

Translating the Culturally Implicit: Limitations to Creativity

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Abstract:

This paper is about the impact of the cultural differences on translation task. To take the last level, give rise to lexical gaps evinced in incongruous ideological, social and ecological terms which relate to highly sensitive issues such as religion and politics or those pertaining to institutions and nomenclature. To bring about some gain, the translated text (from Arabic into English / English into Arabic) is a laborious task on the part of the competent translator who has to resort to certain strategies, such as those of compensation, domestication, and explication. On the textual level, for instance, the translator may utilize different types of references; and in the stylistic / rhetoric level he / she may adopt the strategy of compensation whereby he could plant in the target text metaphor equivalent to non-metaphor in the source text to atone for an inevitable loss of a preceding rhetorical feature in the source text .Furthermore, equilibrium should be maintained with regard to loss and gain in literary translation.

The translation techniques /procedures applied in this paper are used in order to mention the importance of translator's knowledge /competence in choosing the target strategies as solutions to maintain and perform SL text analysis / TL text reproduction correctly. Besides that, this paper takes into account some important points such as the characteristics of literary texts, literary translation difficulties, the relationship between translation and culture, and ambiguity /creativity in translation.

Keywords: Implicitness, creativity, limitation, culture, loss, competence, knowledge.

المخلص:

تتفق هذه الورقة اثر الاختلافات الثقافية للترجمة. على مستوى يثير ظهور ثغرات إيديولوجية واجتماعية إيديولوجية التي تتصل المسائل الشديدة الحساسية مثل الدين والسياسة او تلك المتعلقة بالمؤسسات والمسميات. لتحقيق بعض المكاسب إذ أن ترجمة نص من اللغة العربية الى اللغة الانكليزية / الانكليزية للعربية في هذا الخصوص مهمة و شاقة لدى الهيئات المختصة مترجمة الى استراتيجيات معينة مثل التعويض وجعلها مفهومة وواضحة على الصعيد النصي على سبيل المثال، قد يستخدم المترجم مختلف أنواع الإشارات; وفي مستوى الخطاب الأسلوبية يجدر إتباع إستراتيجية التعويض حيث ان تقنيات الترجمة /الإجراءات المطبقة في هذه الورقة استخدام الإشارة إلى أهمية معرفة المترجم /الكفاءة في اختيار الهدف استراتيجيات الاحتفاظ أداء الحلول بالنص الأصل وتحليل على مستوى الهدف لنصوص قصد انتاج نص بشكل صحيح. اضافة الى ذلك تأخذ هذه الورقة في الاعتبار بعض النقاط الهامة مثل خصائص النصوص الأدبية الترجمة الأدبية صعوبات العلاقة بين الترجمة والثقافة الغموض /الإبداع في الترجمة. الكلمات الأساسية:التضمن والإبداع وحد ود الترجمة و الخسارة الثقافية والثقافة والكفاءة والمعرفة.

Introduction:

Literary translation includes all translations of literature whether it can be poetry or novels of drama, fictions, plays and the like. On the other hand, books including works which are classified in the field of science are called scientific translation. This type of translation (scientific) has to be accurate in information which reveals to the reader as true and as exact as the information in the original. Thus, literary translation conveys information but it focuses more on the aesthetic value of the work of art. Moreover, it represents a distinctive kind of translating because it is concerned with distinctive kind of texts (Theo Hermans, cited in *A Companion To Translation Studies* 2007:77). In fact, the theory of text type which attempts to classify texts according to their functions and features rightly places literary texts in a class of their own. Mona Baker (2005: 129) points out that "literary translation is then a very social culturally-bound process where the translator plays a key role in a complex series of interactions". Literary translation, of course, does not go beyond the scope of translation process. It is a real test for the translator who tries to convey the peculiarities of the culture embedded in the literary text.

Although translation studies had been developed as a distinct discipline through the 1980s by employing a lot of different methodologies that drew upon research in linguistics and comparative literature but they felt. However, just along with many other researchers working in field of translation they could arrive at increasing the employment of tools of cultural history and studies successfully.

Accordingly, language is implanted in culture, linguistic acts take place in a context and texts are created in a continuum not in a vacuum (Basnett 2007 :23). For the same reasons, she states that :A writer is a product of a particular time and particular context, just as a translator is a product of another time and another context. Translation is about language but translation is also culture, for the two are inseparable.

