ترجمه
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Literary Translation*

The Translation of Prose, Drama, and Poetry

The language of literature (or literary language) is much different from the language of science, since it is not technical but open, and characterized by richness and complexity which is a reflection of the richness and complexity of life or man's consciousness of it. Indeed a work of art is an immensely complex product as it is held together by a very subtle network or relations that stabilize the work and give it its artistic merits and identity, (Robins, M).

In works of literature (whether poetry, drama, or fiction), form acquires significant importance as does content. If the translator of a certain literary work concentrates on the content as a priority (i.e. the prose argument, or the poetic paraphrase of the content), he will inevitably do much harm to the original text, and produce an inadequate translation of the S.L. text. In what follows, the translation of prose, drama, and poetry will be discussed.

The Translation of Prose

As already mentioned, literary translation is far from literal or word-for-word rendering. The translator's duty is not only to express the S.L. author's ideas, but also to take into consideration his style and language (the author's conscious choice of words and their overtones, his structural devices, figures of speech, and such stylistic subtleties). It is true that the relation between form and content in fiction is of a different nature compared with that which holds in a poem (weaker in some sense) but it would be quite unacceptable to approach the translation of novel, for instance, stressing the content only at the expense of the total structure of the novel. This is what happens indeed when some translators embark on the translation of novel that they have not read previously, or have read it only once in a quick and careless manner without adequate attention, concentration, and pondering over it. It has been suggested that the sentence in a literary text or work does not consist solely of a statement but aims at something beyond what it usually says since sentences within a literary text are always an indication of something that is to come, the

structure of which is foreshadowed by their specific content (McGuire 1980). In other words, the translator of a literary work should not render sentences at their face value, but should handle them as constituents in a complex overall structure.

Hiliare Belloc (1930) suggested six rules for the translation of prose:

1. The translator should avoid transiting his work word by word or sentence by sentence, but should instead tackle the work as an overall unit and keep in mind the whole sense of the work when carrying out his translation.

2. The translator should translate the SL idiom by an equitant T.L. idiom which will naturally differ in form. e.g.: The Greek exclamation "By the dog" if translated literally into English would seem comic, which should therefore be translated as "by God". S.L. grammatical systems should also be rendered by their equivalent T.L. grammatical systems. E.g. French historic present must be rendered into the English past tense, etc. The English passive voice should often be rendered into its equivalent Arabic active voice; e.g.: The door was opened by Ahmed: فتح احمد الباب، احمد فتح الباب.

3. An S.L. intention should be rendered into an equivalent T.L. intention; and as the weight that a given S.L. expression may have is often different from the weight of its counterpart in the T.L. (stronger or could be weaker) if translated literally, the translator might find it necessary to add words to make up for the difference.

4. The translator should avoid the pitfall of similar words in different languages. (For this purpose, one may cite the example of the sign *brutal* which signifies "serious' in French but has a different denotation in English).

5. The translator should not be slavish to the S.L. text since languages differ in form; he should bring about such changes that he thinks to be necessary for the reproduction of the equivalent effect in the T.L..

6. The translator should not add elements that are not in the S.L.

Belloc accepts the translator's moral responsibility to the original text, but thinks that the translator has the right, and is justified in altering the text in order to conform to the S.L. stylistic and idiomatic norms. He emphasizes that the translator should deal with the text as a whole

structure, and that the structure of a prose text is not as linear as it may seem to be, or as the chapter divisions of a novel may indicate. The task of breaking the prose text into sections is much more difficult for the translator of prose than it may seem for the translator of poetry who can more easily analyze a poem into stanzas, lines, feet, etc (McGuire 1980).

Another problem that is associated with the translation of prose is that of proper names, since languages differ with regard to the systems of names and surnames. The customary mode of address in a formal English situation is the use of the surname preceded by one of the forms: Mr., Miss, Mrs., etc; but the surname is not used as a mode of address in a similar Arabic situation; the first name is used preceded by such forms as Mr., Mrs.. Miss, etc. Another more serious problem in the translation of prose is the use of dialects by certain characters in the novel. The translator has to select an equivalent T.L. dialect. The situation becomes more difficult for the translator if more than one dialect exists in the T.L. The translator has to decide on the choice of the appropriate dialect as an equivalent one. In Arabic, for instance, many dialects exist besides the standard one. His decision as to select a certain dialect cannot be taken arbitrarily but on some logical grounds and relevant situational features (some features at least that are shared by the S.L. and T.L. dialects). The T.L. dialect should have an equivalent social function and status rather than an equivalent geographical distribution.

