

**Brian Friel's *Translations*:
Confrontation of British Cultural Materialism with Culture**

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Abstract

From the very beginning of the formation of communities people shared, at least, one common base, within that they could help them live peacefully and communicate safely and continue their lives. Culture is ubiquitous to affect human life, but cultural materialism always tends to change and adjust itself with its malevolent purposes. British cultural materialism, as one form of cultural materialism during history, affected many communities, such as those of Ireland, India, etc. to spread its territory of imperialism, but the targeted communities always confronted with effects of imperialism in different ways. Intellectuals, as an engine to these movements, have always played an important role. One of these contemporary intellectuals is Brian Friel, the Irish writer.

From the very beginning of his writing career, Friel's mind was obsessed with his homeland and the occupation of it by British imperialism. He, thoughtfully, tries to reflect this issue in his plays, especially *Translations* which is a mirror reflecting the presence of British imperialism in Ireland, and the attempts it does to colonize Ireland from various aspects. That is why the play seems to be important from different perspectives.

Using critical theory including historical-biographical, sociological, psychological, and postcolonial approaches, this study hands over and foregrounds what people should notice when they face their own and other people's cultures in order to understand their own culture better and prevent probable problems through knowing the essence of one's own culture, one can protect it while it is being attacked by other cultures, especially by cultural materialism. Since culture constructs the being, identity, belief, language, etc. of a person, this study shows how Brian Friel, as an Irish man, in his play named *Translations*, tries to come to terms or react to British hegemony which practices itself as British cultural materialism. It is shown that by being aware of all the criteria just mentioned, people can both protect their own genuine culture and communicate with other communities.

Keywords: Irish Literature, Brian Friel, *Translations*, Cultural Materialism, Postcolonialism

Introduction

From the very beginning of the formation of communities people shared at least one common base, culture, in order that they could live peacefully and communicate safely to continue their lives. An overall understanding of culture, both the culture of community one lives in and the culture of communities one communicates with, seems to be important for people to live their lives under the shelter of peace.

The main goal of this study is to present the ways through which cultural materialism tends to affect other cultures to take advantage of them, especially by a case study in which the British cultural materialism tries to affect Irish culture, based on what Brian Friel, as a contemporary Irish intellectual, shows in his drama, *Translations*.

Moreover, as British hegemony, in the guise of cultural materialism, has been trying to affect many countries and communities, such as Ireland, India, etc., one of the goals of this study is to aware the readers of the ways they can react to it when facing it.

Some works have already been done on and about the issue raised so far. In the Ph.D. dissertation, *Language and Identity in Post-1800 Irish Drama* (1994), Down E. Duncan traces the connectivity of language and identity to one another as represented in the works of post-1800 Irish writers. Looking through sociolinguistic and post-colonial perspectives Duncan analyzes selective works of selective writers to prove the importance of language and identity. In chapter five of the dissertation Down goes deep through Brian Friel's *Translations* and tells us about the ways post-colonialism works to build up a postnational Irish identity.

"'It's the same me, isn't it?': The language Question and Brian Friel's *Translations*" (2000) is an article written by Charles Barker, in which, as the title suggests, he tries to clarify "the language question" which seems to be quite clear in Friel's *Translations*. Barker goes on to discuss how colonialism tries to breakdown Irish identity by trying to target its culture. "The language question," as Barker explains, shows itself when some natives seek to use their own language than the one being proposed by the colonial power of their homeland.

Suzy Clarkson and Holstein Source wrote an article entitled "Carrying across into Silence: Brian Friel's *Translations*" (2004) in order to emphasize how naming plays an important role in Friel's *Translations*. They show us who owns the power to name and that there are economical and military purposes behind the phenomena of naming. They, further, explain that the process of naming is not confined to naming the places, but even naming, or better to say renaming, of people who already possess names is necessary for their purposes.

Concerning the scholarship of Brian Friel, *The Cambridge Companion to Brian Friel* (2006),

edited by Anthony Roche can be mentioned which presents a more comprehensive, to the point, and up-to-date study for students, researchers, and scholars to get familiar with multiple layers of dramatic imagination and potentiality of Brian Friel in his works of art. The book is a collection of essays from prominent commentators which covers an entire scope of Friel's works from *Philadelphia, Here I Come* (1964) to his recent one *The Home Place* (2005).

Brian Friel, Ireland, and the North (2007), written by Scott Boltwood, presents a highly informative examination of Brian Friel's works of art. The book focuses both on his dramatic and non-dramatic works to show political and social issues which are seen in his works as well as around his works. Considering socio-political themes of Friel's works, on the one hand, and the fraught positions that they express, on the other hand, the writer hands over an understanding of Friel's works.

