

**LINGUISTIC HYBRIDITY AND READER POSITIONING THROUGH  
UNTRANSLATED CULTURAL LEXIS IN KAMILA SHAMSIE'S *BURNT  
SHADOWS*: A POSTCOLONIAL STYLISTIC ANALYSIS****Amina Abbas**

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**Abstract**

*This study examines the postcolonial stylistic analysis of the untranslated cultural lexis for highlighting the linguistic hybridity and its effects on readers' positioning in Kamila Shamsie's novel *Burnt Shadows* (2009). The novel is written in English language which is globally enriching language, however there are certain cultural, linguistic, social, religious, and political untranslated expressions in Urdu, German, and Japanese language are deliberately used in the narrative for creating a different readers' experience. Furthermore, it is a conscious effort being a diasporic author, Shamsie implemented linguistic strategies through religious, clothing lexis, food items, and a few identities driven expression from the Japanese language in the context of the bombing attack for constructing different reading experiences of western audience. Furthermore, it is qualitative research methodology, under the lens of the postcolonial stylistic analysis, with purposive sampling technique and the close reading of the primary text provides multiple examples of untranslated cultural lexis. These words are divided into five categories such as religion and spirituality, dresses and visual representation, food and domestic lifestyle, kinship and affection, and traumatic symbols in the bombing attack context.*

*The theoretical framework is based on the postcolonial stylistic linguistics. It is further examined the linguistic hybridity through cultural untranslated lexicon with Homi K. Bhabha's concept of hybridity and third space as theorized in *The Location of Culture* (1994), Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin's strategies of abrogation and appropriation from *The Empire Writes Back* (2002), Roger Fowler's linguistic criticism and reader positioning from *Linguistic Criticism* (1996). The results reveal that the constant rejection of English translation in *Burnt Shadows* shows that it is a deliberate/conscious effort of the author to construct a linguistically hybrid place which is relevant to Bhabha's ambivalent space where different languages and cultures blend. This study further argues that this untranslated lexis functions as reader positioning device, like the South Asian readers are culturally insiders, however the Western reading community is known as culturally outsiders because they are unfamiliar with the cultural, religious, social, domestic, and political lexis. Because they are unfamiliar with the deeper embedded meaning. These findings reveals that this study contributes in the growing field of postcolonial stylistic linguistic research in which close linguistics analysis uncover the ideological and cultural perspectives of postcolonial literary text as Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows* is a linguistic and cultural resistance text with the untranslated cultural lexis.*

**Keywords:** *Linguistic hybridity, untranslated cultural lexis, reader positioning, postcolonial stylistics, third space.*

**Introduction**

Language is a medium of communication, however it is never neutral medium for everyone. The positioning of author and readers is crucial because at one end the text is created, constructed, and designed, however it can be manipulated on the reader's side because of their linguistic, cultural, religious, and political differences. In postcolonial writings, the diasporic authors consciously manipulate the meaning because of some political and historical reasons. They play with linguistic, cultural, and political identities of the characters. Therefore, the deliberate efforts of the authors are their stylistic choices which reflect in the selected narrative of global politics. Similarly, a diasporic writing, *Burnt Shadows* is written by Kamila Shamsie, it was published in 2009, also contains similar ideology of postcolonial linguistics politics. Shamsie blends maximum four languages within the global context of the bombing attack in Japan, the Second World War, the division of India, the 9/11, and the Afghan war. This novel was written in English language which is globally accepted language to enhance the readership.

However, Shamsie refused to translate all the cultural embedded lexis and left the weight on the shoulders of the readers. Therefore, this study investigates the untranslated lexis left in the novel like Urdu, Japanese, and German language. The author keeps the cultural diversity and richness of the meaning in the multilingual narrative. The readers try to understand the meaning with contextual information.

*Burnt Shadows* is a novel which provides a timeline of globally disastrous events such as the traumatic experience of the bombing attack in Nagasaki in 1945, the independence of Pakistan and India in 1947, the Soviet invasion of Afghan in 1980s, and lastly the aftereffects of 9/11 in 2001. This novel covers six countries which is a huge geographical history for six consecutive decades. Furthermore, this narrative provides linguistic hybridity through cultural and ideological blending. The novel's setting and characterization is an example of hybrid space where Urdu, German, and Japanese language expression are remained untranslated throughout the novel because it provides cultural hybridity in rich and complex form for the readers.