The translator should also take care of the appropriate equivalent style, for languages vary as to the kinds of style as well as their functions in different situations. Martin Joose has suggested five types of style in English: the frozen, the formal, the informal, the casual, and the intimate style. Stylistic equivalence is not usually established in a one-to-one relation between the S.L. and the T.L. styles, with regard to different situations. For instance, a casual style in an English situation may have an equivalent formal style in the T.L. e.g.: An English youth may address his father in a casual style, but an Arab youth in a similar situation would use honoric terms. Cultural considerations may lead to stylistic shifts and divergence between the S.L. style and its equivalent T.L. one.

The Translation of Dramatic Texts

It is true that the text of a play is another genre of literary language; yet one has to admit that a play text in general has certain characteristics which the translator of drama has to take into consideration when undertaking the translation of dramatic texts.

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A play text is a piece of literature written with a view to being performed on a stage usually. The dramatic text is thus related to such paralinguistic systems as pitch, intonation, inflection, loudness, as well as gestures in addition to the system of interaction between the actors who perform such a play, and their use of space on the stage. The theatre text is also characterized by dialogue, as well as the presence of stage directions within the body of the text that are eliminated in performance and replaced by other signs or actions. Unlike the other types of literary genres, a play text is read as something incomplete, because the full potential of the text cannot be realized but in performance. In fact, there is a notion of multiplicity in the act of reading a play text:

a. The play text can be read as a part of an academic course (i.e. as a piece of literary reading).

b. The play text can be read a directional reading (i.e. taking its direction on stage into consideration (whether to act it or not).

c. The play text can be read an actor's reading with emphasis on the extralinguistic features of the signs such as pitch, tone, etc.

d. A play text can be read as a post-performance reading. In other words, is in a dialectical relationship with its performance on stage. (McGuire, 1980). The nature of the play text constitutes a problem for the translator, because of the many non-linguistic factors that are involved in the process of translating it. The translator of the play text (who undertakes a translation for the theatre) requires an awareness of multiple codes within and without the play text. In the case of poetic drama, the translator has to care for metrical features; but in the case of naturalistic dialogue, the translator has to reproduce in the T.L. the appropriate speech rhythms. The translator of the dramatic text should also take into consideration that he has to be aware of the changes in register, tone and style, which are bound to a certain context (ibid).

In the translation of dramatic texts, different translators have used different approaches in carrying out their task:

1. Translating the theatre text as a literary text or work:

In this method of handling the theatre text, the text is treated as a piece of literary work in which the translator is concerned with being faithful to the original (S.L.) work. In fact, this approach is the most common practice among the translators of theatre works, particularly
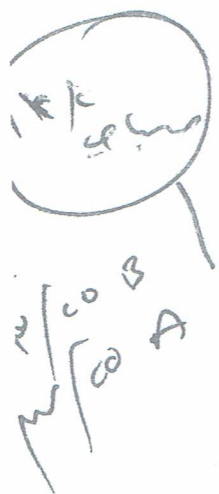
when the translator undertakes the translation of the complete theatre works of a certain author or playwright.

2. The S.L.-culture oriented approach of translating theatre texts:

In this method, the translator tries to reproduce certain S.L. cultural features in his rendering of the text in an attempt to make use of such elements as a means of adding some comic flavour, or to try to be faithful to the SL text.

3. The Performance oriented method of translating theatre texts:

In this approach, the translator takes into consideration the dimension of performance in his rendering of the SL text in terms of fluent TL speech rhythms which can be uttered by the actors without any difficulty, as well as the equivalent registers and accents in the TL. In addition to the omission of certain passages that are too closely bound to the S.L. culture and linguistic context.