This is a library research, and since the ultimate goal of this study is to present an understanding of how culture is targeted by cultural materialism, the major discipline of the study will be cultural studies and critical theory. Nevertheless, it will tend to be more eclectic, taking benefit from other disciplines, such as historical-biographical, sociological, psychological, and postcolonial approaches. Furthermore, the ideas of the influential literary figure in the field of cultural studies, Raymond Williams, are used to strengthen the purpose of the study.

Discussion

Cultural Materialism

Cultural materialism, like any other literary theory, did not emerge overnight, but it needed its own proper infrastructure to be coined. Raymond Williams, the forerunner of cultural materialism, started his systematic study towards culture almost twenty years before his ideas about cultural materialism. Cultural materialism, in order to be understood properly, needed culture so that it could be comprehended well. As a theoretician in the area of culture, Williams started writing his systematic ideas in *Culture and Society 1780-1950* (1958), which was a beginning for him; then he continued his ideas towards culture in *The Long Revolution* (1961), *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (1976), and *Marxism and Literature* (1977). All the discussions and ideas concerning culture built a base to propose the idea of cultural materialism in his book of collected essays entitled *Problems in Materialism and Culture* (1980). Undoubtedly, Marxist theories influenced Williams in his life as he was one of the leftists in Britain who followed Marx's ideas. In this book, as in his previous ones, he strengthened his ideas with twentieth-century Marxist doctrine. It was under all these influences that Williams sought to name his theory as cultural materialism, as he (1980) mentions, "it took me thirty years in a very complex process, to move

from that received Marxist Theory ... to the position I now hold, which I define as 'cultural materialism'" (243).

As a cultural critic, Raymond Williams, by publishing an essay in *New Left Review* (1980), believes that cultural materialism

... is a theory of culture as a (social and material) productive process and of specific practices, of 'arts', as social uses of material means of production (from language as material 'practical consciousness' to the specific technologies of writing and forms of writing, through to mechanical and electronic communications systems).

(qtd. in Andrew Milner Milner 2002: 20)

Martin F. Murphy and Maxine L. Margolis (1995), explaining about cultural materialism, state that, "as a model, cultural materialism provides a framework for understanding the organization of societies past and present, while also providing a guide for the study of contemporary life" (2). As it is clearly illustrated, cultural materialism examines all dimensions of a society's being in general and individual's life in particular. Cultural materialism, being aware of the overall structure of a society, knows to which aspects direct its targets in order to achieve the goals it looks for. Martin F. Murphy and Maxine L. Margolis, further, continue their discussion mentioning that,

cultural materialism posits that all social systems consist of three levels or layers: infrastructure, structure, and superstructure. The bottom layer, the infrastructure, is seen as the base or foundation of a society wherein the material conditions of human life lie. These include the strategies by which people relate to and reproduce in their environment; how they produce food, tools, and shelter, and the technologies they employ in doing so. In short, the material conditions of a society are the ways in which humans survive and reproduce in a given setting. The second layer is society's structure, its social and political institutions. These include the myriad forms of familial and nonfamilial organizations and associations found among human populations, as well as the political structures that organize human social life. The final and top layer is society's superstructure, its system of secular and religious ideologies and values. ... [and] that changes in a society's infrastructure are primarily the result of changes in a human population's relationship to its environment. Moreover, cultural materialism holds that, over time, changes in a society's material base will lead to functionally compatible changes in its social and political institutions (structure) and in its secular and religious ideology (superstructure).

(1995: 2)

The interconnectivity of cultural materialism and imperialism cannot be ignored as imperialism dominates all its aspects. Christopher Prendergast (1995) believes that, "Williams's cultural materialism attempts to include imperialism in its sphere of discourse, but it is inherently incapable of accounting for imperialism as a function of metropolitan culture" (199). Imperialism, as the only seemingly dominant power in the world, affecting all the areas of cultural activities, tries to change everything which is not desirable for it, towards its own benefits; as a result, explaining the essence of imperialism is required.

Cultural materialism, and imperialism as its consequence, has been affecting communities for many years. The idea of cultural colonialism and, as a result of it, cultural change as the target point of imperialism to dominate one society have always been noticed by the elites of the colonized culture. Ireland, as one of the societies which was the target of imperialism and colonial power for many years, always reacted towards this phenomenon throughout its history. Brian Friel, the renowned contemporary Irish writer, in order to decipher the ideological colonialization of British imperialism in his country wrote many works, one of the most famous of which is *Translations* (1981). It is the voice of the protest and resistance of the Irish towards the British cultural materialism against the phenomenon of cultural war of Britain in Ireland.

