The Effect of Cultural Differences in Translating Stylistic Features Between Arabic and English

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A B S T R A C T

The main problem that the translators face is the cultural difference between the two languages. this study is clarified the significance of stylistics, as a well-known literary phenomenon, and its effect of the cultural differences.

The study aims to investigate translation difficulties that encounter literary translators due to cultural and stylistic features when translating literary texts. The findings of the study revealed that literary translators encounter serious problems when translating literary texts because of differences between cultures and beliefs. In the light of the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that literary translators should have a good grasp of literary genres in both languages and they should consider both cultural and linguistic elements.

K E Y W O R D S

Cultural Differences, Stylistic Features, Literary Translation

1. Introduction:

Language plays a very important role in human life. People pay attention to language, and as a result, the discipline of linguistics, which focuses on the study of human languages, is developed. Linguistics is also the study of how humans communicate information through spoken or written form in various language styles depending on the speaker or writer. In linguistics, this study is called stylistics. By learning stylistics, people can find out the relation between language and its artistic functions (Leech & Short, 2007: 11). Different views and approaches have recently emerged as an extension of literary criticism. According to the stylistic approach, literary texts are analyzed depending on contextual features. According to the development that occurred in literary analysis, this attention has been shifted to the new analysis of literary work which is the study of literary text from a linguistic point of view (Widdowson, 1975).

So, defining stylistics is almost an impossible task. Its area is hard to limit: is it a linguistic discipline or a method for literary criticism and text appreciation? Can it ever overcome discussions of objectivity or subjectivity in interpretations? Does it have pedagogical value? If so, how? From its inception, the history of stylistics has been shaped by debate and lack of consensus. If, on the one hand, Meyer-Lübke in 1899 had avoided stylistics claiming it was the study of language as art (in Ullmann, 1966, p. 99), in 1909, Bally excluded literary works from his investigation and studied expressive elements only in everyday speech. And yet, stylistics has not disappeared from the map of language and literature studies.

2. The Concept of Stylistics:

Stylistics, much favorable branch for analysis, is a high art of widely known forms of writing, creativity, and innovation in literary texts. It is "non-canonical" because it's not right to think that skillfulness in the language is only from canonical literature. The techniques of stylistic analysis can help understand language structure as well as function. Stylistics is defined differently by different scholars but have somewhat similar concepts:

Leech and Short (2007: 11) state that the study of stylistics aims to explain language use and artistic function. They also affirm that every analysis of style is an attempt to find the artistic principles underlying a writer's choice (2007: 60). Moreover, the essential purpose of stylists is to explore language and creativity in language use. According to Widdowson (2013: 3-4) stylistics can be defined as dealing with literary discourse in a linguistic way. It differs from literary criticism as well as from linguistics. There exists a middle ground position between linguistics and literary criticism. The function of this middle ground is to mediate between the two. It connects between the two disciplines thus it has an interdisciplinary function. He further states that "stylistics as an area of mediation between two disciplines".

"Stylistics is an elusive and slippery concept", (Bradford,1997: Xi) observes its definition in general linguistic books is frequently incorrect. According to Verdonk in his book Stylistics, Stylistics is defined as "the analysis of distinctive expression in language and the description of its purpose and effect" (Verdonk,2002: 4). In general, stylistics is divided into two categories: linguistic stylistics (general stylistics) and non-linguistic stylistics (literary stylistics). Non-linguistic or literary stylistics which is the scope of our subject. The latter is concerned with the evaluation of the esthetic aspect and the prescriptive harmony of writing or speaking (Cummings, 2010: 459). Esthetic perception of style mirrors the impression made by the reader, while prescriptive perceptions mirrors how well the writer (or the speaker) follows the recommended social and stated rules for good writing. (McMenamin, 2002. 115).

Non-Linguistic stylistics, (literary stylistics) is commonly associated with the criticism and appreciation of literary, works (Hickey, 2014: 7). On the other hand, Linguistic stylistics investigates the ways in which the meaning is made through literary language and in other kinds of texts. It

regards the linguistic models and theories as its tools of analysis are to describe the conditions that make the text work.

The stylistic analysis frequently concentrates on the traits of texts pragmatically, semantically, discoursally phonologically and lexically or grammatically. It also focuses on the cognitive aspects that aid in the development of those characteristics. Stylistic methods are used to research an author's style, a text, or the role of the reader in constructing meaning (Simpson, 2004:17).

