

TRANSLATION AS LITERARY AND CREATIVE PRACTICE

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Introduction

Translation is a mental activity in which a meaning of given linguistic discourse is rendered from one language to another. Simply put it is an act of transmitting the message of one text in language A (source language) into another language, Language B (target language). In doing so, all the information contained in text A is to be transmitted into another language in text B. So, the translator's task is to find the exact meaning of the text of a source language (SL), and translate it into another language target (TL), taking all its linguistic components into consideration. In this work we will explore the importance of literary translation its characteristics and how issues of style and faithfulness are crucial to creative translation. We will also see how to translate literary text effectively.

Literary translation

Literary translation consists of translation of literary books, poetry, plays, literary texts as well as songs, rhymes, literary articles, fiction novels, novels, short stories, poems, film texts, etc. Translation of literature texts is obviously different from other categories. This is because the main principle of literary translation is the dominance of poetic communicative function. It means that in addition to rendering information to the reader, literary translation also has aesthetic functions. The artistic image created in the source language (be it the image of a character or nature) must be must be sustained so as to have the same impact effect on the reader of the target language. For this reason, the literary translator should take into account specific features of the text. It is the poetic focus of the text that makes literary translation different from other translations. It requires specific linguistic preparation and skills, a particular sensitivity to language, certain creativity, and a good ability in the artistic and figurative exposition of speech.

The literary translator may need to work closely with authors to the intended meaning, as well as the literary and cultural characteristics of the original publication. He also works to keep the tone, style, and meaning of the author's work.

The primary purpose of literary translation is to disseminate art. In carrying out his task, the translator has to be faithful to the message by expressing the author's emotions, preserve the style and artistic conception of the original work to a large extent. He also has to express the social meaning and incidental meaning of the original work more deeply, and strive to achieve the same artistic feeling as the target reader.

Characteristics of literary translation

Literary translation has some guided rules which must be followed to achieve effectiveness:

- i. The style of the original text is maintained.
- ii. The author's voice and emotionality are maintained. It is the translator's responsibility to carry out the translation in accordance with the choice of the author's lexicon, word runs, and to search for expressions that are at least equivalent to the source language.
- iii. A creative approach to translation: this does not mean that the translator can change the meaning and or content of the original text. Creativity lies in the mastery of choosing the right synonyms, epithets, metaphors, so as to make the translated text another original text.
- iv. Adaptation of the translated text to the cultural characteristics and mentality of the country of the target language.

Literary translation that involves translating dramatic and creative poetry and prose into other languages is a very challenging, but important task. It helps to shape a reader's understanding of the world, their history, philosophy, politics, and more. It is a way of broadening horizons, learn about the world of foreign literature, become more educated and enlightened. Illustrative materials in a foreign language cannot be understood without the intervention of a professional translator.

Challenges of literary translation

Literary translation is quite different from non-literary translation. The variety of literary work being translated shows the demand for different genres. The process of translation involves a different process than regular content translation. The volume of the texts itself speaks volume. Before going further into the discussion, it is imperative to know the difference between a literary and a non-literary text:

Non-literary texts are formal textual forms, including law, medicine, news, science and technology, and other types. The authors of non-literary texts are experts, scholars, technicians, advertisers, etc. working in professional fields. The difference in the two translations lies in the fact that the non-literary translation is more straight forward, more accurate than the latter, because it focuses more on reality.

The translators involved in literary translation, especially poetry are very much challenged. There is the need to keep a balance to remain faithful to the original text by reproducing a work that is distinctive and unique, which elicit the same feelings and reactions as the original work. When it comes to translating novels, the complexity and the challenge could be even on a higher level than translating poetry. The complication arises from the need to retain the true intent of original text while the content is not literarily translated. The translator has to be concerned about recreating the ambiance of the novel while keeping to the message of the text. Literary texts are not translated literarily. The style of the author and the story's atmosphere are to be preserved. The work requires the translation of idioms and local sayings. It also requires a specialized dictionary and a large personal vocabulary on the part of the translator. The translation not only complies with the style of the author of the SL. but also with the specific eras, cultures and settings of the literary work.

In the process of translating, the translator creatively reproduces the original style through linguistic techniques which, in the target language are similar to those in the source language so as to make the reception of the translated version close to the way in which the original is appreciated. However, the concept of style in translation has been an object of debates for many years.

Style in translation

The question of style arises in an evaluation of any literary work because it is fundamental to literary writing and its understanding. A good style is synonymous to effective communication. Style could be defined as the choice of words used by a particular author or a specific group of people when they speak or write. Style in literature

is the literary element that describes the ways that the author uses words- the author's word choice, sentence structure, figurative language, and

sentence arrangement all work together to establish mood, images, and meaning in the text. Style describes how the author describes events, objects, and ideas (<http://www.readwritethink.org>>files)

The concept of style has created hot debates among translators over decades. Many writers have considered the question of style, and there are two groups of thought as regards the issue of style in translation. Some authors like Catford 1965, Simpson 1993, to mention but a few, argue that translation should account for original style of the text, others believe that translation will be affected by the style of the author/ translation writer in the new text. For Catford (196:39), "translation is all about replacing textual material in the source language with equivalent textual material in the target language." For Leech and Short (1981:10), style refers to "the way in which language is used in a given context, by a given person, for a given purpose, and so on". As for Munday (2008:6), "in translation studies, issues of style are related to the voice of narrative and of the author/translator". Those who believe that style should be translated merely see the translator as only conveying or presenting the text he has read because he is not the author of that text, so he cannot claim ownership of the text. He is just presenting the text to the reader of another linguistic group. Such distinction between writing and translating denies "creativity" and lack of authorship in translation.