Friel's *Translations* and the Presence of Cultural Materialism

As an affecting power in Ireland, as it is seen in the play, the first target of the British cultural materialism is towards the land itself. Going inside the borders of Ireland, surveying its various places and trying to rename and change them all show the desire of imperialism of Britain to dominate this land. The ordnance survey which reflects the "utilitarian" and "bureaucratic" dominance of England over Ireland works as an excuse for the rule of Britain over Ireland (Maxwell 1990: 10). On the other hand, homeland as Helen Lojek (2004) believes that, "in Ireland place always matters;" (177) for sure, Friel is not an exception regarding his concern for his homeland. As an intellectual, who sees the process of the British cultural materialism in his hometown, he cannot sit aside and look at the destruction of his own country. Claire Gleitman (2008) states that, "throughout *Translations*, Friel makes clear that Baile Beag is threatened by its own internal deficiencies as well as by pressures from without" (31). Friel's Purposes are to make the natives aware of the process of imperialism in the land they are living, on the other hand, criticizing some behaviour of the natives to support Britain's goals. Even the changing of the name

of the town clearly shows the purpose of Britain's imperialistic survey to erase all the places of Ireland and implant them under the power of Britain. Charles Baker (2000), elaborating on the setting of the play, maintains that the play took place in "Baile Beag, which means "small town,"" but "it later will be renamed "Ballybeg," which means nothing" (265).

Frequently in the play, Friel pinpoints the importance of land in Ireland and the intimidation of dispossession of the natives by an external imperial power;

Manus: 'Land that is black and rich beneath the pressure of the plough ...'

.....

Jimmy: 'And with *cui putre*- with crumbly soil- is in the main best for corn.' There you are.

.....

Jimmy: Isn't that what I'm always telling you? Black soil for corn. *That's* what you should have in that upper field of yours- corn, not spuds.

(Friel 1989: 19)¹

As one proceeds in the play he can see that the characters of the play understand the value of their homeland and try to keep it. Friel highlights that land has a very crucial role in people's lives while their food depends on it; as imperialism tries to possess the land of Ireland, it wants to possess the life of the natives. The conscious and unconscious reactions towards this phenomenon, to keep the homeland and to protest to the dispossession, are seen in various parts of the play. "Bridget: ... just beyond where the soldiers are making the maps- the sweet smell was everywhere" (*Translations* 21); she ironically refers to the corruption of land by the British army. As it is seen, the characters of the play, step by step, comprehend that their homeland is being destroyed by the soldiers, losing its beauty and is replaced by what the colonizer wants. As the play goes on, we come to know that Irish people are being changed into foreigners in the viewpoints of British soldiers. The moment Owen, Captain Lancey, and Yolland enter into the Hedge School is described as, "Captain Lancey is ... uneasy with people- especially civilians, especially these foreign civilians" (*Translations* 29), as if the British are the owner of the land and the Irish are the foreigners in Ireland. British soldiers behave and speak in a way that it shows they want to possess Ireland in the future. Yolland, addressing Owen and Hugh, states that, "I think your countryside is- is- is- is very beautiful. I've fallen with love with it already. I hope we're not too- too crude an

¹ All the references to the play are from: Friel, Brian. (1989). *Translations*. London: faber and faber. And illustrated as (*name of the play* page number).

intrusion on your lives. And I know that I'm going to be happy, very happy, here" (*Translations* 32). It is noticeable that British soldiers are frightened of the Irish at first, but they become rude when they notice that Irish people are indifferent to their intentions of dispossession in Ireland. Yolland directly states that "I'm not going to leave here ..." (*Translations* 52), but again there are no objections from natives. At last, the behaviour and deeds of the British soldiers interpolate Irish people as strangers in their homeland; as a result, they stimulate their sense of nationalism, as it is seen at the end of the play when Doalty informs people of the arrival of fifty soldiers into Ireland and the reaction of Barney Petey whom he says he has ran for the first time in his life, and it was the time he was running after the soldiers, "you hours you! Get out of my corn, you hours you!" (*Translations* 57). In the end, they all come to this point that "we must learn where we live. We must learn to make them our own. We must make them our new home" (*Translations* 66).

Language, as the most important system of communication and part of culture, is the target of British imperialism in the play. The focus on language is clearly shown in the play. Kathleen Hohenleitner (1998) believes that,

Translations explores the political implications of the usage of language, and the connection between language and culture; it "maps" out the role of language in constructing subjectivity, on both individual and national levels. The play dramatizes the power concomitant in the act of naming, as Sarah identifies herself by pronouncing her name, and as the Irish citizens of Baile Beag become disenfranchised from their national identity by having their local living space renamed.

(40)

Furthermore, she believes that the language of one culture represents that culture, so when you reject the language of that culture you reject their being as human being (Hohenleitner 53). The ultimate target of the colonizer, as one proceeds in the play, is to change the language of the Irish people and replace it by English language in order that it could colonize them. On the other hand, the colonizer pays more attention to the concept of culture to be able to resist the process of colonization. Irish people, by persisting in the usage of Irish language and their gathering in the hedge school try to keep the Irish language alive.