3. The Purpose of Stylistics:

Stylistics explores language and more specifically, acquaint creativity in language use, doing stylistics thereby enriching our ways, of thinking about language, and, as observed, exploring language offers a substantial purchase on our realizing of (literary) texts. Stylistics uses linguistic techniques to describe and analyze literary works. Stylistics examines creativity in the use of language. It enhances the way we think about language and its uses. Thus, the stylistic process, examining the creativity of language use, develops our understanding of literature (Simpson, 2004:3). The purpose of stylistics is to connect linguistic analysis with literary criticism. This can be done by expanding the literary intuitiveness of linguists and by expanding the linguistic observation and knowledge of critics. Thus, the linguists' attention will be focused on how the literary text represents the language system. The critics will also consider the underlying significance of the text (Widdowson, 2013: 6). To sum up, stylistics uses linguistic techniques to examine and analyze literary works for making connections between linguistic analysis and literary criticism. The efforts of statisticians to make such connections help develop our understanding of literature and the underlying significance of texts.

4. Characteristics of Literary Translation:

As literary texts involve linguistic, social and cultural aspects of human lives, the literary translator has to be aware of the style of writing, choice of vocabulary and grammatical structures According to Belhaag (1997) the literary translator is the person who should consider the following characteristics of literary translation:

A. Literary translation should be expressive, connotative and symbolic.
B. It should focus on both form and content.
C. It should be subjective.
D. It should allow multiple interpretations.
E. It should be timeless and universal.
F. It should use special devices to heighten communicative effect.

It should not have tendency to deviate from the language norms.

5. Cultural Concepts and its Impact on Literary Translation:

Translating literary texts is a difficult task for the translator, Nida (1982 :130) pointed out that one of the problems a translator can face come from the fact that some words or phrases expressing objects, facts... etc. are so deeply rooted in their source culture and so specific to the culture that produced them that have no equivalent in the target language because they are not yet codified in the target language. He also uses the term "cultureme" to refer to cultural concept that are present in one language but absent in the other. According to Santoyo (1987) when translating literary texts, we face untranslatability with terms which are culture- bound and culture- specific. Nida (1982) argues that differences between cultures may cause more severe complications for the translator than do differences in language structure. Cultural differences represent the most serious problems for the translator and can result in far-reaching misunderstanding among readers (Brooks 1968 p:128). According to Newmark (1988 p.21) cultural concepts are classified into the following five categories:

1. Ecology (flora, wind, climate... etc.).

2. Material culture (food, clothes, towns, houses, transport) .

3. Social culture (work and leisure).

4. Organizations, customs, activities, procedures or concepts.

5. Gestures and habits.

Ku (2006) stated that culture reveals itself in the following aspects:

A. Environment, including ecology, place names... etc.

B. Cultural heritage e.g. religious beliefs, historical events, characters, folklore, housing... etc.

C. Social culture e.g. conventions, beliefs, habits, social organization.

D. Linguistic culture e.g. fixed expressions and idioms.

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6. Figurative Language:

The term figurative language has traditionally denoted language trappings with which writers dress up their language to make it more amusing and to clarify the meaning they intend to convey. According to this view, literary devices such as metaphor, simile, rhythm, etc. Ornamented ordinary language and so oblige the reader to work harder at making meaning in a text. Recently, almost all languages are in some sense "figurative". There are very few ways of talking and writing about the world that do not make use of comparisons, symbols, etc... (Kennedy, 1982: 83-99). According to Abrams (1999: 96-97), Figurative language is a conspicuous departure from what users of a language apprehend as the standard meaning of words, or else the standard order of words, to achieve figurative language some special meaning or effect. The role played by figurative language in encoding the meaning of a literary text cannot be overemphasized. Specifically, it serves both functional and artistic purposes. This infers that figurative language acts as a semantic signifier in texts and also helps the literary artist in achieving beauty in form. Figurative language also enhances the beauty of the writing, makes the sentence deeper, and leaves the reader with a sense of wonder. It brings life to the words used by the writer. The figurative language not only shows the writer's intent but also his purpose in using such language. And it adds flavor to the writing and makes it so much more enjoyable for the reader (Ibid).

Usually, most people assume that the use of figurative language is commonly related to the field of literature. Figurative language is also used in the field of linguistics. A figurative language, which is included in the field of stylistics, can be automatically used in both literature and linguistics since it functions as a mediation between linguistics and literary criticism. According to Puspita (2014:106), a word, phrase, or statement is figurative when it cannot be taken literally. In other

words, some figurative words or phrases cannot be true in any circumstances. Therefore, when a statement cannot be true, people will automatically understand it in a figurative sense. The traditional meaning of 'figurative' has always involved a contrast with the 'proper' meaning of a given word, or in other words, figurative language in used literary language shows the difference between what is said and what is meant. It's supposed rightful meaning, the idea which comes directly to mind when the word is employed. Figures of speech twist the meaning of the word — the Greek word for figures of speech is "trope" which means 'turn, twist'. The figurative system of language has rhetorical and political force. The word is as powerful as the bullet. Thus, figures of speech have the psychological force and the chief element of eloquence and skill (Abdul-Raof, 2006:196). Current views of language suppose another function or purpose for language which is communication through suggesting or arousing a mental image which is carried out by figurative language.

