

## LITERARY TRANSLATION AS A TRANSLATION OF DIFFERENT LITERARY GENRES

Guliyeva J.

*Ph Doctor on philology**Nakhchivan State University*<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10380644>**Abstract**

The article deals with the linguistic, stylistic and cultural problems in the process of literary translation. It also explains the close relationship between the language and culture, and the difficulties the translator faces in the translation process of dramatic works. It is stated that it is not enough for literary text translators to be bilingual, but they should be bicultural as well.

**Keywords:** source language, target language, literary translation, linguistic problems, stylistic problems, cultural problems, bilingual, bicultural, dramas.

Translation serves a crucial function in connecting diverse cultures and nations. In particular, literary translations contribute to establishing a shared universal culture among these nations. Without literary translation, the richness of human thought and art would lack the essence of great minds and profound books. According to George Steiner, every language expresses the world in its distinctive manner, serving as a unique world in itself. He argues that without translation, our existence would be confined to territories closely resembling silence. (1)

Literary translation involves the translation of a wide range of literary genres, encompassing creative works like novels, short stories, dramas, comic strips, film scripts, and poetry. It may encompass art and literary criticism, as well as classical and ancient literary works. According to Johnson, literature is a seemingly ambiguous body of knowledge presented in oral or written form. It serves as an imitation of life, reflecting civilization and culture, while encompassing every facet of human activities such as culture, tradition, entertainment, and information, among others.

Literary language exhibits a high degree of connotation and subjectivity, as each writer or poet possesses lexical and stylistic idiosyncrasies. Through the power of imagination, they employ various literary techniques, such as figures of speech, proverbs, and homonyms, to craft distinctive literary forms. The role of the literary translator is twofold, involving participation in the author's creative process and subsequent recreation of structures and symbols. This entails adapting the target language text as closely as possible to the source language text, considering intelligibility. The translator must evaluate not only the literary merit of the text but also its suitability for the target reader, requiring a profound understanding of the cultural and literary histories of both the source and target languages.

Literary translation has always been more difficult and problematic than the translation of other texts. In literary translation the translator may face the linguistic, literary and aesthetic, psychological, and socio-cultural problems. Translating poetry presents dual linguistic challenges: navigating the intricacies of words and meanings on one hand, and capturing the inherent flow and rhythm on the other. The words and meaning embody certain issues related to the images, similes,

metaphors, culture-specific words, phrasal verbs, idioms, punned expressions and grammar of both the TL text and the SL text.

It is clear that grammar constitutes the set of rules that govern the usage of a language, with each language possessing its unique grammar. Consequently, grammar becomes a significant concern for translators. Given that the entire language system of a culture relies on its grammatical rules, a translator must possess thorough grammatical knowledge of both the source language (SL) and target language (TL).

In the realm of dramatic texts, Savory asserts that "Style is the essential characteristic of every piece of writing, reflecting the writer's personality and emotions at the moment. . No paragraph can be crafted without, to some extent, disclosing the nature of its author." (Savory 1957, p. 54).

Full translation adequacy includes right choice of stylistic means and devices of the target language to substitute for those observed in the source text. This means that in translation one is to find proper stylistic variations of the original meaning rather than only the meaning itself.

Flow and rhythm cause a great problem in literary translation. As the rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, etc. create musicality in a poem, and they are the beauty of the poems, their existence is very important. But sometimes these elements are not found in translation. Maybe it is the reason why Robert Frost says "Poetry is what gets lost in translation".

Translating a dramatic work differs slightly from handling other literary pieces. As a dramatic text is intended for performance on stage, the translator must keep in mind that the audience will not only engage with the written script but also predominantly with its spoken rendition. Consequently, the translator needs to select words that are easily pronounceable by actors and readily understandable to the audience.

Simultaneously, the translator has to try to maintain the meaning and form of the original work to the greatest extent possible, ensuring that the translation reflects the intentions and endeavors of the original author. Every translator aspires to achieve a high level of realistic authenticity, encompassing both the internal elements such as author's and director's notes, and the external language of the drama.

