Exploring the Issue of (Un)translatability of Poetry between English and Arabic: An Analytical and Critical Study

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ARTICLE DATA	ABSTRACT
	This paper investigates the solutions for the problematic issue of the debate over un/translatability of poetry, particularly between English and Arabic. The issue of un/translatability is going to be analyzed and discussed in view of Lefevere's (1975) seven strategies and a blueprint. This study tries to answer four questions: What makes poetry translatable or not? How do translation theories and approaches be used and applied to poetry translation and why? What is the most frequently used translation strategy in translating the selected poems? Which of the approaches and strategies can fit the translation of poetry to maintain its nature? The methodology adopted in the study is mixed methods, i.e., qualitative and quantitative. It evaluates the quality-assessment of the target text by the frequencies of Lefevere's (1975) taxonomy. This study arrived at the conclusion that poetry is translatable for many reasons, the most significant one is cultural interaction. Moreover, the choice of the translation approaches and strategies is not fixed; they can, however, co-exist. In other words, the two orientations, i.e. free and literal ones, should supplement and complement each other in terms of time and spatial factors in poetic translation. The present study endeavors to analyze the decision-making process that the selected translators follow as well as how their orientation affects the way they handle culture-specific references, figurative language, imagery, structure, prosody and so on in the translation.[1]

1. Introduction:

Translatability versus Untranslatability of Poetry

No poem, drama, novel or essay would ever be read, without translation, in countries whose language is different from the author. Therefore, translation is a key to the other languages and it is a channel through which ideas and cultures spread. However, "[translating poetry] is sometimes possible, sometimes impossible, sometimes easy, sometimes difficult, sometimes a failure, sometimes an amazing success" (Holmes, 1978, p. 45).

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Poetry must be translated by poets as Jones, (p. 62) emphasizes that "Poetry translation involves cognition, discourse, and action by and between human and textual actors in a physical and social setting. A poetry translation project usually aims to publicize a poet or poets".

Bassnett & Lefevere (1990 : 204) say:

"There are countless book-shelves, probably enough to fill entire libraries, of self-indulgent nonsense on poetry. In comparison with the quantity of poetry actually produced, the mount of redundant commentary must be at least double. A great deal of this literature claims that poetry is something a part, that the poet is possessed of some special essential quality that enables the creation of a superior type of text, the poem. And there is a great deal of nonsense written about poetry and translation too, of which probably that best known is Robert Frost's immensely silly remark that 'poetry is what gets lost in translation', which implies that poetry is some intangible, ineffable thing (a presence? A spirit?) which, although constructed in language cannot be transposed across languages".

Audience of poetry translation are expected to lose some of the esthetics of the original poem, such as rhythm, rhyme scheme, the internal music, as well as cultural items. It is inevitable miss these peculiarities, because of the far distance between the two languages, in question.

There is inevitably a middle ground, that believes translation and more specifically poetry translation 'is sometimes possible, sometimes impossible, sometimes easy, sometimes difficult, sometimes a failure, sometimes an amazing success. In the translation of poetry there will always be aspects (if not significant ones) that will be missing, as languages do not have the same phonology, syntactic structures, vocabulary, literary history, prosody or poetics. A poem that leans towards prose may present relatively few problems, but a poem that has a highly complex structure encompassing imagery, intersexuality, idiom, ambiguity and complex tonalities will almost certainly have to sacrifice some elements in translation (Attwater, 2005, p. 50).

Brodsky, the Russian poet and translator and a Nobel laureate in Literature, in response to Robert frost's statement "Poetry is what gets lost in translation" (p. 14) states, "Poetry is what gained in translation". (P. 19)

Hence, poetry is translatable like any kind of texts, because the meaning is the same, even if the language and its styles differ, the human experiences resemble one another and may be the same in all human societies. This becomes evident when we find a fact or a phenomenon is observed by poets or men of letters who speak different languages from different ages.

