



Graduation Project

Final Draft

Title: Difficulties of translating literary texts from English into Arabic

Student Name: Waleed AlHarabi

Academic Number: 213199639

Under the Supervision of: Dr. Thamer Alharthi

I certify that all material in this proposal, which is not my own work has been identified and that no material has previously been submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Waleed AlHarabi', is written above a dashed horizontal line.

Signature

❖ Table of Content

Section	Page
Abstract	3
Introduction	3-4
Literature review	4-5
Significance of Research	5
Research Questions	5
Research Methodology	6
Ethical Considerations	6
Limitations of the study	7
Expected Results	7
References	8
Appendix	8

Abstract:

Tackling the problems of literary translation is very controversial because there are various opinions about the nature of the text and thus the nature of the translation itself, this is on One hand and on the other hand, the readers and the ones Interested in translation always ask an eternal question that has no answer till now about the literary translator's identity: Is he a writer translates literature, or literature lover translates Literary texts from one language to another?

Furthermore, one of the most difficult challenges facing any literary translator is the figures of speech thus what it draws my attention to study such a topic is that most of the translators do not care about translating the figures of speech in literary texts therefore, How can the translator handle similes, metaphors and symbols used in the text and bring them up to the Arab reader with a similar effect as the one in the source language?. If we put these questions aside, there are other questions related to the prospects of text translation, which are the accuracy and honesty in the literal or free translation.

In a nutshell, this research is an attempt to examine these relevant aspects of Translation and highlight them to open the door wide in front of the reader to understand the literary text.

Introduction:

Translation is considered to be a necessary activity and one of the oldest professions practiced on earth. It is still having a significant importance as it has emerged as the main player in transferring the heritage and culture of human civilizations. Thus translation emerged as a solution to the problem of language and as a mean of understanding among the various human races. It also serves as the bridge that connects different nations and civilizations.

Literary Translation poses its own problems as we can certainly say that the same thing applies to any kind of translation. However, translation in the field of literature includes tremendous problems that cannot be found in other fields and the reason for that privacy is the several social, linguistic, cultural, systematic and theoretical factors overlap between each other when it comes to a literary text.

Literary text is a text in which a number of human knowledge comes together and the most important one of all is the literary knowledge. It is a personal writing tackles things that took place with the writer or the poet himself.

The literary texts have several faces such as poetry, drama, short story and novel. It is characterized by several features such as figures of speech; pun, simile, allegory and metaphor. Besides, it also contains the author`s feelings and imagination so the translator has to produce a

similar text in the target language representing honesty in translating the source text along with highlighting the beauty and splendor of the original text.

The previous idea is clearly presented by Mohamed Awad (1969) when he asserted that the first requirement comes to our minds is that the translator who will produce literary impact similar to the one in the source text should be a man of letters and is not enough to be familiar with both source and target language because literature has something to do with the spirit and willingness and these things are innate and cannot be acquired therefore, it is not surprising to ask the literary translator to be a man of letters or who translates poetry to be a poet.

To conclude, one can summarize that translation of one language to another is substantial in today's world for education, economy, politics, religion, medicine and all fields of life. It overcomes the hurdles of linguistic differences and promotes harmonious interaction and mutual understanding.

Literature Review:

Scientific text and literary text differ completely, almost totally reversed, thus when you read a scientific text you do not feel emotionally or even find any kind of suspense as its writer aims to bring the facts to our minds by non-ornate phrases and a language lacking of verbal music. Newmark (1982) stated that the current difference between the literary and non-literary translation is that the literary translation is metaphoric unlike the non-literary translation which has nothing to do with figures of speech.

Jaback (2007) contributed to the field of translation when he conducted a study on 200 Arab students to highlight the problems they meet when translating texts from Arabic into English and vice versa. The outcomes were pretty terrible as the monstrous problem was the one related to linguistics - mainly the grammar – in addition to the lexical and morphological problems.

Zhongde (1991) identifies two translation difficulties; content and style which already exist in the original text and as a result, the translator should exert the best effort he has to reproduce them in a similar way as they are in quite a different language.

Worth mentioning that the most brilliant study conducted in this field was the one done by M.Enani (2003) as he is considered to be the one who related theories to practical translation when he presented in his books the problems of literary translation and highlighted some theoretical principles that encourage researchers to study this field deeply. He asserted the idea that literary translation is in some way a comparative literature and its practice needs translators that studied literature and criticism in addition to mastering Arabic and English languages,

moreover, the idea of idealistic translated text is completely ruined under his assertion that each translator has his own style, vision and way of creating a translated text.

As long as literary text presents problems which are different from other specialized domains, a translator should be highly aware of the sensitivity of the subject matter and should also be aware of the importance of understanding the literary terms he/she comes across during the translation process in both languages.

Significance of Research:

Literary texts have various faces like; poetry, drama, story, short story, novel and allegory which is considered to be a special kind of literary texts. They are more difficult to translating than any other kind of texts because the literary texts do not represent only ideas, but also contain Feelings of the author along with the text tone in addition to its figurative language which is serving as an integrated part of the text which is created by the hands of a poet or the prose writer. So the translator has to produce a similar text to the original one and put into his consideration the beauty and coherence of the source language text.

So it is unfair to consider that translation is a mechanical act in which words and phrases are replaced with words and phrases of the other language. But it requires a knowledgeable and experienced translator who knows well the original text the target text as well as knowing the writer intension behind producing this text.

George Mounin (1963) presented the previous idea in his well-known book "*Les problèmes théoriques de la traduction*" as translation of the literary texts either prose or poetry is not as easy as a piece of cake, but it is so tough for the translator when he finds himself in the middle of nowhere while translating a text full of figures of speech, rhetorical styles and symbols.