The present study evaluates the untranslated lexis through the postcolonial stylistic lens. The stylistic toolkit provides patterns to analyze the significance of untranslated lexis such as cultural, linguistics, religious, and political manifestation of the words. Moreover, this study mainly aims to investigate the untranslated lexis in Shamsie's novel and highlight the linguistic and cultural hybridity after following the framework of Homi K. Bhabha *The Location of Culture* (1994). This study examines the reasons behind selection of these stylistic items and its impact on the readers.

### **Research Objectives**

1. To investigate Shamsie's text *Burnt Shadows* through its stylistic features of untranslated lexis of the novel.
2. To examine the ways behind the construction of linguistic hybridity and the negotiation of cultural practices through the embedded untranslated cultural lexis.
3. To describe the ways of formation reader position and individual interpretations through colonial practices.

### **Research Questions**

1. How does Kamila Shamsie utilize the untranslated lexis stylistically in *Burnt Shadows*?
2. What are the ways to contribute the construction of linguistic hybridity and the negotiation of cultural practices through the untranslated cultural lexis?
3. How does the use of readers positioning for the cultural representation and its meaning through untranslated cultural lexis?

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is significant because of its contribution in the growing field of the postcolonial stylistics. It creates a bridge between the linguistics stylistic analysis and cultural, ideological interpretation of linguistic hybridity under the broader lens of the postcolonial criticism. This novel has been explored with different thematic analysis such as theme of trauma, east-west encounters, historiography, diasporic writing, and so on. However, this study evaluates the untranslated lexis, hybrid linguistic stylistic analysis, and its effects on the readers.

## **2. Literature Review**

Neha Chatterjee (2016) elaborated the traumatic experiences of people because of their disturbing historical and political events in the article "Trauma, Memory, and Identity in Kamila Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows*". She mentioned the deadly effects of bombing attack on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan, the division of sub-continent, and the Soviet-Afghan war, and the 9/11 attacks. Moreover, the study primarily focuses on the ideology of memory, trauma,

and identity. Through the theoretical framework of Sigmund Freud, the study reveals the negative effects of war on the lives of Hiroko, Sajjad and Raza. The study reveals the psychological imbalance because of the fragmented identities and traumatic experience of bombing attacks. However, the study mainly consists on the thematic and psychological analysis, but the use of untranslated cultural lexis is still not explored.

Aurangzeb and Saeed (2025) elaborated the postcolonial themes in Kamila Shamsie's novel *Burnt Shadows* through the lens of Homi K. Bhabha like the hybridity, ambivalent spaces, and identities. The study reveals that the constant intermingling of multicultural practices evolves the identities of the characters because these identities could not remain the fixed and pure, however, they evolved into hybrid or mixed identities. They argued that the main reason behind the challenging evolution of identities was cross-cultural interaction at global level after migration from one country to another. Through the lens of Bhabha's concept of ambivalence and hybridity, the authors narrated that the postcolonial identities are fluid, not fixed because they get into shape after linguistic, religious, cultural and social interaction at global level. The author argued that Hiroko, Raza, Sajjad and Elizabeth are the epitome of postcolonial hybridity because they had experienced of national, conventional and international religious and cultural practices. Furthermore, the authors concluded that the hybridity and plural identities are inevitable because Shamsie's novel rejects the ideology of pure culture and linguistic capability. They need to highlight the ambivalent space for the characters of the novel.

Sarvat (2014) highlights the themes of postcolonial identities through applying Homi K. Bhabha's lens of cultural hybridity. The study reveals the mixed identities of the characters because they had experience of multiple cultural traditions and values without leaving their original identity background. Therefore, they reached at point of cultural hybridity and mixedness. Bhabha demonstrated the idea of "third space", which has been mentioning the process of identity revolution throughout the text because their identities continuously reshaped after multicultural and religious blending. Moreover, the study argues about the art of characterization in *Burnt Shadows* also provides example of cultural hybridity through the character of Hiroko, Sajjad, Raza and Elizabeth. These characters live in those liminal spaces where they have reached at a point of cultural, religious, social, and political co-exist spaces to blend with one another national and international attachments.