For instance, the following behavioral phenomenon, which Shakespeare* (1564-1616) refers to when saying, "He that is giddy thinks the world turns round" is the same of which Al-Mutannabi* (915-965) refers to more than six centuries before that, when saying "وَمَنْ يَكُ ذا فَمٍ مُرّ مريضٍ/ يجد مُرّاً به الماءَ الزُّلالا" . See Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*, Act 5, Scene 2 and البيت الثلاثون "أبو الطيب المتنبي، قصيدة "بقائي شاء ليس هم ارتحالا

On the one hand, Jakobson (1959) writes in his article about the possibility and impossibility of translation and defines poetry as "by definition untranslatable. Only creative transposition is possible". P. 219

In the same respect, Al-Jahez, an Arab prose writer and author of works of literature for instance, in his *Kitāb al-Hayawān*, believes that poetry is untranslatable; in case it is translated, its meter will be distorted, its tone disturbed and the pleasure disappears. This view stems from the fact that each language has its own poetic meters and music.

On the other hand, Newmark (1988) states, literary translation is "the most testing type of translation" p. 119, it can further be claimed that translation of poetry is the acid test showing the challenging nature of the task.

Wolfram Wilss (2001, p. 86) says:

"The translatability of a literary text can thus be measured in terms of the degree to which it can be re-contextualized in TL, taking into account all linguistic and extra-linguistic factors. The translatability of a poetic text is thus guaranteed by the existence of universal categories in syntax, semantics, and the (natural) logic of experience. Linguistic untranslatability occurs when the linguistic form has a function beyond that of conveying factual relationships and is therefore a constituent part of the functional equivalence to be achieved. This, for example, is true of play on words, which can usually be adequately translated semantically but not stylistically".

The issue of un/translatability is a problematic matter among scholars, because of the fact that some elements get lost in translation, especially the extra-linguistic factors that make translators of poetry have a great concern. The esthetic values, cultural elements and language of the source text must be rendered as much as possible, in order to make the readers have a background about the new culture.

Aiwei (2005, p. 78) states that:

"Translators who translate poems or literary works have different concern in dealing with the work of translation. She compares the type of scientific text and literary text; the former has denotative adequacy, logical expository, argumentative progression, precision, intellect, reason and truth to particular and the later has unbridled connotation, lack of argumentative progression, vagueness, imagination or intuition, emotion and truth to the ideal and universal. She describes that the function of literary translation as aesthetic value, it means the target receiver takes the translators interpretation for the intention of the sender (writer)".

Jakobson (1959) believes that "Poetry by definition is untranslatable… and it requires creative transposition." (Cited in Venuti, 2000, p.118). One may start with the following statement by Wilss (1982, p. 35) which seems very applicable to the translation of poetry:

"All translation seems to me simply an attempt to solve an impossible task. Every translator is doomed to be done in by one of two stumbling blocks: he will either stay too close to the original, at the cost of taste and the language of his nation, or he will adhere too closely to the characteristics peculiar to his nation, at the cost of the original. The medium between the two is not only difficult, but downright impossible".

The matter of translatability and untranslatability of literary texts is a controversial issue in translation studies that becomes more serious when it deals with the field of literary texts translation. Catford (1965, p. 98) believes that "The validity of the differentiation between linguistic and cultural untranslatability is questionable." therefore, he proposes two types of untranslatability:

1. Linguistic untranslatability

2. Cultural untranslatability.

Linguistic untranslatability means "failure to find [that] a target language equivalent is due to differences between the source language and target language. Some examples of this type would be ambiguity, plays on words, etc…" (Catford, p. 98). Cultural untranslatability is due to the absence in the target language culture of a relevant situational feature for the source language text.

One of the scholars who disagree with the concept of untranslatability is Pedro (1999) who believes that "each linguistic community interprets reality in its own particular way, and this jeopardizes translatability" (p.18). This discussion unfolds the fact that he agrees with Nida and Taber (1969). They claim that "anything that can be said in one language can be said in another unless the form the essential demand of message" (p.4). Dryden also emphasized that poetry is translatable. He believes that "to render a poem, the translator should be a poet him/herself." Dryden himself pays much attention to the style, or formal features of the original poetry. (Cited in Miremadi, p. 85).

Dryden (cited in Frost, p. 72) emphasized that "poetry is translatable but the one who should translate poetry must be a poet" and (Nida p. 104) argues that "anything that can be said in one language can be said in another, unless the form is an essential element of the message".

