينب*/ زينة	Zakaria/ Zein	12. زكريا* / زين
Salwa, Sulaima/ Saajida	13. سلوى / سُليمى /ساجدة*	Saud, Sulaiman Siraj/Saalim/ Saeed/	13. سعود / سليمان*/ سراج/ سالم/ سعيد
Shahd / Shurooq	14. شهد/ شروق	Shakir/ Shaddad ibn Aws;	14. شاكر*/ شدّاد بن أوس
Safaa	15. صفاء	Saleh/ Sayyah / Suhaib	15. صالح*/ صياح/ صهيب*
Dhuha or Duha	16. ضحى*	Dhaigham or Daigham	16. ضيغم
Tahirah/ Taibah	17. طاهرة* / طيبة*	Talib Talaal	17. طالب/ طلال
Zilaal	18. ظلال*	Dhafer or Zafer	18. ظافر
Aishah/ Aidah	19. عائشة* / عايدة/ عادلة*	Abdullah/ Abdurrahman/ Abdulaziz/ Omar or Umar/ Eesa/ Ali/ Ammaar/ AAmer	19. عبد الله* / عبد الرحمن*/ عبد العزيز*/ عمر*/ عيسى* / علي*/ عمّار*/ عامر
Ghaidaa/ Ghadah	20. غيداء/ غادة	Ghalib/ Ghassan	20. غالب /غسان
Fatin	21. فاتن	Faisal / Fawzi/ Fahd	21. فيصل/ فوزي /فهْد
Qamar / Qamaruzzaman	22. قمر/ قمر الزمان	Qasim	22. قاسم*
Kawthar	23. كوثر*	Kareem	23. كريم*
Lubna	24. لبنة	Laith	24. ليث
Maha/ Muneerah/ Masaudah /Mayyadah	25. مها/ منيرة / مسعودة/ ميادة	Muhammad/ Murad	25. محمد* / مراد
Nadiah/ Nourulhuda/	26. نادية/ نور الهدى*	Nabeel/ Nidhaal or Nidaal /Nizar/ Naseeruddeen/	26. نبيل / نضال/نزار /ناصر الدين*
Wedad	27. وداد	Wael/ Waleed	27. وائل / وليد
Yasmeen	28. ياسمين	Yaser	28. ياسر *
	29.	Ismail	29. اسماعيل*

* Names with asterisks indicate religious connotations or references. (33 (50%) Male and 22 (39%) Female names)