1-Characteristics of literary texts:

The literary text, like all other texts, has functions. Here are the most important functions of the literary text:

- 1. Communicative function:** Since the literary text refers to a particular reader, the writer seeks to address him in his language, and aims to inform the message, influence in some form.
- 2. Graphic function:** The most prominent functions carried by the literary text, by portraying events and events in a special way, based on the imagination of the owner,

and this is reflected in the attempt to express the vessels of the spirit of the captive, which can not be penetrated in other ways;

3. **Aesthetic function:** This function reflects the creative taste in the use of different kinds of statement and brilliant to give special luster on the text, which should be enjoyed by the reader and represent the function at the same time the power of the message in terms of reporting and influence, because the aesthetic language and aesthetic reading, reflected in the ability to reach Meaning and aesthetic meaning at the same time.
4. **Social function:** The literary text usually conveys social content, through re-expressing the reality of its concerns, hopes and pains, as well as through the embodiment of the status of society in all its circumstances, serving its issues.

2-Difficulties of Literary Translation:

Literary texts may face many difficulties. These difficulties can be summed up as follows:

1. Literary Genres

Translation

These problems are evident in the wide differences among translators on the methods to be relied on in different literary genres. Literary works have also encountered difficulties, which confirm to us that the problems of literary translation lie in the translation in terms of it and are not due to the circumstances of the translated literary works.

2. Double Translation

Double translation means those translations that have not been completed from the SL of the foreign literary work. These difficulties alone represent a particular case of literary translation difficulties. In any case, the translation of the literary text from an intermediate language rather than its SL necessarily leads to a doubling of the translation errors.

3. Professional Difficulties

The difficulties faced by a literary translator at the beginning of his professional career. The literary translator is advised not to rush to take his copyright decisions and to consult with a lawyer specializing in the arts before negotiating with any publisher to print his works.

4. Material Difficulties

The literary translator always seeks to achieve the best in his career, but he encounters material obstacles. The reward paid to him by the publisher is not consistent with the

volume of his work, the time and the effort he has made to transfer that text from one language to another. The best way to overcome this difficulty is to volunteer the translator himself to search for an unknown author in the literary arena and negotiate directly with him the proceeds of his books on the market.

3-Creativity in Literary Translation:

One of the most obvious problems of literary translation is the lack of equivalents that render the appropriate meaning as in the original texts. fact which leads to the use of different translation procedures and strategies to translate different terms and expressions written and realized in particular time and place, as for many different reasons and purposes, under many different factors and circumstances. Henceforth, the evaluation levels of the quality of translation such as: perfect /good / acceptable product is not usually just a matter

of translating each word from the source language text into the target language text. Also , it not a question of taking the idea from the source text and putting it aside and then giving the main idea of it in one,s own words in the target language. For such reasons we intend to mention in this part a variety of different procedures and techniques which translators of this type of translation(literary texts) use intuitively for any given word, expression ,or text in order to go beyond such obstacles and problems they may encounter during the translation process.

3-1 Translation Procedures :

a) Direct translation Techniques :

- Borrowing
- Calque
- Literal translation

b) Oblique (or indirect) Translation Techniques :

- Transposition
- Modulation
- Reformulation
- Adaptation
- Compensation

Indeed, translators play a significant role in shaping literary systems. In other words, the translator is still considered as the rewriter and the reviewer of the original text; while the function of translation detects the translation strategies to be applied and employed by the translator during translation process. So, to accomplish certain target culture permits that translator to make particular choices to find strategic solutions.