Thence, Dryden and Nida believe that poetry is translatable and it will be a must for a translator if s/he is a poet to be able to render the stylistic features of the poem besides the linguistic ones. Furthermore, the issue of loss is clarified by W. Benjamin, who stresses that the product needs to be the echo of the original.

Benjamin, 1968, (p. 76-77) argues that:

"There is nothing "lost" in translation, but, on the contrary, there is something "gained" by birth of a text which will not be merely a replica of the original but will have the ability to achieve a sort of equivalence to the SL. Accordingly, the "task of the translator consists in finding that intended effect upon the language into which he is translating which produces in it the echo of the original".

Wittgenstein (cited in Robinson, 2010, p. 58) emphasizes that poetry is translatable, like everything else. He argues that translating from one language into another is a mathematical task, and the translation of a lyrical poem, for example, into a foreign language is quite analogous to a mathematical problem.

Even for poetry, the translation dilemma is creating either a text enabling a reader to access the original, or a beautiful poetic text inspired by the original. Osimo, (2001) makes seven strategies to overcome the issue of un/translatability of poetry.

1. Direct access to the original: probably the most common form of translation of poetry is metatextual, and consists in a critical apparatus prepared for a poem – in the same language of the poem or in another language – allowing people not particularly proficient in that language to access an interpretation of the text through a clarification of the semantic values of the original.
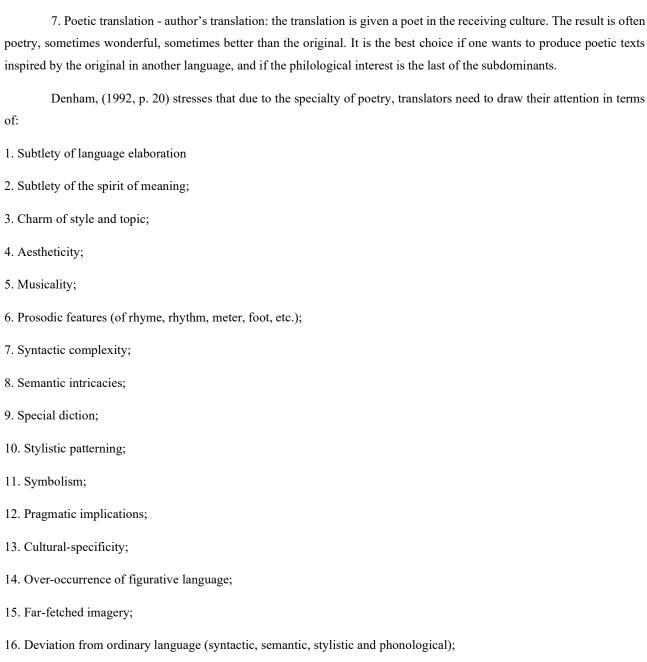
2. Interlinear translation with a parallel text: this is another form of direct access to the original, but in this case the aid is textual and not metatextual. Even if it is not always possible to call a parallel text "text". When the parallel verse is the reproduction, word for word, of the original verse, its only aim is to indicate the meaning (the one, among the many possible meanings, chosen by the translator) attributed to the individual words in the original, and seldom the whole result can be called a"text" in the proper sense of the word, i.e. a consistent and coherent set of words.

3. Philological translation: a translation that does not consider the readability of the text that is produced, only its philological adherence to the prototext. Aim of such a translation is to give access to the original for readers unable to access it through one of the previous strategies. Philological translation can be in prose or verse. When in verse, the verse of the metatext generally matches the verse of the prototext, but there are no rhymes (if not by chance), or pursued alliterations, and rhythm and other non-denotative aspects of the text are not considered. One of the most famous advocates of such a strategy is Nabokov:

> "There is a certain small Malayan bird of the thrush family which is said to sing only when tormented in an unspeakable way by a specially trained child at the annual Feast of Flowers. There is Casanova making love to a harlot while looking from the window at the nameless tortures inflicted on Damiens. These are the visions that sicken me when I read the "poetical" translations from martyred Russian poets by some of my famous contemporaries. A tortured author and a deceived reader, this is the inevitable outcome of arty paraphrase. The only object and justification of translation is the conveying of the most exact information possible and this can be only achieved by a literal translation, with notes". (1973: 81)

4. Single-dominant translation: usually the result of a poor and superficial analysis of the prototext, or of insufficient poetic competence, or of a low-profile publishing policy . One aspect of the original is found, the one most visible to the inexpert reader, like rhyme for example. In translation, the rhyme pattern is reproduced. Due to the anisomorphism of natural codes, pursuing the rhyme means obligatorily discounting the sense. For the dominant's sake, all the rest is lost, relegating the role of subdominant to the sense, when a part of it can be preserved. This kind of translation, especially when the rhyme is preserved and the measure of the verse is even, is also called "singsong" because of the effect similar to counting-out rhymes.

