

On overcoming translation barriers

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Abstract

Translation is a matter of choice, but this choice is always motivated: deletions, additions, and changes are justified in relation to the intended meaning. Translation can therefore be considered the result of motivated choices. This is most evident in the work of poetry translators. When a translator decides to translate a poem, he first chooses the poetic form of the Translation Language, that is, the sonnet, the ballad, the verse, etc., as close as possible to that of the Original Language. The model can be replaced by another that is more appropriate with the Translation Language. The translator will need to follow the rhythm of the Source Language to that of the Translation Language in such a way as to ensure the production of the same effect when read by the reader of the Translation Language. Understanding must be conveyed creatively and accurately in the Translation Language. The translator must reproduce literary figures, that is, concrete images, which include metaphors and comparisons, as well as phonetic features, that is, vowels, such as alliteration and assonance. It is clear that there is no perfect, ideal or accurate translation. The first thing to consider when evaluating poetry translations is the purpose of the translation, so that it can be judged by confronting it with the objectives.

Keywords: translation, poem, reproduce, creatively and accurately, literate figures, purpose, objectives.

Introduction

Literary translation means the translation of different literary genres. True imaginary literature has four main types, namely, poetry, drama, short story and novel.¹ Translating literary works is not an easy task. Each literary work has its own specific translation problems.

Thus, the key when translating a play is the question of staging, as long as the play is written to be shown, to be played, and not just to be read. Furthermore, the translator, during the dialogue, should be able to choose the language that fits the environments where the characters act, as well as the relationship between them.²

Hence, translation of the short story is the most difficult literary form to translate, immediately after the poem. The difficulty stems from the fact that they must be carefully preserved, through certain related effects, concentration and formal and thematic unity.

Thus, the main problem between translating the novel is the relative significance of the culture of the Source Language and the moral purpose of the writer for the

¹ P. Newmark, *A Textbook of Translation*, Longman, London, 2003, Page 39.

² M. Massoud, *Translate to Communicate: A Guide for Translation*, David C. Cook Foundation, 1988, Page 49-50.

reader.³

Of the four literary genres of serious literature, poetry is the most difficult to translate. The challenges faced by the literary translator in trying to imitate the form, rhythm, meaning, and images of poetry in another language, as well as the suggested procedures for coping with such challenges, are worth exploring.

The similarities, the differences between the poetic forms of the Source Language and the Translation Language pose a challenge for the translators of poetry. It is more than natural for each language to have its own distinctive, special poetic form. This can be seen if we compare the forms of the source of the Original Language and the Translation Language (in our case the English Language and the Albanian Language). Taking for granted the fact that the translator recognizes verse in his native language, we are focusing on English Poetry, which is divided into different genres in terms of form. The most common traditional types are lyric, narrative, epic, and dramatic. Lyrical poetry is divided into various types, that is to say, we have the sonnet, the ballad, the elegy, and the ode. Each of them has its own defined form. For example, the Shakespearean sonnet consists of 14 verses divided into three four-line stanzas and a couplet, and the rhyme scheme is always ABAB-CDCE-EFEF-GG. In terms of strophic structure, there are many types of stanzas. A stanza is a four-line stanza; a string consists of three verses, and a *rhyme otava* (stanza of epic rhyming verse with ABABABCC rhyme), consists of eight verses. In narrative and lyrical poems, the verse can consist of six to seven verses. Spenserian stanza⁴ consists of 9-11 verses. The stanza of the ballad consists of a number of verses, which have four feet and three feet, respectively, and such verses may be accompanied by a chorus. In English, two words rhyme, when the last stressed vowel, as well as all the sounds that follow it, are the same and come out in the same order, as, for example, "bream" (lloj krap) / "seam" (tegel).⁵

Adaptation and applicability issues are most important when choosing the form of poetry in the Translation Language (Dickens, Hervey, and Higgins 92)⁶. To translate poetry accurately, translators must be poets who know the poetic forms of the Source Language and the Translation Language. Equally important is that translator poets must have the sensitivity of when to translate a poem into verse and when to translate it into prose⁷. This is the biggest challenge that translators of Shakespeare's verses in Albanian or other languages face. After that, the translator has to decide when to translate into free verse, and when to translate into regular rhyming poetry, in columnar form. The decision is important due to the fact that cultures differ in the way they use or relate to different language types.

In some cases, the translator may choose to translate the poem into prose or free verse. There are opinions that historical poetic dramas translate better into prose than

³ P. Newmark, *A Textbook of Translation*, Longman, London, 2003, Page 170-171.