The irony of the usage of language starts from the beginning of the play. Although all the dialogues and descriptions are written in English, in almost all parts the writer means Irish as David Krause (1999) maintains that the emphasis of the play is on native language and cultural tradition of Ireland and Friel wants to be faithful to the Irish language and its people in this play (641). Nicholas

Greene (2003), also, believes that, Friel "uses the English language to commemorate the Irish culture of which the English colonists deprived him ... (47). For sure, Friel intentionally does so to show the effect of the British cultural materialism on the psyche and life of people. When the dialogues proceed in the play the audience or readers can easily understand where the writer means Irish language. The opening scene of the play is a hedge school, representing a microcosm of macrocosm which is society, with all types of members in it learning and practicing language. Two circles of Hugh, the schoolmaster, Manus, his son who seems to be Maire's lover, Maire, who wants to leave Ireland when she learned language, and Sarah, who learns how to tell her name and Captain Lancey, and Lieutenant Yolland as the British colonizers and Owen, Hugh's son, as the interpreter between these two groups of people symbolize the process of language war in the play. Language, like a web, is knitted through the other processes of British materialization of culture like translation, naming, mapping, education, and even the people.

Brian Friel, as a colonized Irish intellectual, uses the idea of language in his play to keep Irish language alive. Josephine Lee (2005) believes that *Translations*, by paying more attention to the idea of language, not only expresses the idea of "Irishness" but also portrays the political and social impulses. The play illustrates both the loss of Irish language through the language of cultural imperialism of Britain and the "idealized Edenic language" of Irish which has been subverted through the ironic and parodic uses (169). Various in the play, *Translations*, Friel pinpoints the idea of language and the importance of it in the life of Irish people. Maire, referring to the arrival of British soldiers, says that, "they're coming to give us a hand. I don't know a word they're saying, nor they me; but sure that doesn't matter, does it?" (*Translations* 17). The rhetorical question that Maire asks here is answered at the end of the play when the British soldiers not only do not help the Irish, but also want to colonize them by taking the control of the country. Hereby, there is a close connection between the language that Irish people are conversing with and the colonization of them in order to teach them to learn English language as they want to establish a national school for Irish people to teach them English in a way that Bridget says, "and from the very first day you go, you will not hear one word of Irish spoken. You'll be taught to speak English and every subject will be taught through English ..." (*Translations* 22). Interestingly enough, when Captain Lancey knew that they cannot speak English, "he voiced some surprise that we did not speak his language," (*Translations* 25) and behaved as if he believed speaking English is a kind of "humble" for him. Little by little, one can notice that Hugh is expressing his idea of dissatisfaction towards the English language as he says that, "English, I suggested, couldn't really express us;" (*Translations* 25) but Maire, on the other hand, seems to get really fond of English language, "we should all be

learning English," and "I don't want Greek. I don't want Latin. I want English" because as she heard "the old language is a barrier to modern progress" (*Translations* 25). Owen, too, as an interpreter, seems to accept the superiority of English language and inferiority of Irish tongue when he says, "my job is to translate the quaint, archaic tongue you people persist in speaking into the King's good English" (*Translations* 29).

The importance of language is quite clear for the British materialism and colonizers. They know that language is the only system they can use to pierce into the life, thought, and culture of the people and affect them; but because it seems to be difficult to learn the language of the colonized and change them, the British cultural materialism tends to affect the target culture by teaching them its own language. Yolland, being aware of this, pinpoints this fact when he addresses Owen, "even if I did speak Irish I'd always be an outsider here, wouldn't I? I may learn the password but the language of the tribe will always elude me, won't it;" (*Translations* 40) that's why they want to change that language of Irish people in order not to be an outsider there.

Translation, and its interconnectedness with language, is clearly illustrated in the play. It has both of its functions as a destructive role, in the hands of colonialists to destroy people's identity, and resisting role, by the natives. Nicholas Grene (2003) believes that the play shows that how colonial power affected the spirituality and psychological state of Irish people and totally disposed them from whatever they have. British imperial power, by trying to change the language of Irish people, wants to dispossess them from their identity and homeland (42). That translation in the play is shown to destroy and change the whole things that people have is quite evident in the course of the play. The play, showing multiple aspects of the living of people, wants to emphasize the pain of losing all these possessions by the act of translating Irish into English which occurs in Ireland. Martine Pelletier (2006), explaining about the multiple layers of the living of people in the play and its connection to the language and the attempt of British Empire to change it, believes that,

it [*Translations*] offers us a sophisticated exploration of a set of highly emotional images- the hedge-school, that beloved locus of nationalist history and folk memory; the Irish language; the military presence of the British Empire; the impending Famine- to problematize the simple story of linguistic dispossession with the benefit of hindsight and contemporary linguistic theory.