4. The poetic approach of translating theatre texts:

In this method or approach, an S.L. verse dramatic text is translated into a T.L. poetic dramatic form that is thought to be the most appropriate equivalent of the S.L. text. It often happens, however, that the reproduced T.L. version of the dramatic text becomes obscure and vague with regard to its meaning when the poetic approach is adopted.

5. The co-operative approach of translating theatre texts:

This approach involves the co-operation of at least two persons to carry out the production of the T.L. text one of whom is usually an S.L. native speaker (or someone with a very good command of the S.L.). This approach takes into consideration the problems related to the performance of a theatre text such as the different theatre conventions of the S.L. and the TL. cultures; as well as the different styles of performance that are employed by the speakers of the two languages (i.e. the S.L. and the T.L.) For instance, the performance of a play written by Shakespeare would take a shorter time if performed in an English theatre than it would take if performed In a French theatre or a German one. Because of the different acting conventions between English, French, and German, The acting conventions and audience expectations (that differ from one country to another) are part of the making of a performance; and are not less significant than the conventions of the written text. When some conventions (that have functional significance in the S.L.) do not have a

functional significance in the T.L. theatre, the translator's task becomes more difficult. This is why the role of the chorus in a Greek tragedy is minimalised by the translator as he reduces (or may reduce) the number of lines that constitute the chorus, or shift the chorus to an Individual speaker in order to conform to the conventions of contemporary theatre.

When translating a play text that is remote in time, the translator may face the problem of the existence of more than one version of the text with some crucial differences between them. The well-known Shakespearean play Othello, for instance, has come down to us in two different versions: the first Quarto which was published in 1622, and the First Folio that was published in 1623. A third version which seems to be an amalgamation of both the Quarto and the Folio was published in 1630, and was given the name, the Second Quarto. There is no agreement, however, as to which of the versions is more authoritative. Sanders (1984) holds the view that the first Quarto and the first Folio are derived from two different manuscripts of equal authority for which Shakespeare himself is held to be responsible that he had composed at different periods of time. The translators of Othello have to decide whether to follow the Quarto, the Folio, or both of them.

Let us consider some examples of Arabic translations of some textual material from Shakespearean drama:

Macbeth (Act V):

    Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow,
    Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
    To the last syllable of recorded time,
    And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
    The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle
    Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,
    That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
    'Tis a tale told by an idiot full of sound and fury,
    And then is heard no more,
    Signifying nothing.

Khalil Mutran's rendering:

كل ليلة تنقضي تمهد لبعض الأناس الضعاف
طريق القدر! انطفىء انطفىء أيها النور المستعار
هنيهة! مالحياة؟ إن هي إلا ظل عابر إن هي إلا إلاضاعة التي يقضيها الممثل
على ملعبه متخبطاً تعباً يتوارى ولن يرى إن هي إلا أقصوصة يقصها ...

بصيحة عظيمة، وكلمات ضخمة على حين إنها خالية من كل معنى.

Muhammad Abu Farid's rendering:

بل غد بعده غد و غد
تحبو تلك الخطى القصار دبيباً
تتوالى يوماً فيوماً
إلى آخر حرف مسجّل في الزمان.
كلّ أمس أضاء لحمقى
في طريق يفضي لموت التراب
أيتها الشمعة الضئيلة بعداً لك بعداً
فإنما العيش ظل
كخيال يمشي،
وكاللاعب المسكين
في مسرح يضجّ ويزهي
ساعة قدرت له
ثم لا يسمع بعدها مدى الأيام
إنها قصة يرددها المعتوه
صوت وهيجة دون معنى.

The translation of Poetry

Savory (1969) speaks of poetry as:

> ... the art of employing words in such a manner as to
> produce an illusion on the senses, the art by means of
> words what the painter does by means of colours. Poetry,
> then, produces an illusion; it acquires memorableness by
> certain features which can more easily be recognized than
> reproduced at all. There is rhythm, metrical rhythm; there
> is emotion, sensuous emotion; there is an increased use of
> figures of speech and a degree of disregard for
> conventional word-order, there is imagination, and above
> all, there is an ability to see features in an object or a
> situation which another, not a poet, might miss.