⁴ A stanza consisting of eight verses with a Jambic pentameter and an alexandrine with rhyme scheme: ABABBCBCC.

⁵ Dickens, James, Hervey, Sander, and Higgins, Ian. *Thinking Arabic Translation*. London and New York: Routledge, 2002, Page 81.

⁶ Idem, Page 92.

⁷ Massoud, Mary. *Translate to Communicate: A Guide for Translation*. David C. Cook Foundation, 1988 Page 50.

into verse. The reason is that prose can convey the direct and accurate meaning of the Translation Language, as well as preserve the spirit of the narrated facts and historical events. Sometimes, the translation of a poem into free verse can be preferred. While trying to imitate a poem in Albanian, for example, it may be impossible to convey in English the features of Albanian in the phonetic plane (for example, alliteration and assonance), which may be no less important than the features of meter and rhythm. Furthermore, imitation may require the translator to dramatically change the connotative meaning in order to make the text in the Translation Language fit the desired form of the verse, versification, and poem. Here, the translator may prefer the translation of the *Songs of the Kreshniks*, for example, in free verse, or preferably in a kind of prose, which retains at least the prosodic and vocal, phonetic features of the poem. Careful use of vocabulary that clearly belongs to the poetic register, or one that has appropriate meaning in the context in which it is used, can compensate for the loss of metric and rhyming features⁸.

The purpose and the form of the poem

It seems clear that there is a connection between the purpose and the form of the poem⁹. When translating English lyrical poetry into Albanian, one can prefer the translation of all rhyming and regular poetry, such as songs and psalms, into rhyming and regular verses. Undoubtedly, the music of lyrical poetry is essential to conveying meaning, that is to say, it has a meaning, which, no doubt, is no less important than the meaning of words. Another example is the translation of psalms. A psalm does not have a definite form, so its verses vary in length. Whenever possible, the translator should creatively find his or her equivalent in the Translation Language, that is, a psalm in the Translation Language, and not simply translate the meaning of the Source Language. So the translation of songs and psalms, however accurate the translation may be, in a form other than that of rhyming and regular verses, is likely to harm, distort, the purposefulness of the poems. On the other hand, when translating lyrical poetry, which has no definite form, the translator is free to choose the most appropriate poetic form for the reader of the Translation Language. So, he produces a poem that has the characteristics of the rhyme and rhythm of the Translation Language.

Equally important is the choice of the most appropriate strophic structure for the Translation Language. The translator of the *Këngëve të Kreshnikëve/ Kreshiniks Songs* from the Albanian Language into English, which is traditionally written as a whole block, will have to make a choice: Either to maintain the complete block only from the Original Language, either to produce a stanza that seems more natural for the stanza form in English. The strophic form of the complementary verses is challenging during translation because it has its own unique features. The verses are grammatically related to each other, so they can be read as if they were a single

⁸ Dickens, James, Hervej, Sander, and Higgins, Ian. *Thinking Arabic Translation*. London and New York: Routledge, 2002, Page 92.

⁹ Basil, Hatim, and Mason Ian. *Discourse and the Translator*. London and New York: Longman, 1994, Page 12.

sentence. Consequently, they are related from a semantic point of view, that is, the meaning becomes clear only after reading all the verses and reaches the point. Such basic features must be preserved in the Translation Language.

Rhyme poses a challenge due to the fact that each language has its own unique rhyming shapes, structures, patterns. For example, the traditional rhyming patterns of the Albanian language differ from the rhyming patterns of the English language. So the translator who decides to use the rhyme when translating an Albanian poem into English must make a choice: Either use the Albanian rhyming style, which conveys foreign sounds to the English reader, or use a rhyming pattern that sounds rather natural to the ear of the English reader, notwithstanding the considerable loss on the phonic plane, that is, the vowel.

Metric models differences

The differences between the metric models of Source Language and Translation Language constitute the second problem area in the translation of poetry. The Albanian meter is quantitative: it depends on the number of consonants and vowels and is rarely related to accent. The difference in Albanian exists between short syllables, that is, unstressed. In general, each syllable begins with a consonant, with the exception of words beginning with vowels; therefore, it is not difficult to discern where a syllable begins and ends. The feet consist of a variable number of syllables, most of the time, three or four of them. A combination of these feet makes up a certain meter. Of the many meters known in the classical Albanian verse, only one of them is usually used by the poet in a poem. However, there is a degree of rhythmic variation in the same poetry due to the variation in syllable types.