Faiza, Batool, and Sarwar (2025) presented a comparative analysis between postcolonial and feministic lens for highlighting the themes of womanhood, cultural representation on the basis of gender and power, trauma and identity crisis in the postcolonial contexts. The novel's protagonist character Hiroko is portrayed as the symbol of migration, historical colonial and imperial powers, and transformation of cultural identity through visiting the historical events countries such as Japan, India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Therefore, Shamsie did not only portray the female protagonist as a sufferer, however the female character depicts the presence of resilient and adaptive nature of females while facing traumatic war experiences and migrated to foreign countries.

Deen, Mir, and Salim (2025) analyzed the novel through Linda Hutcheon's theory of historiographic metafiction. The study argues about the themes of history, memory, identity, migration, trauma, fiction and geography. Moreover, they presented the twenty-first century view of global historical events like the bombing attack on Nagasaki, the independence of India and Pakistan, the cold war, and the negative effects of 9/11 attacks. They utilized the ordinary lives of individuals to connect with the international conflicts, rather than portraying the history through the specific historical figures. Therefore, they presented the public history through addressing the sufferings of an individual at personal level.

Arif, Zahra, and Wakeel (2025) revealed traumatic psychological states in *Burnt Shadows* and *Baumgartner's Bombay* through a comparative analysis under the theory of trauma by Cathy Caruth. The study argues the reasons behind the traumatic major historical events in both novels such as the bombing attack on Nagasaki in Japan, the Partition of India into India and Pakistan, the disastrous effects of 9/11, and the World War II. The characters faced the sense of trauma and the uncertainty of a displaced identity in both novels like Hiroko traveled from Japan to India and then migrated to Pakistan. Similarly, Hugo became a Jewish refugee faced cultural alienation and exile at a new place. Caruth concept of the belated trauma is widely applicable in the past haunted memories of these two characters with the reference of postcolonial identities and traumatic past experiences.

The above-mentioned studies have been done on the research topic of cultural hybridity, migration, postcolonial identities, traumatic past experiences, historiographic study, comparative analysis of *Burnt Shadows* through the lens of feminism and Postcolonialism, and Homi K Bhabha's hybridity. However, these studies did not reveal the untranslated lexical items and reader's position in *Burnt Shadows*. Therefore, this is a research gap which still needs to be explored. I will investigate the linguistic and stylistic dimensions in *Burnt Shadows*.

### **Postcolonial Stylistics**

According to the postcolonial concepts of mimicry and hybridity, Homi K. Bhabha described the hybridity and mimicry in discourse as well. He emphasized that the mimicry and hybridity were the tools of mocking at the easterners because these terms used as an effective strategy of colonial power and knowledge. Mimicry is a form of ironic compromise in which the subjects try to articulate their power in an ambivalent space (Bhabha 86). He argues that linguistic hybridity is not normal practice, however it is severely disturbing for the local's cultural identity. Because, in "normalizing" the colonial dream of post-enlightenment civility alienates the subjects' own language and its freedom to articulate the difference of cultural and religious practices. Therefore, the usage of linguistic hybridity produces the knowledge of the forced and powerful colonial power which is based on their norms (86). Mimicry creates problems while representation of the cultural and religious lexis, because the signs of culture and racial differences must be at priority. It is not possible to take the social, cultural, and religious signs as naturalizable. The history of the eastern is badly mocked through the misrepresentation or imitated linguistic hybridity because it marginalizes the history.

Bhabha elaborated an ambivalent space where a migrant joined two different cultural, linguistic and ethnic values which is taken as the survival of a migrant (224). Because it is a transitional process for them not only the translational one. They need to find out a solution for them. Their nationality becomes a problem which requires an assimilation, however they caught in a problem of being nativist because of the difference of culture. This is a limitation of transformation that is the element of translation because it does not only the translation, however, it is the translation of historic and cultural values. The migrants reach at a point of stillness where translation is dealt as the racist nightmare. They have the position of in-between the powerful class and minority group which question the cultural transability. Therefore, the process of hybridity is in-between the selection of danger and purity.

The diasporic identity faces the social and secular issues while tagging Koran with misrepresented names. It is widely represented as blasphemy. Hybridity is one of the factors. The fundamentalist took action not only on the misinterpretation of Koran, however they showed offence because of the "misnaming" of Islam (225). Even they played with the sacred names, Mahamed referred as Mahound. Moreover, they gave the names of his wives to the prostitutes. The Islamic fundamentalist argue against the naming of wives to the brothels and magical realist novels which is destroying for the community. Alisdair Macintyre emphasized the shared uniformity for naming the ethnic and cultural terms in his essay tradition and

translation. These terminologies misrepresented at binary geopolitical polarities such as Islamic fundamentalist vs Western literary modernist. There must be conflict between the migrants and modern metropolitan. It manifests an irresolvable problem that ambivalent spaces are “untranslatable” (225).