From the above description of the nature and characteristics of this
literary genre, i.e. poetry, one can easily realize that the most problematic
and difficult area of literary translation is that of translating poetry.
MacGuire sums up such difficulties concerning the translation of poetry
as:

"It is an established fact in translation studies that if a dozen translators
_____ they will produce a dozen different versions. And

yet somewhere, in those dozen versions there will be what Popovic calls the "invariable core" of the original poem. This invariable core, he claims, is represented by stable, basic, and constant semantic elements in the text, whose existence can be proved by ~~expirimentai~~ semantic consideration."

Indeed, no two translators can produce the same or even similar versions of a poem which reflect the complex nature and structure of poetry. This is why it is considered to be one of the most difficult tasks that a translator may undertake. The translator of poetry is supposed to be very faithful to the poet (of the S.L.) on the one hand, and to reproduce a T.L. version of the (SL.) that conforms with the T.L. stylistic considerations, and be aesthetically appealing and satisfactory, on the other. The problem is further complicated when the S.L. poem is remote in time; because the poem can be read differently from the Intention of Its composer for language, culture, and poetic (as well as artistic) conventions do undergo significant changes in the course of time.

For Jacobson (1966), poetry is untranslatable by definition, and that only creative transposition is possible.

The poet is able to see, hear, feel, or experience things that others cannot but for his poetry. He provides us with a sharper perception of things. In poetry, formal features are of a great significance. The poet normally selects his words with as much attention to their sounds and aural effects as to their signification. The characteristics and artistic features that distinguish poetry from prose are the very characteristics and features that defy translation. Words in a poem designate more than their plain meanings. There is a harmony between the sense and sound in the poetic word. Robert Frost once said that poetry begins in delight and ends in wisdom. The word acquires additional signification and connotations from its relations with the other constituents of the poem. The translator, therefore, has to pay attention to the relations that hold between each part and the other constituent ones of the poem, and the relation between each part and the whole complex structure of the poem.

Scholars have differed on the question of translating poetry, and have taken contradictory stands sometimes. Some of them are of the view that a poem should be translated Into a T.L. poem (i.e. poetry into poetry). To them, "a verse translation at least gives the opportunity to indulge In figures of speech and to adopt the varied word-order which the original contained, and which some translators wish to preserve wherever possible" (Savory).

McGuire (1980) quotes Lefever's presentation of seven different strategies for the translation of poetry which he mentions in his discussion of the different methods applied or adopted by the English translators of Catullus' poem 64:

1. **Phonemic translation:** This method aims at the reproduction of the S.L. sounds in the T.L. version. The overall result of this approach is often the distortion of the original sense because of the emphasis put on sounds, since languages differ radically in their phonetic and phonological systems.

2. **Literal translation:** This method implies the attempt to reproduce the S.L. word-order in the T.L. version. This method also results in the distortion of the original sense as well as syntax since languages differ with regard to their structure as well.

3. **Metrical translation:** This method of translating a poem emphasizes the reproduction of the original (S.L.) metre; but this approach does cause harm to the other poetic features of the original as it subdues the other aspects for the purpose of reproducing metre.

4. **The translation of poetry into prose:** This method leads to the distortion of the original sense of the S.L. poem as well as its communicative value and syntax though in a less measure than that which results from adopting the second method (the literal approach), or the third one (the metrical one).

5. **The rhymed translation approach:** Lefevere is of the view that this method of translating poetry does not reproduce but a caricature of the original poem, because the translator restricts himself by a double bondage: the bondage of rhyme as well as the bondage of metre which usually accompanies it.

6. **Blank verse translation:** This method of translating poetry may result in a higher degree of accuracy with regard to the S.L. poem than the above mentioned methods, yet it imposes some structural restrictions on the translator in his endeavour to produce blank verses.

7. **The Interpretation approach:** in adopting this method of translating poetry the translator tries to retain the substance of the original poem, and makes certain changes in the form of the poem only. In other words, the translator produces a different form that ___ the original substance or content of the S.L. poem. This is

[handwritten margin notes:] انشعار الذي لا يتضمن قافية
poetry that does not rhyme

عادل مساعد

tantamount to saying that the translator, in fact, produces a poem of his own except for the content which is the S.L.'s

From the different methods or approaches of translating poetry mentioned above, one realizes the fact that concentrating on one or more element(s) of the original poem in order to retain or reproduce it in the T.L. version will be carried out at the expense of the other elements or features of the original; and this will definitely make the T.L. version a deficient one. If the poem which is to be translated belongs to a period distant in time, this will render the translator's task further difficult and problematic. In such cases, the context in which the poem is set is dead, as well as the genre sometimes; as is the case with translating a pastoral poem'. Different translators may apply different translation concepts to the translation of a work written by a classical composer.