Meanwhile, the English meter is qualitative: it depends on how the syllables are pronounced, but not on the number of syllables. The English meter is a syllable-and-accent meter. As in Albanian, the verse is defined from the point of view of the feet. A foot is a traditional set of stressed or unstressed syllables arranged in a certain order. A range of traditional poetry consists of a fixed number of separate feet. From the point of view of time, that is to say, the musical note, the meter is divided into the main types, that is to say, in ascending temporal rhythms, that is, note and in descending temporal rhythms, that is, note. So, the sound waves represent the transition from the descending note to the ascending note, to the first type, and from the ascending note to the descending note, to the second type. This is called basic rhythm, but in practice modulations transform it from contagious note to descending note and vice versa, especially in dramatic poetry (drama in verse). Among the basic sticky rhythm, the iambic foot, which consists of a short or unstressed syllable, accompanied by a stressed syllable, is more prevalent. The following illustration is an example of a iambic foot:

The cur/few tolls /the knell /of par/ting day/

This string has five iambic feet, and is therefore called the iambic pentameter¹⁰. The second most common is the anapestical foot, which consists of two short / unstressed syllables, which are followed by a long, pronounced syllable. In the basic descending

¹⁰ Idem, Page 89.

rhythm, the trochaic foot, which consists of a pronounced syllable, which is followed by an unstressed syllable, is widely used. The dactyl foot, which consists of a pronounced syllable, which is followed by two short syllables, that is, unstressed, is also used, but less frequently. With the exception of these four feet, all the other feet are nothing but modulations. English has another type of meter, that is, the meter of strong accent. In such a meter, only accents matter, regardless of the number of unstressed syllables, that is, short. A very large part of modern poetry uses this meter, often combining it with the syllable-and-accent meter.

No one can prove that one meter of English, for example, is the typical equivalent of one meter of Albanian. Naturally, the translator cannot translate the rhythm of a given language into another language, regardless of his abilities. In fact, he is not required to do so because the rhythm of the Source Language has no point of connection or connection with the reader of the Translation Language. On the contrary, translators need to artistically transfer the rhythms of the Albanian language, for example, to the corresponding English language equivalents, so that the English reader can enjoy them. Similarly, the translator of Shakespeare's Sonnets must recognize the verse in the Albanian Language and its prosody, in order to reproduce Shakespeare's rhythm in the Albanian Language, in such a way as to suit the Albanian reader. The choice of meter depends on how the translator experiences the situation, that is, the situation, in the poem.

The length of the string determines the meter in all languages, including Albanian and English. Complementary verse style is prevalent in both classical and modern English poetry. According to this style, the verses are related to each other from a grammatical and semantic point of view. When translating a poem with such features into the Albanian language, the translator faces problems arising from the difference between the meters, which must be stopped and which must not be stopped. Another challenge is to balance the preservation of the rhythmic image of an English meter in Albanian with its reproduction, as a meter that is more typical for Albanian.

When translating poetry, a challenge arises from the fact that all poems have plurality, that is, plurality of meaning. As Baker suggests¹¹, it is not easy to determine "even the basic prepositional meaning of a word or saying, that is, expression, with absolute certainty." Of course, most of the time, words have "blurred boundaries, so to speak, ambiguities," and their meanings are debatable on a large scale.¹² In other words, every act of reading a poem is in itself a translation act. The notion of understanding Source Language is "deceptive"; reading by the translator of poetry into the Source Language is just one of the whole verse, that is, the range of possible meanings.. S. Bassnet¹³ acknowledges that there is no difference between translation and interpretation: the translator first reads, that is, translates, the Source Language, and then translates into the Translation Language. ¹⁴. Therefore, the translator is obliged to make unceasing and much greater efforts than the average reader, in order to understand the poetry correctly.

¹¹ Baker, Mona. In *Other Words: A Coursebook in Translation*. London and New York: Routledge, 1992.

¹² Idem, Page 17.

¹³ Bassnet-Mcguire, Susan. *Translation Studies*. London: Methuen, 1980.

¹⁴ Idem, Page 82.