Peter Verdonk demonstrates that stylistics analysis of the text depends on the individual interpretation of the reader. In stylistics, the textual analysis provides a unique literary interpretation which provides different emotive and cognitive experience through the same text, it means it derives from the positioning of the reader that how he/she perceives things (7). However, individuality is also socially constructed ideology because it is also affected by sociocultural environment which constitutes different cultural values and beliefs which lately formed their ideologies. The individual response is taken as a reaction or response towards text. Reader's interpretation is formed through such ideologies because these are socially practiced and expected. For instance, Marxism, Feminism, and Postcolonialism are based on certain set of ideologies. At broader level, the interpretation of the reader relates with the sociocultural, economic, and political contexts in the past or present through text. Furthermore, these ideologies raise the questions for revision of these literary canonical texts because these readings are neutral for everyone. There must be exclusiveness of the literary text on the basis of their race, gender, color, powerful and powerless. There are some suppressed groups like women, working-class author, representative of minority group, and African writers etc (9).

### 3. Theoretical Framework

This study constitutes on the theoretical framework which combines the two theories such as: postcolonial theory and stylistic linguistics. The postcolonial theory lens is applicable for analyzing the linguistic hybridity which is veiled inside the untranslated cultural expressions. Moreover, the second theory is stylistic linguistics which is applied to evaluate the positioning of readers on the basis of the nationality and cultural influenced identity. The two theories provide a double-layered analysis which is postcolonial and stylistic. This analysis provides a picture how linguistic stylistic features presents the postcolonial themes power, identity, and resistance in *Burnt Shadows*.

The postcolonial framework is addressed by Homi K. Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* (1994). It contains the three basic concepts: linguistic hybridity, mimicry, and ambivalent space. He argues that the “third space” is a place where two different nations meet at one point through blending or mixing of their cultural, linguistic and religious identities between the colonial and postcolonial time period. In Shamsie's novel *Burnt Shadows*, there is linguistic hybridity is prevalent because at the same place, the English, Japanese, Urdu, Pashto, and German languages were spoken by different identities people. The speakers were not purely belonging to the east or nor originally from west within the single narrative. Bhabha's theory is not only for thematic analysis, however it is applied for linguistic analysis that how Shamsie's writing in English misrepresent the picture of East in colonial language and also leave many local language expressions untranslated for the western readers. It shows that under the colonial and postcolonial influence, there is a still need to address the prose of the novel with the positioning of the reader.

In this study, Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin's book *The Empire Writes Back* (2002) further supported the postcolonial framework. The diasporic writers contain two linguistic strategies for addressing the colonial language such as: abrogation and appropriation. Firstly, the concept of abrogation means the rejection of the cultural authority of colonial language. Secondly, the appropriation means the adaptation of new things in colonial language for colonial cultural assimilation. Therefore, the narrative of Shamsie is built on these two strategies because she did not adopt the complete standard of English language, however she mentioned the linguistic hybridity terms in Japanese, German, and Urdu language. She refused

to completely follow the English standard of writing and left many untranslated cultural lexis in the novel to enhance the multicultural weight for readers. To leave many untranslated expressions is not an unconscious effort, however it was a conscious/deliberate postcolonial strategy of the writer to enhance the multicultural weight over the shoulders of the readers.

As the postcolonial theoretical framework elaborated the cultural and ideological identities for adapting linguistic hybridity, similarly the stylistic theory provides a toolkit to examine these cultural and ideological assumptions and its effects on the positioning of reader. Roger Fowler's *Linguistic Criticism* (1996) supports the linguistic choices that lexical carries the meaning in every culture because language is not neutral at global level. The context of the reader and writer also effect the selection of untranslated lexical items in the narrative. Fowler argues that language builds a relation of power with the audience and the reader because every word has a worldview and distinguish perspectives. According to his framework, it can examine that how Shamsie leave certain untranslated cultural items. It also manifests the positioning of the reader from the inside and outside of the culture.