5. Translation with a hierarchy of dominant and subdominants: this is the method that, while seeking an equilibrium between the opposite extremes of translatability ad untranslatability, takes for granted the impossibility to translate everything. It is a strategy deriving from Torop's total translation view. You first make a translation-oriented analysis of the prototext to identify the dominant elements in the source culture. Then such dominants are projected onto the receiving culture, and one must foresee the understandable elements, those textually incomprehensible and the partially understandable ones. Based on the model reader, the publishing strategy, the type of publication and, often, the translator's taste, one decides which important elements of the prototext can become dominants of the metatext, and which elements can be rendered only metatextually (through a critical apparatus). Then a critical apparatus is made in which the metatext reader is told all that and a metatextual rendering of the translation residue (e.g. explaining the meter of the prototext that is not possible to reproduce in the metatext, or what connotative meaning a given poetic form in the source culture has). When drafting the translated text, absolute precedence is given to the main dominant; once rendered, the translator tries to make room for the other dominants too, according to the hierarchy set during analysis. The most important aspect of such an approach is

absolute transparency of the decisions made by the translator (often by the publisher too) as concerns translation strategy. A translation of poetry that doesn't make clear what its carefully analyzed blind spots are, runs the risk of presenting itself as a "complete", "absolute" translation or, as some insist in saying, "faithful" translation of the original, a situation in which the reader comes out of feeling cheated, teased and/or manipulated.

6. Cultural transposition: it is the strategy of people thinking of those who believe themselves able to find the cultural homologue of the poetic forms from a culture to the other.

7. Poetic translation - author's translation: the translation is given a poet in the receiving culture. The result is often poetry, sometimes wonderful, sometimes better than the original. It is the best choice if one wants to produce poetic texts inspired by the original in another language, and if the philological interest is the last of the subdominants.

Denham, (1992, p. 20) stresses that due to the specialty of poetry, translators need to draw their attention in terms of:

1. Subtlety of language elaboration

2. Subtlety of the spirit of meaning;

3. Charm of style and topic;

4. Aestheticity;

5. Musicality;

6. Prosodic features (of rhyme, rhythm, meter, foot, etc.);

7. Syntactic complexity;

8. Semantic intricacies;

9. Special diction;

10. Stylistic patterning;

11. Symbolism;

12. Pragmatic implications;

13. Cultural-specificity;

14. Over-occurrence of figurative language;

15. Far-fetched imagery;

16. Deviation from ordinary language (syntactic, semantic, stylistic and phonological);

17. Special conventions of reading poetry;

18. Sublimity;

19. Special features of literariness; and

20. Hypersensitivity of romanticism, sentimentalism, emotionalism, passion and touchiness.

Al-Jahez, ('2003', p. 76) states that: A translator's faculty in translation must be just much as his knowledge of the field he translates. He must be quite knowledgeable of both SL and TL in order to be much more accurate. As long as a translator speaks to languages, he will be inevitably unjust toward both languages, because every language attracts the other. How does come his completely competence of both just as his native one? However, a translator has only one dominance, so if he speaks a single language, his power will be consumed upon both. The same thing if he speaks more than two languages, his power will be consumed upon them. The more the access to a certain knowledge is hard and narrow and the erudite specialists are few, the more the translator finds it strenuous and susceptible to mistakes. You cannot find a translator has the master that exist in these erudite specialists. (*)

It is true that the best translator of poetry is a poet translator, this attitude is idealistic, but neither practical nor realistic. Poetry has been and is being translated satisfactorily even by non-poets.

