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The Translator's Preface as Paratext: A Thematic Study of Translators' Prefaces in English to Arabic Translations

Abstract

This study explores the translator's preface as an essential paratextual element in English into Arabic translations. Drawing on Genette's (1997) paratextual theory and Batchelor's (2018) emphasis on treating paratexts as ends in themselves, the study conducts a thematic analysis on (50) translator prefaces that were selected randomly to examine both their thematic patterns as well as their functional characteristics. A mixed-methods approach is employed, combining qualitative thematic analysis with quantitative frequency analysis to identify the reoccurring and the most prevalent themes discussed by translators in their prefaces. The study introduces the Wadi & Al-Ali (2025) as a suggested model that could be applied in future studies to evaluate translators' prefaces in different contexts.

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مقدمة المترجم بوصفها نص موازي: دراسة تحليلية موضوعية لمقدمات المترجمين في الترجمات من الإنجليزية إلى العربية

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الملخص

تستكشف هذه الدراسة مقدمة المترجم بوصفها عنصراً بارزياً من عناصر النص الموازي في الترجمات من اللغة الإنجليزية إلى العربية. بالاستناد إلى نظرية جنيت (1997) في الباراتكست، وإلى تركيز باشلور (2018) على اعتبار النصوص الموازية غايات في حد ذاتها، تُجري الدراسة تحليلاً موضوعياً لمقدمات 50 مترجماً تم اختيارها عشوائياً، بهدف فحص أنماطها الموضوعية بالإضافة إلى خصائصها الوظيفية. وتستخدم منهجية مختلطة تجمع بين التحليل الموضوعي الكيفي والتحليل الكمي للتكرار، من أجل تحديد المواضيع المتكررة والأكثر شيوعاً التي يناقشها المترجمون في مقدماتهم. وتقدم الدراسة نموذج وادي وعلي (2025) كإطار اقتراحي يمكن تطبيقه في الدراسات المستقبلية لتقييم مقدمات المترجمين في سياقات مختلفة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: النصوص الموازية، مقدمة المترجم، التحليل الموضوعي

1. Introduction

Translation studies have evolved from a primarily linguistic discipline into a broader interdisciplinary field that incorporates cultural, social, and political dimensions. This expansion reflects translation's growing significance in a globalized world. The scholarly focus has shifted beyond concerns of fidelity and equivalence to include elements that frame or accompany a text but are not part of its main body (Shakir and Al-Ali, 2021). These elements are called Paratexts. Genette (1997) defined paratexts as the "off-text" components that mediate between the text and its external environment. Paratexts include peritexts (titles, prefaces, covers) and epitexts (interviews, letters, diaries) (Genette, 1997).

In translation studies, paratexts are increasingly recognized as significant in their own right. Rather than treating translations as secondary to the original, argues Batchelor (2018), translations should be studied as independent texts with their own paratextual structures. Batchelor (2018) mentions that Genette (1997)

himself used examples from translated works, subtly acknowledging their analytical value. Examining paratexts in translations, therefore, reveals insights not just about language but also about the translator's role as a cultural mediator and the broader socio-political context of translation.

The translator's preface is one of the essential paratextual elements that serve as sites of communication between translator and reader. Genette (1997) sees the preface as a threshold that introduces and frames the text. It is also very important in shaping how texts are perceived (Nelson, 1998). Translators' prefaces often explain the translator's choices, reflect ideological positions, offer critiques, and provide practical insights from the translation process. These prefaces are historically valuable, offering rich material for theoretical exploration and a deeper understanding of translation as both a process and a product (Dimitriu, 2009).

2. Theoretical Background

This section discusses the theoretical background of the relationship between paratexts and translation studies. It also overviews how the translator's preface was approached in the literature.

2.1 Translation and Paratexts

The relationship between translation and paratexts has drawn growing attention in translation studies. Although Genette (1997) does not directly integrate translations into his typology of paratexts, his use of translated works as examples suggests that translations carry their own paratextual value (Batchelor, 2018).

According to Batchelor (2018), translated texts should be approached as original, autonomous entities. This perspective rejects the hierarchical assumption that the source text is inherently superior to its translations. By acknowledging the paratextual richness of translated works, scholars are better positioned to have a better understanding of both the translator and the translating process (Batchelor,

2018). Viewing translations as independent texts also opens up possibilities for examining how paratexts offer deeper insight into translation phenomena.