Furthermore, Peter Barry's book *Beginning Theory* (2009) enlightens the concepts and supports the reader-response theory that how the perspective of the reader constructs on the basis of the position. Barry's theory explicitly draws our attention that the text is not designed for universal reader who is one in nature, however the perception of the reader may change on the basis of their cultural, historical, linguistic, and religious contextual information. Shamsie mentions untranslated cultural lexis which produces multiple dimensional experience of readership because the readers understand according to their linguistic and cultural background. She mentions German, English, Japanese, and Urdu language expressions in *Burnt Shadows*. Therefore, the linguistic hybridity produces different reading effects for a south Asian reader from Pakistan as compare to the Western reader with different context.

#### **4. Research Methodology**

The qualitative research methodology is adopted in this research. The research approach is interpretive paradigm because the data will not be measuring in numbers, however the text will be analyzed through interpretations and find out the embedded meanings in literary language. The postcolonial stylistic analysis is utilized for the core methodological approach on the text *Burnt Shadows*. The stylistic literary tools combine with the lens of postcolonial theory. The primary data for investigation is collected from Kamila Shamsie's novel *Burnt Shadows*. The close reading technique is utilized for the collection of Urdu, German, and Japanese language expressions which are untranslated cultural lexis in the novel. The untranslated cultural lexis is collected through purposive sampling. After the collection of data, it will be organized on the basis of their immediate context of the text for highlighting its stylistic and ideological features at lexical level like kinship, food, religion, cultural practice, identities and location etc. Furthermore, Homi K. Bhabha's the theory of hybridity and third space is implemented as theoretical framework for addressing the negotiation of cultural practices and linguistic hybridity, and Peter Verdonk's concept of readers positioning for interpretation the untranslated cultural lexis. This lexis evaluated three level such as: firstly, it will be identified whether the untranslated terms mentioned in glossary or voluntarily left in the narrative, secondly evaluate the cultural and ideological importance of the word, and thirdly examine the effect of these untranslated cultural lexis on reader positioning whether it belong to east or west origins.

#### **Data Analysis**

The analysis has been divided into four stages. The first stage is about the identification of specific untranslated lexis in Kamila Shamsie's novel *Burnt Shadows*. There is a plenty of untranslated words from Urdu, Japanese, and German language. The close reading technique is utilized to find out the linguistic hybrid untranslated words. The use of rich vocabulary from

these three languages is clearly reflecting the presence of multilingual characters which are the symbolic survivor of multicultural environment. The central characters spoke more than one language. Therefore, there are five cultural domains which reflect the hybrid identity of the characters such as kinship terminologies, religious terms, clothes, food, and domestic vocabulary in the novel. The selection of words is not unconscious effort by a writer because these words are not randomly distributed. However, it shows a complete mapping or web which enclosed all the cultural and domestic life vocabulary. It shows the selection of Shamsie's multilingual identity as well that she tries to grasp the reader's intentions through these untranslated lexis. The cultural significance of untranslated jargon is reflecting that it is a deliberate effort done by the author. It is not random, incidental, or unconscious, however it has a purpose.

The most repetitive lexis in the novel is about Islamic religion words which reflect the spiritual attachment of the South Asian characters. Islamic religion practices are widely spread in their domestic life usage vocabulary because the narrative is derived from daily life routine, in which characters used Urdu and Arabic terms for showing the richness of their religious culture. These terms are constantly repetitive throughout the novel which helps us to analyze their identities as well. There are two significant lexis used in the narrative such as *Haji* (p. 324) and *Wali* (p.324). These words contain deep meanings in the South Asian context. Because Hajj is a secular thing in which Muslims went to Suadia Arabia and completed certain activities to accomplish the status of Hajji. It is not a casual activity to perform, it is a sacred act which is one of the five pillars of Islam. Shamsie left this term untranslated for the western readers. The concept of Hajj is complex to understand by the western audience. Shamsie voluntarily used this religious term to make her text multilingual for enhancing the cultural and religious richness. The untranslated lexis of Hajji contains more significance because it reflects the social and cultural identity of a South Asian Muslim. Therefore, the term Hajji portrays a strong moral and religious obligation among all other Muslims, because he is a person who went Mecca and completed the whole steps to win this prestigious title in the society. However, the translated word pilgrim entirely fails to articulate the similar attributes of a Hajji.