All these approaches to literary translation, whether linguistically or culturally oriented, necessitate evaluating the position and the task of the translator. It has been established that translators are mediators between two cultures, people and nations by removing the language barriers preventing them from understanding each other.

The literary translator and the concept of fidelity

Translating without betraying is a constant concern in the field of translation, another aspect that poses the problem of fidelity or faithfulness in translation. And this is because, the translator does not always have the same object for fidelity. Some privilege the form and others the meaning. Faithful translation simply means that the translator's task is to convey the author's intention to the text (what the author was intending to communicate) as faithfully as possible into another language. To some translators (Catford 1965), fidelity is to transfer the message from the source text to the target text in a word-for-word manner, while some others believe that it is to

adopt a free method in passing on the message (Kolawole and Salawu 2008: 402). According to Hurtado-Albir (1990), fidelity is three-fold relationship to the author's intentions, to the target language and to the reader of the translation. Therefore, to betray one of them is to fail in the fundamental requirement of fidelity. In a nutshell, what should be given regards in translation, is the content not the form as the mere regard for beauty may betray the original text.

A literary translator is a person who translates literary texts written in literary language full of lexical ambiguities, and cultural values. In a literary text, translator avoids word to word translation to find the equivalence, because a literal translation cannot be devoid of idiomatic expressions.

Creative Practice

Translation is creativity, because the translator has to adapt a given text to a different language by looking for adequate equivalences. This may require the translator to use new words, delete or add new sentences, or in some cases, change a whole sentence with another which is judged to suit the context of the situation. That task could only be handled by a translator with native-like proficiency in a language, but also a translator with a native-like understanding of cultural concepts of the language.

More often than not, a direct or word to word translation may cause some misunderstanding or misjudgments about the message. For translation to be effective and meaningful, the translator should be experienced and well knowledgeable in the culture of the two texts, because any tiny nuances can create massive differences when it comes to adapting a text to another language. Literary translation involves the translation of style, meaning, grammatical, lexical knowledge, finding equivalence and parallel usages of concepts and work in its own linguistic system. The personal style of the author and its effects, created meanings, impressions and connotations and the main challenging elements of a literary text for its translator, make the translator to be creative. In the field of literary translation, the mastery of both the SL and the TL are at the cornerstone for the start of any work. Thus, apart from the knowledge of the SL and TL, five other techniques are employed for the success of a translation. Albi (2001), <http://cultureconnection.com> (19/11/2021) one of the leading specialists in translation, proposes five literary translation techniques:

i. Adaptation: it is described as "a technique whereby one cultural element is replaced by another which is typical of the receiving culture. This technique is very useful when translating advertisements, slogan, etc., which employ a number of different linguistic processes... In these cases, the most important thing is the actual meaning of the message rather than the words making it up."

ii. Linguistic Amplification: according to Albir's definition, "this translation technique adds new linguistic elements in the target text. It is the opposite of the linguistic compression technique." It means using a paraphrase in order to explain a word with no equivalent in the target language.

iii. Compensation: is a "translation technique whereby a piece of information or stylistic device is moved to another location in the text, because it does not have the same effect if maintained in the same place as in the original text". This process is intended to compensate for the losses that a text suffers from when it is translated. Such technique is useful especially when it comes to wordplays. If, for instance, translators are unable to adapt a pun (it tends to happen quite often) then they try to create another play words in another part of the text.

iv. Elision: the fourth technique of literary translation described by Albir is elision. Elision is a process that "involves removing items of information in the original language text. As with the linguistic compression technique, elision is the opposite of the amplification process." Literary translators are frequently compelled to condense the information contained in some part of a text being translated. To do this, such items considered as non-essential must be removed because their elision will improve the stylistic quality of the translated work.

Borrowing: is a technique often used in literary translation, and it is also applied for example in medical and business translations. Albir says that this translation technique involves "using a word or an expression. in the original text and placing it as it is, with no modification, in the target text." This can be an expression taken from a third language (e.g., Latin), or a familiar expression by speakers of the target language, or even an untranslatable expression not worth explaining.

A good translator has to be alert in capturing cultural expressions by reading books, using the internet to find and understand cultural linguistic expressions in various languages.

Conclusion

The importance of literary translation is immeasurable. It enables people to understand the world. Students are to understand philosophy, politics and history through translated works. Many readers enjoy new insights into different ways of life through contemporary translations.

Without translation of literature, people would not be able to read the vast majority of literary works that are available in the archives and library around the world. It would not have been possible to enjoy the way ancient authors viewed the many facets of life and how they expressed their myriad expressions. Moreover, it gives people the opportunity to compare how things are done in the past and see some similarities.

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