Interlinguistic translation is likely to reflect the creative interpretation of the source language provided by the translator¹⁵. The translator must try to perceive, grasp as accurately as possible the meanings of the words of the Source Language, in order to convey them in the Translation Language. Forcing readers to read from the source language translator is a common mistake encountered in translating poetry, because polyvalence is an essential feature of poetic discourse. While Source Language allows for a variety of reactions between the readers of Source Language, it is the task of the poetry translator to preserve the verse as much as possible, that is, the range of possible reactions between readers of the Translation Language, while keeping intact the possible meanings present in the Source Language. Newmark suggests that the translator may "translate the most possible meaning, as well as place the least possible meaning in an explanatory note, if he or she deems it important."¹⁶

The translator of the poem must be aware of the difference between the referential meaning and the poetic meaning. The task of the translator of poetry is not limited to conveying the meaning of the words, that is, to refer the reader to the same thing that the poet of the Source Language referred to, it also includes conveying the meaning and producing the same effect as the Source Language. Unlike scientific translation, that is, technical, success in translating poetry does not depend on the degree to which, from a preferential point of view, translation approaches poetry in Original Language; on the contrary, it depends on other criteria, based on literary criticism and from their language and writer applications. This is important because the text is likely to produce meanings that are not physically present in it. Again, the difficulty in translating poems arises not only from the changing planes of meanings, but also from the need for the translator to know the cultural context of the languages in question, to choose the word closest to the author's meaning.

Translating the tone

Translating the poet's tone of the Source Language is the most challenging task because it embodies the poet's attitude toward the author's poetry; whether he has it seriously or will cause laughter, mocking people and events involved in them; if it aims to increase or decrease, that is, reserve performance. Translating the tone into another language that has different literary conventions from the Source Language is definitely extremely difficult. While understanding poetry in Source Language is "deceptive" and it is more accurate to describe the meaning conveyed by the translator, as an interpretation of the meaning conveyed by the author of the original poetic text, it cannot be proved that poetry has only one tone. or that there is only one true or "intended" tone. So when translating a poem that has clear and meaningful tones, the translator must keep those tones as long as possible. This means that the translator must be as faithful as possible, not hindering himself from using everyday words and expressions, for example, if it helps him to convey the tone, as well as knowing that the language has different planes that can help him to "ride" or "get off" in tones. Indeed, familiarity, that is to say, closeness, with the implied ideas and meaning of

¹⁵ Idem, Page 82.

¹⁶ Newmark, Peter. A Textbook of Translation. London: Longman, 2003, Page 220.

the poet of the Source Language is essential for the translation of the intention of the original author of the poem. Therefore, it is said that the best translators of literature and poetry are those who are most "tuned" to the source writer. This enables the translator to acquire the spirit of the original and turn the poet's intention into his own.

Translating the metaphor

Metaphor is one of the literary figures, which depends more on meaning than on sound. It is defined as a literary figure based on comparison that is more implied than directly expressed. To say: *He was a lion in battle*. According to Newmark, metaphor has two purposes. The first is cognitive, that is, referential purpose: To describe a process or mental state, a concept, a person, an object, a quality, or an action in more detail and in a more condensed way, that is, more precisely, as far as possible in literal or physical language. The second is aesthetic, that is to say, pragmatic purpose: to attract the senses, to arouse interest, to clarify, to satisfy, to enjoy, to surprise¹⁷. In general, when translating images, the most important principle is that the translation should give the same meaning as the original, and should produce the same emotional effect. A metaphor can be universal (a "glassy" stare = *vështrim "i ngrirë"*); cultural (a "beery" face = *fytyrë "e burrëruar"*); or individual (a "papery" check = *çek "i hollë"*)¹⁸. Newark argues that there are six types of metaphors: dead, klishé, forgotten, adapted, new (recent), and original.

The translator of the poem may have to choose a suitable procedure for translating the metaphor. The translator must have an aesthetic sensitivity to images and symbols, as well as possess the dexterity, that is, the dexterity, to choose the effective way of effectively conveying meaning and metaphor, choosing between many possibilities. Cultural metaphors are usually more difficult to translate than universal or personal metaphors. Difficulty arises when local flowers and herbs are used as metaphors. To produce the same effect, translators may need to create a culturally equivalent metaphor similar to the source language metaphor, or convert the source language metaphor to give the proper meaning, or if possible, by adding them metaphorical meanings, therefore, enriching metaphor meaningfully. For example, the image of a disgusting person, in other words, impatient, described in English as "a pain in the neck" can be translated into Albanian as "halë në sy". The translator of the poem has to reproduce the original metaphor scrupulously, although it may cause cultural shock to the reader of the Translation Language, who does not know the culture of the Original Language. For example, the Albanian translation of Shakespeare's verses, "Me kë të të krahasoj, veç se me një ditë vere", does not evoke any kind of driving in the Albanian reader. Albanian readers need to make some effort to understand the truth of the metaphor, relying on the following verses. Here, the translator of the poem cannot tell a story to the reader, transferring the culture of the Source Language to the equivalent of the Translation Language. The reader needs to understand this background and, if he wants to feel it, repeated reading is more likely to make it his

¹⁷ Idem, Page 104.