Toury (1978:83) is explicit about the cultural importance of norms in translation as stated:

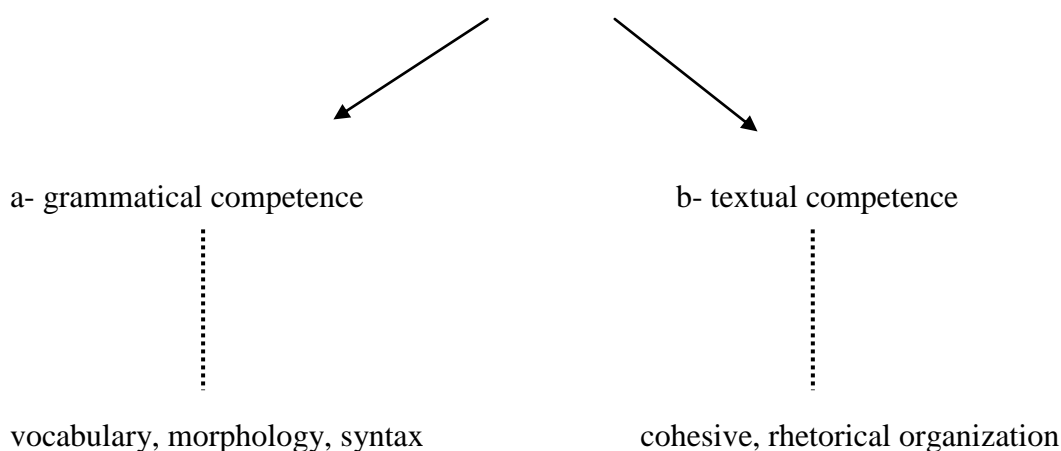
Translation activities should be regarded as having cultural significance. Consequently, translation ship amounts first and foremost to being able to play a social role, i.e. to fulfil a

function allotted by a community to the activity its practitioners and / or their product in a way which is deemed appropriate in its own terms of references. The acquisition of a set of norms for determining the suitability of that kind of behavior and for manoeuvring between all the factors which may constrain it, is therefore a pre-requisite for becoming a translator within a cultural environment.

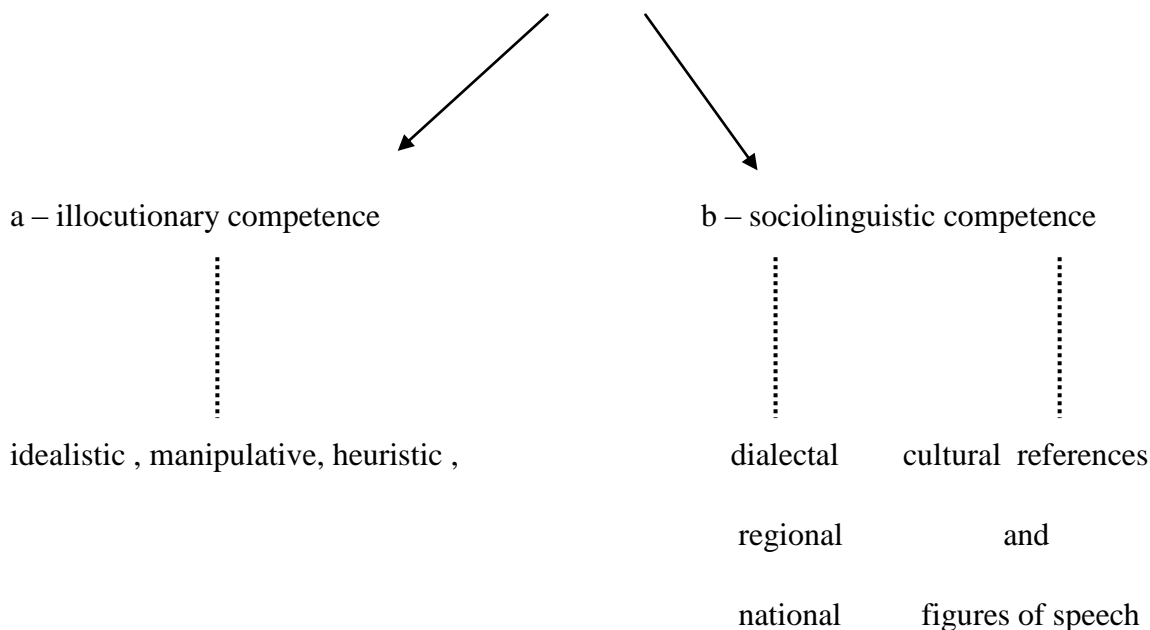
3-2 Translational Knowledge / Competence:

Translational knowledge includes knowledge of the language the world and specialized knowledge necessary to rule a translation task accurately. However, translational strategic competence performs the language and knowledge competence necessary to perform a communicative translation task. Hence, translators in the field of literary translation must possess and acquired a certain amount of different skills and competence as mentioned in the following charts:

I- Organizational competence



II- pragmatic competence



Components of Translational Competence

3-3 Text- processing knowledge:

The significance from both practical and theoretical points of comprehension and creativity cannot be over-stressed. We intend to specify another element which has to do with the competence of translators working in the field of literature. Thus, this part is particularized, mainly, to translator's knowledge which plays an important role in facilitating the task of translation and makes the steps easier than they appear in the beginning of the process without any complexity or ambiguity as well. Roger T. Bell (1991 pp 206-209) set up three categories of knowledge sub-divided to supplement text- processing knowledge stage.

a- Syntactic knowledge:

Knowledge at this level is limited to the means for creativity clauses, ordered sequences consisting of all units and structures. It is a matter of knowing what elements exist in a language, and how they may legitimately be combined.

b- Semantic Knowledge:

The competent must not find difficulty in translating texts losing their texture. It should, however, be realized that such an ability devices from semantic knowledge and makes the translator able to use strategic techniques to sense and return missing texture to the text when reproducing the target text.

c- Pragmatic knowledge:

The domain of pragmatics involves plans, goals, and textual characteristics such as intentionality, acceptability, and situationality - the attitudes of the producer and the receiver of the text and its relevance to its context in use.

4-Ambiguity in Literary Translation:

Ambiguity is linked to the fact a word, an expression, or a sentence may be interpreted and understood in several ways. There are two types of ambiguity; that concerns the lexical level is called lexical ambiguity which means that a single word may have more than one meaning. This case can lead to a certain difficulty in identifying the accurate sense of that word.

On the other hand, the ambiguity which is related to structural level is called structural ambiguity. It refers to the various meaning inferred from a clause or a sentence. This means that ambiguity is related to syntax and sense which may cause certain problems to the translator in which can find himself in front of difficult situation looking for effective solutions in guessing the real and exact meaning that corresponds to the original.(Zidane Ramouna 2008: 308)

Henceforth, according to Larson (1998) the task of translation includes three components; the first element is the source language which refers to the language of the text to be translated. The second element is the receptor language that denotes the target language in which the text is translated, whereas the last element is the meaning which has to be understood and clear from the source language and reproduced in the target language. In fact, the cultural aspects occurred in the SL text cause many problems and difficult cases in the literary texts. Thus, the latter may sometimes underlie a certain ambiguous translations because of several factors that are related mainly to the nature of the words used the writer of the original text among which cultural, social, ideological, religious, and the like.. These cultural differences existing between the two languages (SL/TL) lead to absence of their equivalent in the target language.

5-Manifestation of Creativity in Literary Translation:

Creativity manifest strongly and deeply on the textual and stylistic level in the translation of literary works that provide different specific cultural aspects. The following examples show how much certain techniques and strategies are available and suitable to solve such difficult situations in the translation process. (Here, are some examples taken from Hassan Ghazala 2004:80-90)

a- cultural equivalence: is the translation of the function of cultural terms

The term Hello , Hi —————> مساء الخير/ السلام عليكم

/ Masa u L-khayri / and / as-salamo alykum/

Empty- handed —————> خاوي اليدين

/Khawi- alyadayn/

b- Metaphors:

Waste time —————> يقتل الوقت/ يضيع الوقت

Kill the time / yaktulu l-waqta/

/Yudayyiu alwaqta/

The action of killing is applied metaphorically to denote the serious loss of time wasted

Religious Factors:

Example:

giving / asking a help —————> مد يد العون

help me

The term / awn / عون in Arabic is inspired with emotional charge. It has a religious implication within the context muslim's brotherhood as reflected the /Hadith of the prophet Muammad(peace be to him) . " إن الله في عون العبد مادام العبد في عون أخيه "

Indeed, if we use literal translation to the hadith we may the following meaning: that Allah is verily in the assistance of the servant (of Allah) as long as the servant is in the assistance of his brother in Islam. These dimensions of meaning of help in Arabic are not in the English metaphor. The two languages share only one term in common (hand) which is used metaphorically as a symbol of giving a help.

c-Loan Cultural Metaphor:

It also called by Newmark 1988 (adapted metaphor)

Example:

To sow division —→ **يزرع الشقاق**

Here, to sow means yanthuru / yabthuru **ينثر / يبذر**

But not the meaning to grow / yazra u **يزرع**

Normally they are near synonyms, but a more favorable translation for this English metaphor is: farreq tasud / **فرق تسد** divide and rule. This is of course due to specific beliefs adapted by people (literally; divide and you will be the master)

d-Calque

Example: **يُعود من بعيد**

Literally: he is coming from far, whose English equivalent may be; he has been at death's door or (blood bath)

Naturalization:

There are several examples are available in all live languages all over the world. Among the reasons that lead to the impact on such languages to be naturalized and transcribed naturally is the constant interaction among people and culture as in:

Jihad —→ **جهاد** Sultan —→ **سلطان**
Khalifa —→ **خليفة** Intifadha —→ **انتفاضة**

Other examples are taken from the translation of the book ('Alzilzal' by Taher Wattar translated into English as 'The Earthquake' by William Garanara) show to what extent the translator was faithful in rendering the meaning of different contexts employed by the writer of the original book by using borrowing, compensation, and modulation in order to keep the same cultural aspects as functioned by the writer.

Example 1.

| Example N° | Source Text | Transliteration | Page | Taregt Text | Page |
|------------|-------------|-----------------|------|-------------|------|
| 1 | جبة | ğbā | 89 | Jubba | 82 |
| 2 | رباب | rbāb | 224 | Rebab | 179 |

Clothes vary according to location, climate, religion, design and tailoring. When William Garanara realized this disparity through his study of Arabic literature in general and of Algerian literature in particular, he maintained these words that reflected the peculiarities of Algeria. The translator preferred "borrowing procedure", as shown in example 1, in which he saw the most effective way to reach a cultural translation in an innovative way.

Example 2.

| Example N° | Source Text | Transliteration | Page | Taregt Text | Page |
|------------|-------------|-----------------|------|--------------|------|
| 1 | خمّاس | ħmās | 29 | Sharecropper | 39 |

The translator uses the compensation in kind and paraphrase procedures. In this example, the translator uses explanatory technique to explain the translation when he described *hmās* as the farmer who shares the farm owner in the farm crop when he used the word "sharecropper".

Example 3

| Example N° | Source Text | Transliteration | Page | Taregt Text | Page |
|------------|-------------|-----------------|------|-------------|------|
| 1 | حوش | ḥwš | 86 | House | 141 |

The translator follow, in this example, modulation procedure. He replaces the word " ḥwš" to a general (generalization) and comprehensive term in English, which is the word "house". Thus, the translator removes the ambiguity of a word with several meanings in the Algerian culture. Therefore, the word may have many meanings which are as the following: yard, square, field, piazza, site. Consequently, the translator succeeded in transferring the Algerian culture honestly and creatively.

Accordingly, naturalization, compensation, free translation, and literal translation are successful procedures used to fulfil cultural and lexical gaps in literary translation. They are famous for its faithfulness to SL expressions and its transparency in the TL.

In addition to these procedures, there are other techniques are used by translators when facing difficulties such as deculturalization of cultural terms, translation couplet and translation triplet by using a combination of two or three procedures as a means of solving a cultural problem satisfactorily. Also, they are used creatively to bring about comfort and satisfaction to TL reader through the creation of equilibrium in that it strikes a balance between the SL culture and the TL understandability.

Conclusion:

This paper has taken a step towards applying closer ties between some theoretical and practical aspects of literary translation. Indeed, literary work is influenced by a great number of factors among which, religious beliefs, feelings, cultural background, mental and psychological constraints, dialect, idiolect, etc. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to show how much is important to the translators working in the field of literary translation to be bright and creative in the re-creation of the target text without any ambiguity or redundancy. In fact, within the help of dictionaries and the selection of the adequate equivalent as well as translation procedures the translator, then, can reach such satisfaction in finding available solutions in translating difficult cultural terms and expressions from one language into another. Hence, it is the responsibility of everyone involved in the concerned field (literary translation) to master their work perfectly by using all possible tools as accurately and satisfyingly as possible taking into consideration faithfulness and respect to the original and the readerships.

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