(70)

Undoubtedly, the linguistic theory and its dispossession focus on the translation of the Irish into English and the attempts of the British cultural materialism to change the identity of people in

Ireland. The resistance of Irish people at the end of the play shows that how difficult it is to change the identity of people and dispossess them from all their identity traits, such as culture, language, history, etc. Robert Welch (1993), elaborating on this fact, believes that, “translation, the carrying over of the depth of association, is a difficult business, because languages have quite different systems of awareness;” (187) while trying to change this system of awareness, people, at last, as the speakers of language reacted towards it.

The act of translation in the play, definitely, relates to the power of the colonizer who wants to dominate the whole area of land in Ireland by knowing all of its parts and mapmaking. The choice of the title of the play is not accidental. Friel knows how significant, names, which are being translated in the play, are for the history and maintenance of the place. The title of the play, for sure, directs the attention of the reader towards translation, and also its importance. Interestingly enough, it is noteworthy to know that translation in the play does not concern just the translation of the name of places, but also translation of the name of people, which illustrates how far the process of translation goes. The act of translating in the play makes everything defamiliarized and unknown for the Irish people; on the other hand, objects which have been translated become familiar for the British. By doing so, the power of knowledge about the area is being removed from the Irish people; however, the British gain this power. As a result, if the translation of the whole area, objects, and people’s name continues, Irish people will live in an unknown world where they do not know anything about. The history of the land would change and be forgotten after some years, and the natives would not have any power over their homeland. Friel, prudently, pinpoints all these processes in the play.

Owen, one of those Irish people who spent some months in Dublin and the one who is able to speak English, is employed as the interpreter in the play. “Owen’s official function as translator is to pronounce each name in Irish and then provide the English translation” (*Translations* 34). What Owen does in the play seems to be an action of betrayal towards Irish people and Ireland. British colonizers even change Owen’s name into Roland and believe that “we’d [British soldiers] be lost without Roland” (*Translations* 37). Owen, at last, comes to know his mistake and stops the process of working and translating for British imperialists.

The act of translation is no longer separated from the act of naming and renaming. Friel is fully aware of the importance of names and wants to transfer it to the readers. Dawn Elaine Duncan (1994), maintaining on this aspect of Friel’s purpose, believes that Friel creates questions in the minds of readers when he refers to Yolland and Owen and the time Owen wants to ignore the social phenomenon of naming; furthermore, the time Owen transfers his disinterest and Yolland shows

his absurdity towards naming, the readers understands that naming is important (218). Concerning the people whose names are being changed the act of naming even questions their life, culture, and being. Claire Gleitman (2008), explaining about this aspect of the play, believes that, “yet the play’s larger burden is to suggest the profound personal and cultural significance in a name, so that its obliteration may result in its referent leaping *out* of existence and in the eradication of the ‘Eden’ that Yolland reveres” (33-34). On the other hand, the interconnectedness of the act of naming and renaming relate to imperial power which does such actions. Helen Gilbert and Joanne Tompkins (1996) state that, “the oldest colony of the British Empire, Ireland, also faced the loss of linguistic autonomy when English was imposed on Gaelic speakers. Brian Friel’s *Translations* (1980) details the insidious effects of the British military’s attempts to anglicise Irish place names in accordance with the imperial standard” (175). What British imperial has in mind is not only to defamiliarize the places for Irish people but also to familiarize them for itself. For sure, as Charles Baker (2000) maintains, “if the English don’t already control the land, they surely will after they rename it. By translating these place-names into a tongue the inhabitants cannot understand, the English soldiers appropriate the territory in a very real sense. The Gaelic-speaking natives find themselves in the curious position of being foreigners in their homeland...” (267).

The process of translation subverts the arrow of centrality and possession from Irish people to British colonizers. Little by little, apart from place and objects, even people of Ireland become the possession of Britain. Every single name is changed or renamed to something else and loses its being and identity. In the process of naming, the colonizers gain control over the colonized. The obvious example in the play is Owen whose name is changed into Roland without whom British soldiers cannot survive and do their job properly. By changing Owen’s name the British take his identity out from him and control him. Explaining about this phenomenon, Maureen S. G. Hawkins (1996) believes that, “names equal identity, and the act of naming (or renaming) confers possession of and control over the person or object thus identified” (471). Thus, the process of domination does not confine just to the control and possessing people, but extends to all the objects which exist around them.

Interwoven like webs into one another, one cannot separate the ideology of the British cultural materialism over place, language, translation, naming, and mapping from one another. After the act of naming and renaming, not only does domination of the British occurs but also the language of the Irish is destroyed. Csilla Bertha (2006), explaining about the interconnectedness of language, naming, mapmaking, the educational system, and the relation of it with domination and the destruction of language believes that,

... language, especially naming or renaming, is one of the most ancient forms of taking something or someone into possession. Highlighting the process of renaming – that is, Anglicizing – Irish place names in the process of map-making, parallel with the introduction of English national school replacing Irish-language schools, *Translations* identifies a moment when the loss of the Irish language accelerated.