Batchelor (2018) identifies two primary approaches in the study of paratexts in translation:

1. Paratexts as means to understand something else like the translation process, the translator's decisions, or the cultural and ideological positioning of the text.
2. Paratexts as ends in themselves, independent of the source text.

Most research combines both approaches, revealing that paratexts not only mediate between texts but also serve as rich sources of meaning. For instance, Tekten (2019), in a comparative study of Edgar Allan Poe's translations, illustrates how paratexts help bridge linguistic and cultural gaps, while also foregrounding translator visibility. Similarly, Ashraf (2020) explores how paratexts in the translation of *The Innocence of the Devil* reflect cultural representation in postcolonial contexts, particularly focusing on depictions of Arabs and Arab women.

Other studies reveal how power dynamics and ideology are embedded within paratexts. O'Conner (2022) investigates paratextual authority in religious texts translated by women, showing how institutions use paratexts to assert control and minimize translator visibility. Yalsharzeh et al. (2019) examine Persian translations of Western political texts about the Iran-Iraq war, demonstrating how paratexts can become ideological tools. These prefaces and footnotes express political viewpoints, often reframing the translated content to align with local ideologies.

Toledano-Buendía (2013) focuses on translator notes as paratexts that give translators a voice. These notes vary in function, from explanatory clarifications to critical commentary, and play a crucial role in guiding interpretation. They highlight the translator's position, interpretive choices, and relationship with the

text, reinforcing that translation is not a neutral act but a deliberate and culturally embedded process.

Pellat (2013) and Qun-xing (2016) further argue that the translator, as the first reader and the one who decides on paratextual strategies, inevitably leaves visible traces in the translation. Whether through tone, language, or structural choices, the translator's presence can be observed and analyzed to understand subjective interpretations and cultural positioning.

Freeth (2023) introduces the concept of collateral paratextuality, encouraging scholars to move beyond source/target binaries and instead explore how paratexts function in translingual and digital spaces. In our interconnected world, readers interact with paratexts across multiple media and platforms, creating layered meanings and interpretations. This broader framework urges scholars to investigate the dynamic nature of paratexts and their reception by audiences.

These perspectives collectively emphasize that paratextual studies are essential to understanding not just translations, but the cultural, ideological, and communicative frameworks that shape them. While many studies analyze paratextual practices within specific contexts, Batchelor (2018) calls for further exploration into the functional aspects of paratexts.

Rockenberger (2014) offers a comprehensive typology of paratextual functions, which Batchelor (2018) adapts to suit translation studies. This typology includes (15) key functions (excluding two overlapping ones from Rockenberger's original list):

1. Referential: Identifies and contextualizes the work.
2. Self-referential: Draws attention to the paratext itself or other related paratexts.
3. Ornamental: Enhances aesthetic appeal.

4. Generic: Classifies the work by genre or type, including whether it's a translation.
5. Meta-communicative: Highlights communicative difficulties, such as translation challenges.
6. Informative: Provides background or explanatory information.
7. Hermeneutical: Guides reader interpretation.
8. Ideological: Conveys or aligns with specific viewpoints.
9. Evaluative: Assigns value or importance.
10. Commercial: Markets the text or related products.
11. Legal: Outlines rights and contractual information.
12. Illocutionary: Symbolically establishes legal agreements, guarantees, or obligations, whether formal or informal.
13. Pedagogical: Sets behavioral or educational standards.
14. Operational/Instructive: Suggests methods for engaging with the text.
15. Personifying: Adapts the content to specific reader needs.

This functional framework allows scholars to analyze how paratexts operate within translated works, whether they serve to explain, justify, market, or ideologically position a text. In translation studies, such functions are essential for understanding how translated texts are framed and received within target cultures.

2.2 The Translator's Preface as a Paratext

Translator's prefaces, once optional, are now considered essential in modern translation practice. McRae (2010) notes that prefaces allow translators, as cultural mediators, to share their deep understanding of both source and target contexts. Through prefaces, translators become visible, clarifying their translation choices, expressing ideological positions, and guiding readers through potential linguistic or cultural challenges. These paratexts also serve as valuable resources for translation scholars, critics, and students, providing insight into translation strategies and

decision-making. McRae (2010) found that prefaces commonly emphasize cultural and linguistic contrasts and promote intercultural understanding.