أقصى

which

Let us consider an example which is the Shakespearean sonnet "Shall I compare thee..." when has been translated into Arabic by different translators in poetic as well as in prosaic language:

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer lease hath all too short a date
Sometimes too hot the eye of heaven shines
And often is his complexion dimmed
And every fair from fair sometimes declines
By chance or nature's changing course untrimmed
But thy eternal summer shall not fade
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest
Nor shall death brag thou wanderest in his shade
When in eternal lines to time thou growest

So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

A poetic Arabic version of the sonnet by Fateena Al-Naib:

منذا يقارن حسنك بصيف قد تجلّى
وفنون سحرك قد بدت في ناظري أسمى وأغلى؟
تجني الرياح العاتيات على البراعم وهي جذلى
والصيف يمضي سرعاً إذ عقده المحدود ولّى
كم أشرقت عين السماء بحرَها تلتهب
ولكم خبا في وجهها الذهبي نور يغرب!
لابد للحسن البهي عن الجميل سيذهب

فالدهر تغيير وأطوار الحياة قُلَّب

لكن صيفك سرمدي ما اعتراه ذبول

لن يفقد الحسن الذي ملكت فهو بخيل

والموت لن يزهو بظلك في حماه يجول

ستعاصرين الدهر في شعري وفيك أقول

مادامت الأنفاس تصعد والعيون تحدق

سيظل شعري خالدا وعليك عمرا يغدق.

A prosaic Arabic version of the sonnet:

أبيوم من أيام الصيف أشبهك؟

انك أكثر جمالاً وأشد اعتدالاً

فالرياح العتية في آيار تجني على براعمه الحبيبة

وعقد الصيف ما اقصر اجله

وعين السماء آناً تشرق بقيض ملتهب

آناً في صفحتها الذهبية يخبو البريق

وكل حسن عن الحسن يوماً يفترق

أما صيفك الأبدي فلن يسري فيه الذبول

ولن يفقد الحسن الذي تمتلكه

ولن يفخر الموت بأنك تطوف في ظله

حين تعاصر الأزمان في هذه الأبيات الخالدة

فما دام في الناس رمق وفي العيون بصر

سيحيا هذا القصيد وينفخ فيك الحياة

The poetic Arabic version of the sonnet, though rhymed, yet, it follows a different rhyme scheme compared with that of the original. The S.L. rhyme scheme of the sonnet is: abab/ cdcd/ efef/ gg; but the rhyme scheme of the Arabic version of the sonnet is aaaa/ bbbb/ cccc/ dd. Although the translator has not limited himself to the same sequence of the original rhyme, the rhymed translation seems to have affected the selection of the appropriate T.L. equivalents in more than a case. The addressee is compared in the first two lines of the poem to the beautiful and moderate nglish' summer's day', and described as being even "more lovely and more temperate" than a summer's day. The translator seems to have omitted the phrase "more temperate" from his rendering in order to preserve the rhyme and rhythm.

The translator of the prosaic version of the Shakespearean sonnet **"Shall I compare thee.."** uses the Arabic term (أشد) as a modifying collocate, but it does not seem to be an appropriate collocate, and the use of (أكثر) would perhaps be a better option, in terms of collocational agreement as well as agreement with the S.L. line in which the word

"more" is repeated: "more lovely and more temperate". This is why suggesting the repetition of the item (أكثر) instead of (أشد) might constitute a better option. The translator would better make a change or alteration in the T.L. in such circumstances to make up for the difference between the S.L. and the T.L. context and cultural divergence. One may suggest the use of "spring" in Arabic (which is indeed the shortest, most beautiful and moderate season in Arabia) as a translation equivalent for the English summer in the sonnet under discussion.