(159)

As it is seen, nearly all the happenings in the play relate to each other.

Naming contains both language and translation in itself; then, it will show itself in mapping. These three processes are linked to one another like a triangle. One cannot discuss the presence of one without the presence of the other one. Naming in the play starts with the attempt of Manus to teach Sarah how to pronounce her name. Later on, efforts of Sarah, which is seen from the opening of the play to pronounce her name, come to the conclusion and she starts saying her name, “Sarah: My name is Sarah” (*Translations* 28). After that, the christening of one child in Ireland, called as “ritual of naming,” (*Translations* 23) reveals the attempts of the Irish to give identity to the new generation, “Bridget: Nellie Ruadh’s baby was to be christened this morning;” (*Translations* 18) “Owen: A hundred christenings! ... We name a thing and- bang! - it leaps into existence!” (*Translations* 45). The British cultural materialism tries to prevent the phenomenon of identity establishment of the Irish by changing their names, such as Owen to Roland, in order to prevent them from the process of creating an identity of their own; but even at the end the Irish protest to this process, “for God’s sake! My name is not Roland! ... My name is Owen” (*Translations* 44). English language is seen as a centre and standard for the colonizers, so “where there is ambiguity, they’ll be Anglicised” (*Translations* 32). Every Gaelic name should be either translated directly into English words or be changed into “approximate English sound,” (*Translations* 34) as “Druim Dubh” which changes into “Black Ridge” (*Translations* 36). The act of naming creates superiority of English over the inferiority of the Irish. Their names are considered as ‘incorrect’ and those of English as correct. English language seems to be the touchstone for evaluating Irish names. Josephine Lee (2005), elaborating on this aspect, states that, “The ‘incorrect’ names and ‘ambiguity’ will be ‘Anglicized’; English will now serve as the standard, the language of authority and power which will supplant Irish. The mapping will be a way of making Ireland readable to the English and unreadable to the Irish” (171). What the imperialists grow in their minds is to dominate the Irish when they finished map-making in their country; for sure, they want to take the Irish under the control of British Empire when they completed map-making (Dawn Elaine Duncan 1994: 223).

By finishing the process of map-making, they not only want to know the unknowing about Ireland, but also they want to complete their mastery over the Irish, as Friel prudently refers in his postcolonial dramas especially *Translations* (Duncan 205).

In the era of colonialism and post-colonialism, maps and mapping play an important role. They involve traveling to other areas in order to discover the unknown lands; as a result, preparing maps, naming and renaming different areas, and bringing to existence different places all were done by imperialists to dominate the target land. These are the characteristics of colonialism and are not limited just to the colonialism of Ireland. Brian Friel shows these processes in his play, *Translations*, when “the native Irish (Gaelic) culture is literally overwritten by English imperialism” (Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin 2007: 28). What the British cultural materialism wants is to dispossess the Irish from their culture and supplant a new desired culture of its own.

Variouly in the play Friel refers to the process of map-making by the British soldiers. The phenomenon is never ignored by the natives, as they inform one another from their action, "... where the soldiers are making the maps...;" (*Translations* 21) and that Captain Lancey is the "... cartographer... a maker of maps," and Lieutenant Yolland "... an orthographer..." whose responsibility is to do "the correct spelling of those names," which they believe are not appropriate (*Translations* 28). Interestingly enough, not only do the natives refer to the process of map-making by the British soldiers, but also they themselves persist in what they are doing without any fear in Ireland, "Lancey: ... we are here... to make map..." (*Translations* 30). As the natives do not react to what they are doing, the British soldiers seem persistent towards their own actions, disregarding the natives. What British imperialism raises in mind is to prepare a small scale of the land by mapping in order to have domination on the all parts of it. The process of map-making leads to the dispossession of the present Government of Ireland and the natives from their homeland. Besides, the role of taxation for mapping, as mentioned by Lancey, "... the entire basis of land valuation can be reassessed for purposes of more equitable taxation," (*Translations* 31) should not be ignored because of its monetary profits for the British Empire. In the end, the natives, being aware of what is going on in their land, reach to the state of epiphany. Owen, representing the natives, believes that what they were doing is not more than a "catalogue of names," and believes the process is a "mistake" (*Translations* 66).