Therefore, literary translation is a very challenging activity that has tremendous hurdles when it comes to deal with since every language portrays the world in a unique way grammatically, semantically and rhetorically. Thus, the responsibility lies on the shoulder of the literary translator is as huge as the mountain and gives the mission of translating literary texts the taste of a fabulous adventure.

Research Questions:

- Who is the literary translator? And how can he behave towards similes, metaphors and symbols used by the writer in the text and bring them up to the target language reader with the same effect as the one in the original text?

Research Methodology:

The study will take place in Riyadh Research Centre and it includes three males and two female participants - final year college students - who are majored in Arabic translation studies or related fields at different universities in KSA and aged between 19 to 21. It is intended to involve some students who are all highly educated in English as well as they are Arabic native speakers which means that they can manage Arabic and English fluently. Accordingly, it will provide a good sample to how they would face the challenges of translating literary texts from English into Arabic. The outcomes of translations and the questionnaire answers will be compared with the artistic production of five experienced translators. Thus the findings were pretty helpful for the study.

The participants will be subjected to different types of literary texts like; poems and prose to show their skills and artistic sense while dealing with some hinders they will face during the process of translation in order to produce a similar text in all its aspects to the original one.

It is worth mentioning that there are some examples in which there is no link between the source and target language which generates what so called zero equivalence case that occurs frequently in the translation of literary texts and are considered to be a great challenge for all the experienced and inexperienced translators.

Ethical considerations:

In this research, I tried hardly to abide by the ethical considerations of Saudi society and the guidelines of Bryman and Bell (2007) as the top ranked ten principles to be followed such as not posing or subjecting the research participants to any harm whatsoever that means to make the participants feel free and relaxed. Respect was the prior factor in dealing with them as well as protecting the research participants' privacy in addition to obtaining their full consent before starting the study that contributes clearly in getting accurate findings out of the research. Ensuring the Anonymity of the individuals was one of the main priorities. Avoiding any deception or exaggeration about the aims and objectives of the research is a must in addition to any type of misleading information, as well as representation of primary data findings in a biased way must be avoided and that was sharply done before starting the research when I explained every point about the study obviously. Affiliations in any forms, sources of funding or any possible conflicts of interests have to be declared as a kind of transparency.

Limitations of the study:

Translation theorists have uttered many hindrances in relation to intercultural translation, which is considered to be a difficult limitation to the study taken place in the Saudi community that is well known for conservatism and rigid customs and traditions that may limit the imagination of the literary translators particularly females.

Furthermore, the participants have no theoretical framework or even any background about the technicality of translating literary works besides the idea of participating in a research was not that easily accepted by students or even the experienced translators which poses another hurdle to the research.

Securing an appropriate place for the study was not a piece of cake mission since part of the study participants are females, this is on one hand and on the other hand, choosing a suitable time for all the parties gives me indeed tough times.

Expected results:

Some of the senior English language students have covered almost all the important branches of the English language and attended courses on literature, translation and linguistics are going to be confused unfortunately, while approaching the literary texts that clearly addresses the question of the nature of the literary translator and whether he is a writer or a literary lover as well as shedding some lights on their insufficient knowledge for the different genres of translation which signifies a failure in the educational system and leaving large chunks of improvement more apparent post-graduation. Furthermore, it draws the attention to some of the characteristics required in the translator of the literary texts, the question most of the participants even the experienced ones try in vain to find an answer to.

Positively, on the other hand, some students and the experienced translators show their skills and brilliant techniques while approaching the texts tough terminologies and styles since they resort to deleting, rephrasing, synonyms and some other tools of translation that can keep the meaning, feeling and effect of the original text. Worth mentioning that such techniques were used instinctively without any single prior study knowledge or even practical experience.

To conclude, literary translation is a very tough process that needs knowledgeable and experienced translators who practiced all its genres, thus, English language students in KSA should be aware that the way to master all the aspects of the language still too long and it needs tremendous efforts and continuous self-improvement and development.

References:

- Bryman, A. & Bell, E. (2007) "Business Research Methods", 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- George Mounin (1963). "Les problèmes théoriques de la traduction". Paris: Bibliothèque des Idées, Éditions Gallimard.
- Jabak, O. 2007. "Analysis of the most commonly recurring difficulties facing Arab students when translating into English". (Unpublished master dissertation). School of Languages, University of Salford, Salford, UK.
- Liu, Z. (1991). "Ten Lectures on Literary Translation." Beijing: China Translation and Publishing Corporation.
- Mohamed Awad (1969). "The art of translation." Cairo: The institute of research and Arabic studies.
- Mohamed Enani (2003). "The literary translation." Cairo: Egypt international company for publication (Longman).
- Peter Newmark (1988). "A textbook of translation." New York & London: Prentice Hall.

Appendix:

Questionnaire to be answered by the participants:

- Who is the literary translator?
- What are the characteristics of the literary translator?
- What are the means and the solutions used by the translator in the translation process?
- Is he heading to highlight the meaning only?
- Does he have to adhere to the original text or unleash his pen to apply repositioning, deletions for the phrases and whenever he sees it fit the target language recipients' taste?
- Is he going to use synonyms in instead of the ones uttered in the source text?

The literary texts to be translated by the participants are:

- The poem "*The tide rises, the tide falls*" by **Henry Wadsworth Longfellow**.
- The poem "*Follow me*" by **Michelle Newton**.
- The short story "*The Child's Story*" by **Charles Dickens**.
- The short story "*The Selfish Giant*" by **Oscar Wilde**.