Haroon (2017) analyzed the form and content of translator prefaces. Most were titled "Translator's Note," appeared in varied lengths, and were structured to distinguish them from the main text. Though typically brief, they greatly enhance translator visibility and offer insight into how translators position themselves and their work. Haroon emphasizes the need for more comprehensive studies with wider datasets to better understand preface practices.

Batchelor (2018) identifies two ways to study such paratexts: (1) as tools pointing to broader cultural, ideological, or historical meanings, and (2) as objects of study in their own right. The first approach connects the preface to external phenomena, while the second focuses solely on categorizing paratextual practices. Both have value, but the former tends to dominate research due to its broader implications.

"Translation is now widely seen as a socio-cultural practice rather than just a linguistic operation. As Özbir (2020) suggests, any text-oriented translation analysis must consider surrounding ideological factors, target readership, and context. Visibility, the degree to which a translator asserts presence in a text, has become a central issue in translation studies, especially after the work of Venuti (1995), who argued that translators are often intentionally rendered invisible to maintain the illusion that translations are original texts.

Several recent studies have explored the translator's preface as a space for asserting identity and visibility. Yari and Amirian (2022), for example, conducted a thematic analysis of 100 Persian translator prefaces and found gender-based patterns: female translators were more personal and self-reflective, while male translators focused on promoting the source author. This study reveals how paratexts can reflect broader societal structures and expectations.

Terenas (2023) examined the Portuguese translation of Robinson Crusoe, where the translator replaced the original author's preface with his own, offering justifications aligned with political and cultural expectations of the target context. This case demonstrates how translator prefaces can become tools for ideological framing, guiding the reader's interpretation in alignment with local norms or agendas.

Özbir (2020), analyzing the Turkish translation of Nabokov's *Pale Fire*, found that the translator made himself highly visible through detailed prefaces and notes that clarify complex narrative layers. These additions highlight the translator's interpretive role and expertise. Fayed (2020) also emphasizes how visibility, social practice, and identity intersect in translator prefaces. Her study argues that translators tailor their discourse based on cultural expectations, professional positioning, and the visibility they wish to achieve. In some cultures, prefaces become platforms for restoring translator identity in heavily domesticated translation environments.

In conclusion, the translator's preface is a powerful and multifaceted paratextual space. It reveals the translator's interpretive decisions, cultural positioning, and ideological stances. From asserting visibility and guiding readers to reshaping texts for political or cultural alignment, these prefaces offer essential insights for scholars, practitioners, and readers alike. As translation continues to be understood as a socio-cultural act, the study of translator prefaces becomes increasingly valuable in uncovering the dynamics that shape translated texts and their reception.

2.3 Previous Theses on Translation and Paratexts

Alblooshi (2021) explores how paratexts influence the reception of Arabic novels translated into English. The study analyzes 277 novels published between 1988 and 2018, especially focusing on those released by American publishers.

Using a mixed-methods approach, Alblooshi (2021) shows that titles and covers are often altered to fit Western audience preferences, sometimes reinforcing cultural stereotypes (e.g., orientalist imagery like deserts and veiled women). The thesis emphasizes the importance of addressing such paratextual modifications to avoid misrepresenting Arab cultures.

Forbes (2017) examines early-modern paratexts like prefaces and dedicatory letters within 16th-century print culture. Drawing on Genette's (1997) theory, Forbes (2017) shows how these elements served as essential communicative bridges between authors and a growing, diverse readership. Paratexts were not merely decorative but were instrumental in shaping reader interpretation and literary identity during the expansion of printed texts.

Stokem (2019) investigates how paratexts blur the lines between truth and fiction in literary works. The study argues that prefaces and other paratextual devices can simultaneously affirm and undermine a text's authenticity, generating a layered, ironic narrative. This dual role is especially relevant in historical contexts like the Enlightenment, where such techniques challenged dominant intellectual assumptions.

McRae (2010) focuses on translator prefaces in 810 literary translations published between 1945 and 2005, analyzing 84 that include commentary on the translation process. The study identifies five main functions of translator prefaces, including enhancing translator visibility, promoting cultural understanding, and documenting the translation process. McRae highlights how these prefaces help readers appreciate translation as a complex, creative act. However, only 10% of the sampled works included such prefaces indicating a missed opportunity for deeper engagement. The study also criticizes publishers who remove paratexts to domesticate translations and obscure their origins, arguing that prefaces can serve as critical cultural bridges.