To implant its own ideology in Ireland, along with all the processes discussed, the British cultural materialism does not leave the education system aside. It knows that education has an important role in domination. Dawn Elaine Duncan (1994), explaining about the role of education in the

domination of one over another, believes that, "in the struggle for language dominance, education becomes a primary battlefield;" (211) the natives unconsciously are aware of this and want to keep themselves away from the supremacy of the British over the Irish. They pay to educate in a hedge school in order to keep their language alive; "thus in the first part of the play, the hedge-school suggests a kind of linguistic paradise, in which words affirm the importance and permanence of a society, and society maintains a clear and unmediated relationship between words and truth" (Josephine Lee 2005:169); as a result, the natives knowing the truth about their own lives and language do not want to be an inferior in front of the British. But the British cultural materialism, being aware of this fact that, "education, when promoting the use of one language, helps to create dominance," (Lee 222) makes it free for the Irish to study in the public national school in which the language is English, and nobody is allowed to speak Irish.

To replace the current education system in Ireland, the British cultural materialism should not only eliminate the previously existed system, but also establish a new one which provides the natives something different. What the imperialists want to establish is a school which, in the one hand, offers free education to the natives, on the other hand, eliminates Irish language by establishing a curriculum in which Irish language has no place. Scott Boltwood (1998) directly refers to this intention of the imperialism when he states, "the establishment of public schools conducted in English that will eliminate the native hedge-school system by providing a free education" (573). Financial problems of the natives may be the Achilles heel of them in the hands of the imperialists to remove and replace the hedge school with what they actually want.

Imperialists act in a way that after a while the education system of Ireland is seen as sinister in the viewpoints of the natives. Manus states that, "the aul drunken schoolmaster and that lame son of his are still footing about in the hedge-school, wasting people's good time and money" (*Translations* 16). The natives themselves are confessing to their own financial care for education, what the imperialists are aware of and use. The natives are aware of the aftermath of the opening of the public school of by imperialists. They know that "when it opens, this is finished: nobody's going to pay to go to a hedge-school" (*Translations* 20). That is not a simple task the imperialists are doing, but something which they have had programs and laws for. It has been established that "every child from every house has to go all day, every day, summer or winter. That's the law," and that "from the very first day you go, you'll not hear one word of Irish spoken. You'll be taught to speak English and every subject will be taught through English..." (*Translations* 22). For the natives education equals identity and creates their identity. They complete their education when

they are able to write their own name, which shows who they are; "ah. Nora Dan can now write her name- Nora Dan's education is complete" (*Translations* 24).

The roles of the characters in the play add to the overall intention of Friel to transfer his message. The opening scene of the play with the students who are being educated in a hedge-school, and the efforts of Sarah who wants to pronounce her name show how the ideas of resistance towards the ideology of the British cultural materialism develop in the play. From the opening scene of the play Friel wants to direct the attention of the audience and readers to the idea of the importance of name and its role to form the identity of the people. As Danine E. Farquharson (1993) believes, "Sarah's early scene is essentially a search for a renewed creation of the self in both personal and cultural dimensions. Her linguistic crisis, in naming and speaking, cannot be separated from the problem of Irish identity in Irish culture and the community at large"(15). What the role of Sarah wants to convey to the readers is to focus on the importance of name from the beginning of the play. She is the representative of Irish people and culture; "Sarah's muteness," as Margaret Llewellyn Jones (2002) believes, "indicates her silenced status as both women and colonized individual" (24). Sarah is depicting the colonized people of Ireland. As she tries to speak out her name, she tries to revolt against the imperial power of Britain. "Her [Sarah's] position symbolizes victims of imperialism who lose their language and, consequently, their identity" (Charles Baker 2000: 266). She no longer wants to be a silent person in front of the colonizers. She is believed to "stand for a people's loss of tongue and name" (Robert S. Smith 1991: 399), but what she wants to do is to get away from all these titles; all of her aim is to tell her name and creates an identity of her own. She is a revolt against the aims of the British cultural materialism. She wants to save the endangered Irish culture and language by her efforts when she says, "my name is Sarah" (*Translations* 28).

Owen, on the other hand, who ignores his name when it is mispronounced by the British colonizers, comes to know that he no longer can tolerate his name to be mispronounced, and at last protests to it. Claire Gleitman (2008), elaborating on the character of Owen, believes that "when Owen relinquishes his own name for the sake of careerist expediency, he forfeits his grip on an identity rooted in a personal and cultural past, and his act is a self-abasing compromise with the powers that be" (34). The ignoring of his name, as a result, his identity for him is not something which he can tolerate and handle. Once, he is fond of having a job and thinks that he can cope with all conditions, but at last he revolts, "for God's sake! My name is not Roland! ... My name is Owen" (*Translations* 44).