"Poetry is probably the most difficult type of text to translate, yet it is translatable not solely by a poet, but also by a good translator provided he/she has a good grip of both English and Arabic languages and essentials of prosody. A good translation of a poem is not necessarily perfect translation, exactly like the translation of almost any other type of text". Ghazala (2019, p. 6)

As usual, at translating poetry, precedence is given to rhyme and rhythm in particular, then to foot and meter over other prosodic features for they are the cornerstone of verse. Consequently, a poem with no rhyme and rhythm in particular would be considered poor, because what sets poetry aside from ordinary language is chiefly its aesthetic, prosodic features, on top of which are rhyme and rhythm. This is the case - especially in Arabic - for the norms of writing, reading, perceiving and, hence, translating poetry are to be rhymed and rhythmical; otherwise, perhaps it is not worthy of interest in the eyes of the public in general. This view is confirmed by the criticism of 'blank verse' in Arabic in the forties-sixties of the twentieth century, which is a kind of modern poetry with no concern with rhyme and rhythm. It is closer to prose, rather. Hence its notorious nickname, 'prosaic poetry', which insinuates its semi-poetic identity. Yet, some accept it as a good solution at times to the translation of some poems (see Khulusi, 2000, pp. 35-36). This type of poetry should not be confused with the well-established and fully recognized 'free verse', which is based on stanzaic rhyme, rhythm, foot and meter, the basics of classical poetry (or Qasidah), with some differences between the two types concerning the layout and number of rhymes in the same poem. (See also Bassnet-McGuire *et al*, 1995; Lefeveré, 1975 & 1992).

Tisgam (2014) argues that translating poetry is considered one of the most complicated types of translations. It encounters many difficulties, the most important of which is the question of possibility or impossibility of translating poetry. Therefore, it is better to start by asking the following question: is the translation of poetry possible? Or is it impossible? It is definitely a rhetorical question because translation is as old as the presence of translated texts, which fills the shelves of libraries. One can ask despite these difficulties, who would discourage people of the world from translating poetry merely because it is fundamentally impossible? (Mann, 1970: 211) The study elaborates, in more detail, upon the necessary traits of translation and poetry, and seeks the intellectual attitudes that deal with the issue of the possibility or impossibility of translating poetry by representing the views for or against the translation of poetry, as well as shedding some light on the

problematic issues to be tackled in this arena. The study adopts a certain assessment model to judge the possibility of translating poetry.

This study concludes that, guided by the definition of Robert Frost, "poetry is what gets lost in translation" p. 14, Tisgam concluded that this statement could be considered truthful to a certain extent because there is no one-to-one equivalent when trying to translate from one language into another, even if the translators are so competent in the source language (SL). Thus, the Findings of the study display that though the translation of literary texts in general and that of poetry in particular represent a real challenge, it is in many cases totally impossible, even though there are other cases in which translation is possible only with certain semantic and stylistic loss.

Naghiyeva (2015) argues that literary translation, especially poetry translation has been debated over by scholars engaged in this field throughout history. The author has focused on the problems arising in poetry translation from Azerbaijani into English, i.e. between languages with quite different literary patterns belonging to different language families. The poetical examples provided in the study have been translated from Azerbaijani language into English, and present the real scene of the existing problems of poetry translation such as idiomatic phrases in the original for which the authors could not find any corresponding idiom in the language of translation. The author emphasizes the necessity of cooperation between a mother tongue translator of the original language and a mother tongue translator of the target language in order to make the translated poetical samples sound like a poem to the native speaker's ears.

The conclusion is that literary samples best present the culture, art and lifestyle of the people, so more poetical samples should be translated from the Azerbaijani literature into other languages to enable the Azerbaijani literary world to integrate the world literature and be a part of it. To sum up, notwithstanding the fact that Azerbaijani poetry partially loses national color in translation from Azerbaijani into English, poems of Azerbaijani origin gain rather than lose by being introduced to English speaking peoples.

Poetic versus Poetical Translation

Poetry can be translated into poetry in different ways; the most common are poetic and poetical translation. Whereas poetic means to render the esthetic values of the original, poetical translation is interested in delivering the meaning in the first place, regardless of the formal style.