A close connection between the author and the translator of a literary work is essential. Both individuals possess distinct styles of writing and expressing their thoughts. However, it's crucial to acknowledge that the translator is inherently subordinate to the author, as the author's text serves as the foundation for a dramatic work and its subsequent stage production. The sense of purpose of translator's work is to maintain, depict and impart the original text; not to create a new piece of work. According to Levy "translation as a work is an artistic reproduction, translation as a process is an original creation, translation as a type of art is a case on the boundary of art of reproduction and originally creative art." (Levy 1963, p.49)

Poetic and aesthetic values of the poem are conditioned by the use of correct word choice, word order and the sounds and they provide the beauty of the original poem. And if any of these elements is broken by the translator, the original poem is impaired. The translator should retain the aesthetic values in the TL text. For it poetic structure and use of sound should be maintained.

It is imperative to convey the stylistic peculiarities of the source text in translation to accurately capture the communicative intent. The translator must discern between neutral, formal, and colloquial words and expressions, rendering them appropriately with equivalent units in the target language.

Navigating socio-cultural variances poses the most formidable obstacle in the realm of literary translation. Diverse cultures exhibit unique perspectives in their approach to various aspects. Larson underscores that "distinct cultures maintain divergent focal points." Conversely, when dealing with akin cultures, the process of translation becomes more manageable. Similar cultures ease the translation process as they often share words that more closely align with the multifaceted aspects of their respective cultures. In contrast, when confronted with disparate cultures, translation becomes a more intricate task, occasionally requiring significant effort to identify suitable lexical items.

Before explaining the cultural differences in translation, it is essential to grasp the concept of culture. Various translation theorists propose diverse definitions for culture. In 1984, Larson characterized culture as "a complex of beliefs, attitudes, values, and rules shared by a group of people" (Larson 1984: 431). He emphasizes that translators must comprehend the beliefs, attitudes, values, and rules of the source language audience to truly understand the source text (ST) and translate it effectively for individuals with a different set of beliefs, attitudes, values, and rules.

In 1998, Newmark offered another perspective, defining culture as "the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression" (Newmark 1998: 94). Here, he asserts that each language group

possesses its own culturally specific features. The Encyclopedia Britannica (1983, vol. 4:657) provides a comprehensive definition of culture as "that complex whole, which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."

This definition of culture stands as one of the earliest, underscoring the intrinsic connection between language and culture, where each is indispensable to the other. In essence, language draws its significance from the cultural context of the country. Given that diverse cultures categorize the intricacies of the world in distinct ways, translating from one language to another becomes a formidable task. This challenge intensifies significantly when bridging two distant cultures, where traditions, symbols, living conditions, and modes of representing experience diverge.

For instance, the phrase "a man has a big head" carries the connotation of arrogance in English, while in Italian, it signifies cleverness. Another illustration pertains to the term "owl." In the Arab world, an owl is often perceived as a harbinger of bad omens, whereas in Western culture, it symbolizes wisdom. Consequently, as different cultures construct their understanding of the world uniquely, the aforementioned linguistic elements are recognized as culture-specific.

But a single language may cross several culture borders. For instance, English and French are Indo-European languages but belong to different cultures. There are generally problems in the translation of cultural words in a literary text due to the cultural gap between the source and the target languages.

In conclusion, translators, entrusted with the responsibility of crafting a target language (TL) text closely mirroring the source language (SL) text, must be attuned to both cognitive and cultural considerations when working across languages from distinct cultures. Being bilingual alone is insufficient; translators should also embody a bicultural understanding to navigate the nuances and intricacies inherent in the translation process effectively.

### References:

1. Frost, R. The Art of Poetry and its Translation.
2. Larson, M. L. (1984). Meaning-Based Translation: A Guide to Cross-Language Equivalence. Lanham and New York: University Press of America.
3. Levy, J. (1963). Will translation theory be of use to translators? 1963.
4. Newmark, P. (1988). A Text Book of Translation. New York and London: Prentice Hall.
5. Savory, (Year of publication not provided). The theory of translation of a dramatic text. 1957, p.54.
6. Steiner, G. After Babel: Aspects of language and translation.
7. Encyclopædia Britannica. (1983). Vol. 4:657.