The reactions towards the processes, which the British cultural materialism created, mentioned so far led by the natives in order to show their own disgust against the imperialists. Their sense of nationalism caused them to respond to all of the cultural threats the British created for them. Nicholas Grene (2003) believes that when the Irish confronted with the act of map-making, they reacted to this phenomenon and resisted it because it was an action of "colonial dispossession" caused by the imperialists to conquer Irish culture (45). Most of the critics, as Clare Wallace (2004), argue about the destructive effects of the foreign cultures, such as British, on Irish culture which leads to the creation of the national identity of Irish against the strange cultures (660). This sense of nationalism of the natives makes Irish culture quite distinct from the cultures of other communities.

Various in the play, the sense of nationalism of the natives causes them to react against the policy of the imperialists. Showing his anger and disgust towards the ongoing policy of Britain in Ireland to replace national school with the hedge-school, Doalty says that, "I'll tell you something-nobody's going to go near them-they're not going to take on-law or no law" (*Translations* 22). On the other hand, when the imperialists want to use Hugh, the teacher of the hedge-school, to run the national school, he exclaims, "I could do that only if I were free to run it as I have run this hedge-school for the past thirty-five years," (*Translations* 26) meaning that he cannot forget about all the costumes, traditions, and past histories related to Ireland, and start to be and teach something which is totally different from what he learned, thought and believed. The physical reactions of the natives, also, express their hatred towards the colonizers. Yolland, the British soldier, says, "I was passing a little girl yesterday and she spat at me" (*Translations* 37). The Irish, old or young, girl or boy, by all means, express their dissatisfactions about the presence of the British in their homeland. Even about the act of naming and renaming, Owen, though responsible to interpret the old names for the British, cannot tolerate this act when it continues to affect his own name; as a result, as it was previously mentioned, reacts to it, mentioning that, "for God's sake! My name is not Roland! ... My name is Owen" (*Translations* 44). Their sense of nationalism and concerns about their homeland again are shown when one of the natives, feeling that his homeland is endangered by the colonizers, starts shouting at them, "you hoors you! Get out of my corn, you hoors you!" (*Translations* 57). The natives' disgust and reactions even become harsher when Lieutenant Yolland is mysteriously missed in Ireland, and the camps of the British get fire, "tell him [Captain Lancey] his whole camp's on fire" (*Translations* 62). At last, the natives' sense of nationalism starts to join them together in order to unify them against the destructive power and purpose of the British cultural materialism in Ireland.

As it was discussed, the British cultural materialism, through the Ordnance Survey, started its process of colonization in Ireland. The cultural differences of Britain and Ireland made British culture to seem superior to Irish culture, as a result, the actions to replace Irish culture by British culture commenced by the imperial power of Britain. It tried to change the images of the past history of Britain and through that affect all the intellectual, emotional, and cultural aspects of the Irish.

British cultural materialism tries to influence and change nearly all aspects of the Irish culture. It starts its act of colonization from the places in Ireland and wants to affect all the aspects regarding the places in Ireland, from identifying the various places to recognizing the borders of the Ireland and piercing into them. The process exceeds from places to one of the crucial aspects of colonization, which affects almost all other aspects, language. The target of the British cultural materialism in this domain is to change the language of the natives into English in order to be able to understand them, and most importantly control them. It passes into the act of translation through language, not only trying to replace their language, but also translating and changing the past history and 'collective unconscious' of people. Through the process of translation, the British cultural materialism wants to defamiliarize Ireland for the natives, and make it familiar for itself. Further, as it was discussed, the process of translation by the imperialists contain the act of naming, through which the British wants to name and rename all the objects and even people in Ireland. For sure, the act of naming also enacts as colonial process in the hands of the British cultural materialism to know all things in Ireland and control them under its own power. Naming, in order not to be changed during the years, is going to be fixed as maps in the act of map-making by colonialists. By doing all of these processes in a colonial country, the British cultural materialism wants to gain power over the people and things there, and as a result, starts to colonize them. The basic act of colonization and control of people by the British cultural materialism is going to start from the education system in which nobody is allowed to speak Irish but English. Imperialists want to control people and inject their own ideology from very early ages of childhood.

Conclusion

Brian Friel, as an Irish intellectual, who seems to be quite dissatisfied with what the British cultural materialism previously did in Ireland, and as a writer who is aware of all the ideologies of the British imperialism tries to reflect and demystify all the processes that the British cultural materialism used in order to affect Ireland. In his play *Translations*, Friel depicts the consequences of the acts of the British cultural materialism to arise the sense of resistance of the natives for whom the tolerance of stranger in their homeland is not possible.

Friel, along with some of the other Irish intellectuals, established Field Day Theatre to work professionally on this phenomenon. *Translations* was performed as the first production of the Field Day Theatre in order to publicize the imperial ideology of the British cultural materialism towards the colonies, especially in Ireland. Both in the play and by performances in the theatre, Friel wanted to stimulate the sense of nationalism of the people. Through the various dialogues, he, and the other playwrights of Ireland, promised a better future after resistance and revolution against the British cultural materialism.

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