After reviewing the existing literature, we can see that a significant gap remains in treating translator's prefaces purely as ends in themselves, as held by Batchelor (2018). Although many studies intend to focus on paratextual elements independently, they often shift their focus to analyze background insights. Few studies fully focus on paratexts independently of the source and target texts. Additionally, limited attention has been given to the specific context of Arabic translation of English texts and the paratextual trends and practices involved in it.

3. Methodology

This section discusses the model adopted in the study as well as the procedures of data collection.

3.1 The Adopted Model

For this study, the theoretical framework proposed by Batchelor (2018) was adopted as the most suitable model for analyzing the functional characteristics of paratexts, specifically translators' prefaces. While Genette (1997) provided a foundational understanding of paratexts by outlining key variables; space, time, substance, pragmatic, and functional, he did not offer a concrete typology for their functional roles, instead suggesting that such functions be derived inductively from empirical data. Batchelor (2018) builds upon this by adopting and refining Rockenberger's (2014) typology, originally developed for video games, into a set of (15) paratextual functions applicable to translation studies. These include referential, self-referential, generic, informative, hermeneutical, ideological, evaluative, commercial, legal, illocutionary, pedagogical, instructive and personalizing. These functions collectively provide a framework for understanding how paratexts operate within translated texts.

However, the ornamental functional category was excluded from this study due to its limited relevance to translators' prefaces. Unlike visual elements such as

book covers, prefaces are not typically designed for aesthetic appeal but serve more textual and communicative purposes.

3.2 Data Collection

This study collected data from a randomly selected sample of (50) books translated from English to Arabic between the year (2000) and the present, sourced from various Iraqi and Arab publishing houses. To ensure a broad and unbiased analysis, no specific genre was targeted, allowing for the exploration of diverse translator prefaces. This approach enabled both qualitative and quantitative analysis of recurring themes and patterns, providing a comprehensive and reliable representation of translator prefaces within the defined timeframe.

4. Data Analysis

This section presents a profound qualitative and quantitative analysis of the collected data.

4.1 The Qualitative Analysis of Translator's Prefaces

The present study adopts Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis as its analytical framework, which is well-suited for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within qualitative data. This method was chosen to explore recurring themes in translators' prefaces from English to Arabic translations. A theme, in this context, is defined as any element that captures something meaningful about the data in relation to the research questions. Thematic analysis offers flexibility while maintaining a structured, multi-phase process to ensure depth and rigor in data interpretation.

The analysis proceeded through six phases: familiarization with the data through repeated readings; generation of initial codes to highlight relevant features; grouping codes into potential themes; reviewing and validating the coherence of these themes across the dataset; defining and naming each theme clearly; and finally, producing a detailed report with interpretative insights and textual

evidence. This structured approach allowed the researcher to uncover rich thematic content from the prefaces while maintaining methodological clarity and analytical depth.

Following the initial four phases of Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis, the study presents the final phases through a detailed discussion of the themes identified in the translators' prefaces. Each theme is named, explained with illustrative examples, and connected to one or more functions from Batchelor's (2018) typology of paratextual functions, offering both interpretative and functional insights into the translators' approaches.

Theme One: Presentation of the Author and the Work

This theme reflects the translators' tendency to introduce the author and the translated work to the target audience. Many prefaces provide background information on the author's literary career, intellectual contributions, and recurring themes, highlighting their relevance within the source culture and potential value in the target culture. Translators also often clarify the genre and main themes of the work, helping readers contextualize and better engage with the text. This theme emphasizes the translator's role in shaping readers' initial perceptions and aligns with Batchelor's (2018) Referential and Generic functions.

Translators often take on the role of introducing the author and the work to the target audience, shaping how readers perceive the text. By highlighting the author's biography, reputation, and thematic focus, translators influence readers' expectations and understanding. This aligns with Batchelor's (2018) Referential Function, as it helps identify and contextualize the work, and the Generic Function, as translators clarify the genre and note that the text is a translation.

Theme Two: Insight into the Translation Process and Rationale

This theme captures the translator's reflective use of the preface to discuss their translation process, including linguistic and cultural challenges, strategies used,

and the reasoning behind specific word choices—especially for terms newly introduced to the target language. Translators often express personal connections to the text and provide justifications for translating it, making the preface a space of professional transparency and self-expression. What distinguishes this theme is the translator's clear acknowledgment of the work as a translation, not an original, and their effort to directly communicate with the reader. This theme aligns with Batchelor's (2018) Meta-communicative and Self-referential functions, as it centers on the translator's voice and the preface's role in framing the translated text.