Since rhetoric is the flesh and blood of the Arabic language, especially in the classical period. It is a linguistic discipline that aims to sharpen up and upgrade the linguistic competence of writing and speaking. It provides language users with the appropriate and effective stylistic mechanisms required for eloquently forceful discourse. Thus, Arabic rhetoric makes language meet the communicative needs of the language user. Rhetoric in Arabic, however, is a distinct discipline from Arabic grammar. The study of Arabic rhetoric requires an investigation of its three major constituent disciplines:
(i) Word order (ilm al-ma'ani) that is concerned with semantic syntax,
(ii) Figures of speech (ilm al-bayan) that is concerned with allegorical
and non-allegorical significations, linguistic allusion, and linguistic signalling,
 (iii) embellishments (ilm al-badi) that shows the language user how to bestow decorative lexical and semantic features upon his or her speech activity Nuessel (2006: 446-458).

7. Cultural Effect of Stylistic Analysis:

It's clear that culture affects the translator in a one way or another. So, to maintain the value of the literary product in the target language, the translator must have proficiency-accuracy in rendering literary text. The highly educated skill of rendering such text and knowledgeable background of literary works abroad are also required. That made this translation more adequate and closer to the original text, for example if we said (احذر سيفا بين فكيك) Beware of the sword between your two jaws.

In this Arabic sentence, Arabic translator would often inferred the implied meaning of this metaphoric expression. The implied and intended meaning of the word (سيفا) is (the tongue). Target language translator can't infers equivalent meaning of this word unless he is well comprehended of origin text language (Abdul-Raof, 2006:150).
Metaphor can be seen in the following example in (Qabbani, 2007 :36).

فشرقكم يصادر الرسائل الزرقاء
يصادر الاحلام من خزائن النساء

poet resembles the Arab east when confiscating the "blue letters" to an oppressive colonizer in the process of confiscating. So, he omitted the likened to which represented the aggressive unjust person and leave one of his belongings which is —expropriated. As an example of the implicit metaphor, it thus appears to us as a physical sensory image. The same explanation can be applied to confiscate dreams and convey the same image.

Another example of the cultural differences and its effects on stylistic analysis in translation is the most commonly cited one in English literature comes from the "All the world's a stage" monologue from As You Like It.
All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players
They have their exits and their entrances... Dolan (2000: 185)

This quotation expresses a metaphor because the world is not literally a stage, and most humans are not literally actors and actresses playing roles. By asserting that the world is a stage, Shakespeare uses points of comparison between the world and a stage to convey an understanding about the mechanics of the world and the behavior of the people within it. When the speaker wants to give a certain meaning but without using the relevant direct word, which is designated naturally for that intended meaning in the language and called metonymy. He instead, opts for using another word that is closely related to or suggested by the original to communicate his message. For example, describing a woman as (نَؤومُ الضُحى) a'late riser', (i.e. she sleeps up to the forenoon instead of waking early in the morning) is a metonymic expression used to refer to a rich woman who employs retinue of servants and leads a luxurious lavish life(Abdul-Raof, 2006:144). Metonymy is also clear in Al-Hadrami:

<div dir="rtl">

قد كان تعجب بعضهن براعتي   ...   حتى رأين تنحنحي وسعالي

</div>

Some of them might have admired of my ingenuity... Until they notice my harrumphing and coughing.

The poet in this verse try to express his old age by using the word (cough) as a metonymy of aging. So, English translator couldn't capture an adequate meaning unless he has a wide knowledge of Arabic culture to know how to transfer analogous meaning to origin text.

8. Conclusion:

literary translators face stylistic and cultural problems when translating literary texts. On the basis of the preceding study, the researcher recommends the following points for literary translators:

1. Good knowledge of Cultures is very important in literary translation .

2. Translating literary works requires the ability to read between the lines.

3. Translators must get in touch with different cultures which help him / her to translate correctly .

4. The literary translator should have a good grasp of literary text types and in both languages.

5. The literary translator should have personal suitability to lend him/her to construct a matching literary text in the TL through translation.

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