Furthermore, the term wali is also similar because it has deeper ideological and religious attachment with culture which is complicated to understand by the western readers without translation. Therefore, the term Wali is about a strong divine relationship like an individual who is strongly spiritual and religious and maintains his morally good status in the society is known as Wali, like friend of God. Now, if we try to find a substitute in English language for the western reader, there is no lexis equivalent to it. Therefore, the term Wali brings a devotional love for religion, spiritual obligation, and a great respect among all South Asian community.

The two untranslated religious lexis are *Allah* (p.326) *Bismillah* (p. 21) and Surah *Fateha* (p.325) in the novel. These terms are deeply rooted in theology and religious linguistics because the translated word in English is God which has entirely different connotative meaning. It relates with Christianity religion which broaden a different framework for the English readers. Furthermore, it distinguishes the strong bond between culture and Islamic religion and the followers of Islam also utter these words repetitively which reflects their theological identity. Secondly, the name of the first surah of Quran is mentioned in the narrative. It is crucial because in every prayer Muslims have to recite it. Therefore, it shows the emotional love for the prayer as well. Because the Muslims do supplication for fulfilling their needs from Allah. Shamsie did not provide any metonymy or substitute for these phrases/words because she wants to highlight the religious and cultural significance rather than casually domesticate with English translation.

The two untranslated terms are *Sufi* (p. 325) and *Maulvi* (p.215) further enlighten the concept of linguistic hybridity because Shamsie had written the narrative details in English, however these religious terminologies remain the same for sharing the religious and cultural richness. For instance, Sufi is a follower of Islamic mysticism who is a staunch practitioner of Islam and possess devotional love for Islamic religion and his belief. Similarly, the Maulvi word has traditional, cultural and religious connotative meaning like he is an Islamic teacher or a scholar from whom people can consult the issues relevant to the Holy book, seek guidance about the domestic conflicts of social and cultural lives. These terms carry two layers of meaning and roles which are social and religious. These terms could not translate in English language. It surely eliminates the cultural flavor.

The next religious term is *Mujahideen* (p.233) which is extremely ideologically charged term because usually in Islam, an individual is known as Mujahid who combat for Islam and ready to die for religion. However, in novel this term is used in different historical, political, and religious background. Because, it is constantly used for the elaboration of 9/11 event. This word carries the historical and international political burden that could not be explained in English meaning. This word highlights that Shamsie did not only use Islamic religion as the base of novel, however it also provided living linguistic terminologies.

The second stage of analysis is about the kinship untranslated hybrid lexis. In English language, the kinship terms are completely elaborated for translations. However, Shamsie deliberately used the terms *Ami Jaan* (p.3), *Lala* (p.30) for kinship and addressing the characters which shows the emotional and familial strength of the South Asian characters instead of addressing them with translated addressing lexis. The first word of the phrase is *Ami* which means the writer talks about the mother, however the second word of the phrase is *Jan* which means lovely, life, and dear. The whole phrase combined into highly affectionate and devoted feeling for maternal love. This lexis has deep emotional love and warmth of maternal love than calling them with simple kinship word as mother. The phrase *Ami Jan* brings an emotional charge into the culturally embedded words. Similarly, the term *Lala* (p.30) used in the narrative for showing family love and respect for the elder brother. It can be introduced in English translated kinship like big brother. But the untranslated lexis brings more cultural and social meaning in South Asian context. It shows strength, courage, intimacy, and patriarchy. Fowler (1996) argues that lexical choices are significant in ideological and cultural background. Shamsie has created two worlds for readers through these lexical choices such as culturally insider and outsider. Those who are familiar with this kinship and addressing terms are known as culturally insider readers. However, who do not acquaint known as outsider. Barry (2009) explained the process of implied reader. Therefore, the narrative is consciously designed for the South Asian communities, however it challenges the global language of readership because these lexical items are not translated.