"I distinguish the two terms, 'poetic' as really poetic, and 'poetical', as poorly poetic, or pseudo-poetic. Therefore, the following texts suggested for discussion below are translated mainly into poetic (i.e. literary) and poetical (ordinary) versions of translation. While the latter is based on translating sense regardless of any concern with sound features, the former is based on the paramountcy of sound patterns argued for above in constructing the source texts in the Target Language in poetic terms of sound / prosodic features, giving precedence to the major sound patterns of rhyme, rhythm, foot and meter". Ghazala, H. (2019, Pp. 2-21).

Actually, focusing on one aspect, neglecting the other is a problematic step in translation. It must be a middle ground, so to speak, between the two attitudes. Semi-poetic is the ideal paradigm in translation, where a translator can preserve the meaning with the stylistic features that a poem has.

Literary Translation

Literary translation is widely considered a challenging area of translation as a translator deals with texts of variant linguistic forms and rendering such forms requires a well-versed translator of a refined literary taste. This means that a translator's role is not confined to conveying language A into language B in a way that delivers the literary flavor of the original to the target readers. S/he is also required to produce a text that transfers the same (or similar) literary value of the original. This means that s/he should never end up with an informative, communicative and accurate translation devoid of the literary richness of the original. In such a case, literary translation loses the aspect that distinguishes it from other types of translation. This is due to the fact that the reader of a literary translation expects to get the same pleasure that the original reader gets from the original text. In other words, s/he should do his/her best to present a text to the target reader in a form and language common to him/her. In addition, the translator has to consider the syntactic, semantic and cultural differences between the two languages, and bridge these gaps to convey, maximally, the message of the original. This emphasizes that "The essence of translation is to transfer the information represented in one language into another one. However, literary translation is not only a kind of transfer of language symbols, but also a kind of communication between cultures". (Zhang, 1987:14)

Broadly speaking, literary translation in general and poetic translation in particular is to render the artistic mood of a literary work into another language so as to make the readers enlightened, moved, and make them get the same feelings of beauty as if s/he is reading the original work. Therefore, literature translation has the same significance as literature creation. This means that "It is not simply the change from one language into another, but also the introduction of one culture into another" (Zhang, 2001:28). Thus, it is a creative work.

Poetry Rendering

Rendering poetry has been regarded by many translation scholars and theorists like Eugene Nida and Peter Newmark as the most difficult type of translation, because translation loss is maximal in this case. In his *About Translation*, Newmark indicates that the reason for this loss refers to "the more the text uses the resources of language and therefore the more important its form, the greater the losses of meaning; the greatest loss is in poetry, since it uses all forms of language". (Newmark, 1988, p. 64)

One major translation difficulty confronting translators when attempting to render poetry, is how to translate figures of speech, especially culture-specific images, which represent a dilemma to translators. That is because what is beautiful and fine in one language may sound ugly and odd in another. In other words, what is impressive and effective in one culture may be prosaic and insipid in the target culture. Another major problem resides in the phonic aspect of poetry, that is, part of the pleasure of reading poetry comes from the musicality created by rhyme scheme, rhythm, alliteration, assonance, consonance and so on. That is to say, such details constitute an integral part of the cultural and environmental flavor of the poem.

Translation of poetry is one of the most difficult and challenging tasks for every translator. Returning to Robert Frost's definition, according to which "Poetry is what gets lost in translation" p. 14, we can say that this statement could be considered a controversial among the scholars of translation, but what can be taken for granted is that there is hardly one-to-

one equivalent when comparing two languages. Even if the translators have a profound knowledge of the source language, they will not be able to create a replica of the original text.

The proposed study focuses on the analysis of processes in the products of literary translation, the poetic one in particular. The processes are called domestication and foreignization. Domestication and foreignization are two basic translation strategies, which provide both linguistic and cultural guidance. They are termed by American translation theorist Lawrence Venuti in his widespread book *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*, published in 1995. According to him, the former refers to ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values bringing the author back home, while the latter is an ethnodeviant pressure on those (cultural) values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad.

Generally speaking, domestication designates the type of translation in which a transparent, fluent style is adopted to minimize the strangeness of the foreign text for target language readers, while foreignization means a target text is produced which deliberately breaks target conventions by retaining something of the foreignness of the original (Shuttle worth and Cowie, 1997:59).