Theme Three: Guiding the Reader's Understanding of the Text

This theme highlights the translator's role as a guide who frames the reader's interpretation of the source text and its broader cultural or intellectual background. Translators often use the preface to offer commentary, context, and personal interpretations, helping readers navigate complex historical, social, or philosophical dimensions of the work. By doing so, they shape how the text is perceived and encourage a more thoughtful and informed engagement. This theme aligns with Batchelor's (2018) Hermeneutical function, as it guides interpretation, and the Informative function, as it provides essential context to enhance understanding.

Theme Four: Subjective Engagement with the Text

This theme highlights the translator's use of the preface to express personal reflections, value judgments, and ideological positions toward the text or its author. Rather than maintaining a neutral stance, translators often respond to the work emotionally and critically, sharing opinions that blur the line between translation and literary criticism. These prefaces become spaces of shared reflection, where translators engage with readers not just through information but through belief and perspective. This active, personal engagement contributes to the text's reception

and reflects Batchelor's (2018) Evaluative and Ideological functions, as translators align themselves with or critique the values presented in the original work.

Theme Five: Framing Legal and Ethical Entitlements

This theme focuses on how translators address the legal and ethical dimensions of their work within the preface. Translators often acknowledge copyright permissions, specific editions used, or express gratitude to contributors, thereby asserting the translation's legitimacy and transparency. These acknowledgments serve to position the translation within a broader institutional and professional framework. Additionally, translators may highlight ethical commitments such as fidelity to the source or correcting previous distortions. Such gestures reflect an awareness that translation is a collaborative, responsible act rather than an isolated task. This theme aligns with Batchelor's (2018) Legal and Illocutionary functions, as it emphasizes formal accountability, professional integrity, and ethical engagement.

Theme Six: Mapping Reader Roles Through the Preface

This theme highlights how translators use the preface to actively guide and shape the reader's role, often offering suggestions on how to read, interpret, and apply the text. Translators anticipate challenges readers might face—linguistic, cultural, or intellectual—and provide strategies to navigate them, effectively positioning themselves as mentors. The preface thus becomes a preparatory space that aligns the reader with the intended mode of engagement. In some cases, translators adopt a pedagogical tone, encouraging readers to apply the text's values in real-life contexts. This theme corresponds to Batchelor's (2018) Pedagogical and Instructive Functions, as it reflects the translator's dual focus on the text and audience, turning the preface into an active tool for orientation and education.

Theme Seven: Influencing Reader Engagement

This theme explores how translators strategically use the preface to influence how readers engage with the translated work. Many translators adopt a promotional tone, emphasizing the translation's uniqueness, accessibility, and relevance to appeal to target audiences. These efforts not only encourage readers to explore the current text but also invite them to engage with the author's broader body of work. Translators often tailor their language to resonate with specific cultural contexts, anticipating reader expectations and addressing potential misconceptions. This approach reflects Batchelor's (2018) *Commercial* and *Personalizing* functions, where the preface serves as both a marketing tool and a personalized invitation, enhancing the text's appeal and shaping the reader's connection to it.

4.2 Quantitative Analysis of Translators' Prefaces

To uncover general trends within the sample, a quantitative analysis was carried out to measure how frequently each of Batchelor's (2018) paratextual functions appeared in the translators' prefaces. This statistical component complements the earlier thematic analysis by offering a comparative perspective on the most frequently observed functions and their association with specific themes. Each of the (50) sampled prefaces was analyzed using a binary coding system: a score of '1' marked the clear presence of a function, while '0' indicated its absence. The coding focused on identifying the functions reflected in the thematic variations present in each preface. This method allowed for tracking how functions were distributed across the identified thematic patterns.

The frequency data serve two primary aims: first, to highlight which paratextual functions translators tend to utilize most often; and second, to examine the alignment between particular themes and their corresponding functions. This comparison helps establish a framework for potential future studies of paratexts in various linguistic contexts. While the thematic categories emerged inductively

through detailed textual analysis, the coding of functions applied a deductive approach based on Batchelor's (2018) full list of 14 functional types. This ensured consistency in classifying the diverse roles played by the prefaces.