The third category is about clothing related untranslated cultural lexis in the novel such as *kurta* (p. 11), *kamize* (p. 18), *dupatta* (p.3), and *burkha* (p. 317). These words used for providing details to the attire of Eastern people. Because, the author has explained the physical appearance and visual description of the characters. Burkha has great significance in eastern culture because it is a long garment which uses to cover the whole body of females. It shows religious, cultural, and political dimension in the western discourse because the eastern females are explained as subjugated and subaltern who do not have rights to decide what they should wear, instead the fanatic, patriarchal society force eastern females to cover their bodies. It shows the submissive and modest nature of the Islamic females. Shamsie was least bother to elaborate the translating meanings of these cultural embedded untranslated words. Because a western reader could not understand the eastern culture and their Islamic values in the form of attire. The western gaze must be negative about the burkha in Eastern culture and Islamic

religion because they take it as a symbol of oppression, pressure, and powerless females. However, Shamsie enhanced the present value of the eastern culture and their dresses because she did not elaborate the meaning in English language. It also indicates that Shamsie did not need the western language validation for portraying her culture and religious practices at global level. Likewise, the word *dupatta* is also described in the narrative as a cloth used to cover the head. It carries deeper religious, cultural, social, and political connotative meanings. The wearing of *dupatta* is considered as backward practice which becomes the epitome of gender, grace, and modesty. Shamsie left this lexis untranslated for securing the South Asian culture from the western gaze.

Shamsie further categorize the food items in untranslated lexis such as *chai* (p.25). It is related to the South Asian food and domestic lifestyle of common people. The food items are freely elaborated in the narrative throughout the novel, it shows the link between the postcolonial and colonial settings as well. Because the writer did not ensure the western readers with the daily life English language framework through providing them translated items. However, she rejects the technique of assimilation with the English culture tea. She saved the cultural specificity and the essence behind the Urdu word “chai”. It is not only about the selection of untranslated lexis, however it is an expression of cultural identity.

Shamsie categorized the linguistic hybridity in the novel through the use of untranslated lexicon from Urdu, Japanese, and German language such as *monpe* (p. 3), *sensei* (p. 5), *san* (p. 6), *tatami* (p. 6), and *kimono* (p. 9). These words from three different languages contain a direct relationship with Bhabha’s concept of linguistic hybridity because English was taken as the most powerful language at the time of colonial period. However, now these untranslated Japanese and German lexicons symbolizes the historical trauma and identity crisis in the characterization of the protagonist Hiroko who had gone through various cultural, social, religious, and political changes. She was under the influence of Urdu, German, and Japanese language. She is a true symbol of linguistic hybridity. The Japanese term *hibakusha* and *kimino* left untranslated in the narrative. It increases the weight on readers’ shoulders because there is no glossary for the readers. Shamsie incorporated these Japanese cultural terms for enhances the value of historical and cultural background of Japan because it shows a traumatic experience of Hiroko while elaborating about the burning skin with the dress *Kimino* she was wearing on that unfortunate day. According to Bhabha, this is a deliberate effort to create a hybrid linguistic space where readers find themselves confused because this is a space of linguistic ambiguity because there is no clear details for the foreign audience. They need to understand through contextual, historical, and political background of the text. Because the author created a liminal space for the readers where they were not provided with fully foreign and domesticated details. It relates with Bhabha’s (1994) argument of the third space that it is an ambivalent space where cultural and religious terms never full resolved, however these become a constant source of productive tension in the form of linguistic hybridity.

### Conclusion

This study evaluated the linguistic hybridity and its effects on the positioning of the reader through untranslated cultural lexis under the lens of postcolonial stylistic theory. The analysis demonstrated the embedded multilingual characterization, their cultural, religious, and political identities were examined through their domestic linguistic choices in food, dressing, kinship terms, and some traumatic experiences behind the untranslated words with the context of the bombing attack. This untranslated jargon has collected from Urdu, Japanese, and German language. The untranslated terms construct the cultural boundary for originality of traditional values through emotional attachment with kinship terms, sacred meaning association with religious terminologies, and clothing, food is relevant to the domestic lifestyle of local people. It was a deliberate linguistic stylistic choice to reject the translation throughout the narrative

means that the postcolonial writer utilized the postcolonial strategies for abandoning the western validation for the hybrid linguistic terminologies. Therefore, the author enhances the weight of responsibility over the shoulders of the reader to understand the complex and rich cultural text.

Shamsie's text has different positioning for the readers on the basis of their cultural, religious, and political differences. The utilization of untranslated lexicon creates different reading experiences on the basis of different audiences. The same narrative contains various meanings for the westerners and non-westerners' readers. The South Asian people becomes the insider readers, however the westerners become the outsider because there are many untranslated cultural linguistic items which negotiate them as an outsider.

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