¹⁸ Idem, Page 105.

property. When metaphor is recognized in the culture of Translation Language, the translator can transfer the image of the metaphor. However, if the translator considers the metaphor important, his task is to convey it, to introduce it to the Explosive Language and its culture¹⁹.

When translating poetry, word games are the most difficult to translate because they carry limitations due to the meter. According to the Newmark, word games in English are the most common, because monosyllabic ones come out often and very easily. The simplest type of word game is antanaklaza, that is, the use of two words that have the same shape and different meanings (for example, "wood within wood" = "i çmendur brenda në pyll", with the first word "Wood", which means "mad" ("i çmendur") and with the second word meaning "forest". A word game is also created using a single word (for example, "tit") = "thithkë" dhe "trishtil"), two words that are pronounced a kind ("peace" = "paqe" and "piece" = "copë"), or a group of words with the same pronunciation in their two possible meanings. , usually aiming to cause laughter or fun, and sometimes to reinforce meaning²⁰. The play on words, in terms of its effects, depends on the pronunciation-meaning combination; in general, it is not repeated in other languages, simply because two languages are never the same. Poetry translators have to sacrifice word games, simply because they carry limitations due to the meter. For example, when the purpose of the play on words is only to provoke laughter, the poet can compensate for this by choosing another play on words, with a different meaning but related to the source. If both meanings of the play on words are more important than the means, the dome said, the medium, the poet can translate them, reproducing two meanings incompatible. When a play on words is used in the poetry of the Source Language to illustrate a language or speech or a linguistic slip or when the meaning is more important than the subtle remark (wisdom), the poet must transfer, translate, in both senses, and usually even explain it.

Translation of alliteration & assonance

Alliteration and assonance are among the most prevalent models in poetry and have thematic and expressive purposes. Alteration is the repetition of identical consonant sounds and vowels, often at the beginning of words such as "artful aid" = "ndihmës i shkathët". Assonance is the repetition within words of the same sound or set of sounds, as, for example, in "a swift snifter afterwards" = "një goditje e rrufeshme pastaj". Endless sounds that do not rhyme are defined as assonance. Both types can come together. Another challenge in the phonetic plane, that is, the vowel, is onomatopoeia, where the meaning of the word is conveyed through its sounds, for example, "hiss" = "fishkëllimë" or "buzz" = "murmurimë". These phonetic features, that is, vowels, are called phonetic symbolism, which has two forms. The first occurs when the sound of a word in poetry evokes, that is to say, evokes other words, which are not present in the text. The second occurs when a sound appears in more than one word and establishes a connection between such words, conveying to it the meanings of others.

¹⁹ Idem, Page 164.

²⁰ Idem, Page 217.

Translation of alliteration and assonance is a particular translation challenge as long as they depend on the repetition of sounds and carry constraints due to the meter. It is clear that no Translational Language can reproduce the same sequence of sounds as the Original Language, because two languages are never the same phonetically, that is, vowel. Translators who are faced with sound symbolism must decide what function it has before beginning to translate a poem. When assessed as essential, as long as the translator's purpose is to convey the text message in the source language as much as possible, the translator will need to convey them in the translation language through the sound symbolism of the translation language. Undoubtedly, the sound symbolism will be different from that of the Source Language. The poet translator has the opportunity to compensate for the loss of phonetic features, that is, vowels, of the Source Language, replacing them with the phonetic features, that is, vowels of the Translation Language, which have a comparable effect. Usually, this causes loss in terms of denotative and connotative meaning.

Conclusions

In conclusion it can be said that translation is a matter of choice, but this choice is always motivated: deletions, additions and changes are justified in relation to the intended meaning. So translation can be considered the result of motivated choices. This is most evident in the work of poetry translators.

Thus, first, when a translator decides to translate a poem, he first chooses the poetic form of the Translation Language, that is, the sonnet, the ballad, the verse, the white verse, etc., as close as possible to it of Source Language. The model can be replaced by another that is more appropriate with the Translation Language.

Second, the translator will need to follow the rhythm of the Source Language to that of the Translation Language in such a way as to ensure the production of the same effect when read by the reader of the Translation Language.

Third, the meaning must be conveyed creatively and accurately in the Translation Language.

Fourth, the translator must reproduce literary figures, that is, concrete images, which include metaphors and comparisons, as well as phonetic features, that is, vowels, such as alliteration and assonance.

It is clear that there is no perfect, ideal or accurate translation. The first thing to consider when evaluating poetry translations is the purpose of the translation, so that it can be judged by confronting it with the objectives.