The frequency analysis shows that the most prominent functions in translators' prefaces are the *Informative* (74%), *Meta-communicative* (62%), and *Hermeneutical* (56%) functions. This indicates that most translators use the preface to provide background information, interpretive framing, and guidance for engaging with the text—positioning themselves as mediators between the original work and the target audience. The *Referential* (54%) and *Generic* (38%) functions are also commonly observed, suggesting a reliance on genre conventions and literary context to position the translated work.

Moderately frequent functions such as *Instructive*, *Evaluative* (both 36%), and *Ideological* (32%) reflect the translators' engagement in subjective or persuasive commentary. In contrast, functions like *Commercial* (18%), *Pedagogical* (16%), *Personalizing* (12%), *Legal* (10%), *Self-referential* (14%), and *Illocutionary* (6%) appear less frequently, showing that prefaces are less often used for promotion, legal framing, or direct personalization. When *Self-referential* elements do appear, they are typically subtle, pointing to a general reluctance to highlight the preface as an object of attention as we will see in the table below.

Functions	Frequency	Percentage
Referential	27	54%
Self-referential	7	14%
Generic	19	38%
Meta-communicative	31	62%
Informative	37	74%
Hermeneutical	28	56%
Ideological	16	32%
Evaluative	18	36%
Commercial	9	18%
Legal	5	10%
Illocutionary	3	6%
Pedagogical	8	16%
Instructive	18	36%
Personalizing	6	12%

Table (4.1): Results of the Frequency Analysis of the Functional Characteristics

As for how paratextual functions are distributed across the seven identified themes, we can see in the table (4.2.) below that a total of 232 function occurrences noted in the 50 translator prefaces. The most prominent theme is *Guiding the Reader's Understanding of the Text and Context* (28%), emphasizing the translator's role in offering interpretive support and contextual clarity. This is followed by *Framing the Author and the Work* (19.8%) and *Insight into the Translation Process and Rationale* (16.4%), highlighting the translator's efforts to explain the author's background and their own translation decisions.

Theme	Functions Activated	Total Function Occurrences	Prevalence of Themes Across Corpus
1- Framing the Author and the work	Referential, Generic	46	19%
2- Insight into the Translation Process and Rationale	Meta-communicative, Self-referential	38	16%
3- Guiding the	Hermeneutical,	65	28%

Reader's Understanding of the Text and Context	Informative		
4- Subjective Engagement with the Text	Ideological, Evaluative	34	14%
5 - Framing Legal and Ethical Entitlements	Legal, Illocutionary	8	3%
6- Mapping Reader Roles Through the Preface	Instructive, Pedagogical	26	11%
7- Influencing Reader Engagement	Commercial, Personalizing	15	6%

Table (4.2): The Prevalence of thematic categories across the sample.

Less frequently observed themes include *Framing Legal and Ethical Entitlements* (3.4%) and *Influencing Reader Engagement* (6.5%), indicating that legal, ethical, or marketing concerns are not commonly foregrounded. *Subjective Engagement* (14.7%) and *Mapping Reader Roles* (11.2%) appear at moderate levels, reflecting occasional personal or instructional commentary. Overall, the data confirms that Arabic translator prefaces primarily serve as spaces for educational and contextual mediation, rather than self-promotion or legal formalism, reinforcing the translator's role as an intellectual and cultural guide.

4.3 A Proposed Analytical Model

Building on the thematic and quantitative findings of this study, the Wadi & Al-Ali (2025) model offers a structured analytical framework for examining translators' prefaces. This model highlights consistent patterns in how translators

engage readers through paratexts, combining recurring themes with the paratextual functions they serve, as outlined in Batchelor’s typology. It proposes a dual-layered approach: thematically identifying translator practices and functionally mapping the strategies used to communicate those practices. The framework is designed to be adaptable for future research across languages and contexts, helping scholars interpret translator prefaces through both content and purpose. By applying this model, researchers can better understand the communicative tendencies in prefaces and integrate the approach with various methodologies. The model provides a practical tool for systematic analysis of translators’ paratextual contributions. It can be demonstrated as follows

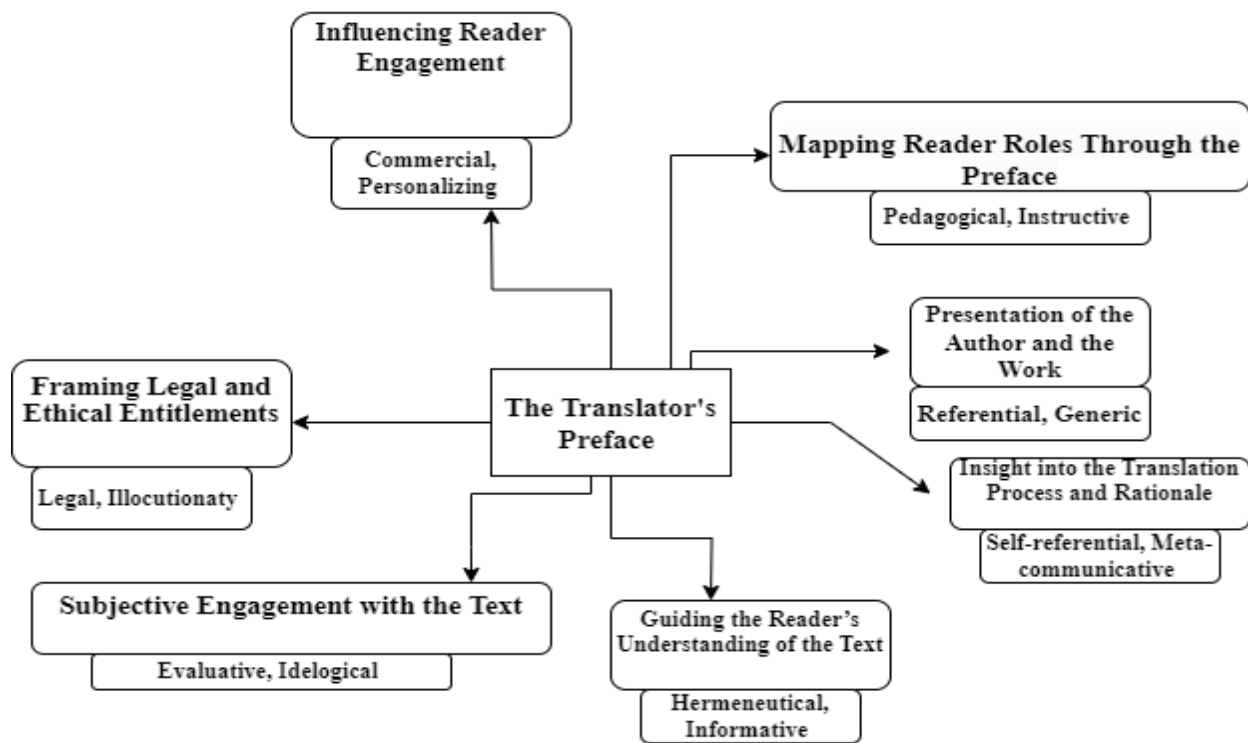


Figure (4.1): Wadi and Al-Ali (2025) Model for examining translators’ prefaces.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

This section discusses the important conclusions and recommendations for future research on the topic.

5.1 Conclusions

- The study examined 50 Arabic translator prefaces of English-translated books using Braun & Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis and Batchelor's (2018) functional typology.
- Seven main themes were identified, each linked to specific paratextual functions.
- The most frequent functions were: Informative (74%), Meta-communicative (62%), Hermeneutical (56%).
- Less common functions included: Referential (54%), Generic (38%), Instructive, Evaluative, Ideological (moderate frequency), Self-referential (14%), Legal (10%), Illocutionary (6%).
- Translator prefaces tend to focus on intellectual mediation and reader support, rather than legal or promotional aspects.
- A two-layered analytical framework—the Wadi & Al-Ali (2025) Model—was proposed, combining thematic insights with functional characteristics to guide future research.

5.2 Recommendations

The findings of this study open several avenues for future research in the field of translation studies and paratextual analysis.

- Applying the Wadi & Al-Ali (2025) Model to translator prefaces across different language pairs and literary traditions could provide further insight into its generalizability and adaptability and reveal different functional priorities.
- Continued research into translator prefaces as discursive spaces has the potential to deepen our understanding of translator positioning, textual mediation, and the broader communicative aspect of these prefaces. The proposed model provides a flexible foundation for such inquiries, offering both structure and interpretive depth for future scholarship.

- Studies that treat translators' prefaces as ends to something else could examine the readerships of these prefaces and the influence they have on the audience's reception of the books.

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