Challenges of Translating Poetry

When speaking about translating poetry, one may risk entering a hazardous area. The main difficulty lies in how to understand the original text in its own home and not how to redraft to the target one. If the difficulties of re-drafting are mainly rhetorical, the problems of understanding lead to displacements and distortions in the transferred expression in a way that may lead to the total destruction of the translated meaning.

Yet, the translated poetry remains the medium of contact with other cultures. Such a process will open a wide window through which one can look at the foreign creations. The difficulties of translating poetry are so hard to the extent that Shelley (cited in Bassnet & Lefevere, 2001:58) once declared that:

"It were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principle of its color and odor, as to seek to transfuse from one language into another the creations of a poet. The plant must spring again from its seed, or it will bear no flower".

Nida and Taber (1969:205) stress that the main goal of translating poetry is to cause the same or at least, a similar effect as the original by saying that "the message is conveyed by means of dynamic translation, conveying the total meaning or content of a discourse; the concepts and feelings which the author intends the reader to understand and perceive."

"However, is it possible to do this job as safely as possible? In other words, can the translator render the SL poetry into the TL without a risk? This is of course impossible, since every language is in itself a collective art of expression in which one can find a deeply hidden set of aesthetic factors—phonetic, rhythmic, symbolic and morphological—that it does not completely share with any other language" (Sapir: 2000: 285).

2. Objectives of the Study:

The major objective of the study is to investigate the issue of un/translatability of poetry, particularly, the selected poems between English and Arabic in view of Lefevere's seven strategies, including the issues of untransltability, culturemes,

cultural specificity and lexical choice. The minor objective is an attempt to interpret the reason lies behind adopting the appropriate approach in the correct place. The marginal objective is to present a suggested rendering for some poems in a narrow scope.

3. Problem of the Study:

This study investigates the problem of un/translatability of poetry with specific reference to Lefevere's seven strategies to be applied to the selected translators' renderings in order to recognize the decision-making process that the translator adopts and follows.

Rendering poetry is the most problematic type of translation at all, for the use of all forms of language. In other words, the translator deals with the literary devices such as poetic-diction, rhyme scheme, rhythm and figures of speech including imagery, epigraph, allusion, euphemism, irony, foreshadowing, metaphor, simile, metonymy, personification, synecdoche, hyperbole and so on. Thus, the translator of poetic works will inevitably face such linguistic problems, since what is impressive and effective in one culture may be prosaic and insipid in the target one when a poem is translated.

Rendering of poetry requires some sort of artistic literary touch by the translator in order to get the target readers' attention and attraction so that the product can win their approval. Besides, preserving the content and the original message as much as possible.

The study argues that poetry is translatable and can be translated well, admitting that there is a loss in translation regarding the accuracy and the style of the original, but it is still translatable. Moreover, how we could know the great poets from English or Arabic cultures if we accept the 'untranslatability' of poetry as a fact.

4. Research Questions:

The study attempts to answer FOUR questions:

1. What makes poetry translatable or not?
2. How do translation theories and approaches be used and applied to poetry translation and why?
3. What is the most frequently used translation strategy in translating the selected poems?
4. Which of the approaches and strategies can fit the translation of poetry to maintain its nature?

5. Scope of the Study:

The study covers Lefevere's seven strategies vis-à-vis rendering poetry between Arabic and English. It examines critically an anthology of English and Arabic poems rendered by a number of erudite scholars. The researcher collects most of the data from authentic sources and credible print materials**.**

6. Significance of the Study:

This study argues that translation is one of the most significant human activities by which we can recognize the poetic art in one country or nation. In such a case, translatability of poetry is something crucial for cultural exchange, notwithstanding, translators may face some problems in finding the proper equivalence and some parts may remain untranslated, but the art of the poetry translator is to reduce these probable untranslatable concepts.

Poetry in translation opens up new linguistic and esthetic realms of language added to the TL and TRs, accordingly. Poetry translator has to be well-versed and has an artistic taste to produce a poetic product that wins the reader's appeal.

Furthermore, there is no room here to argue about whether or not poetry is translatable as the historic importance of poetry translation none can deny. Lefevere's seven strategies are the ideal paradigm to be applied to poetry rendering, because they are connected with literary translation. The present study is supposed to enlighten poetry translators of utilizing such approaches when rendering in a more effective manner.

The study argues that maintaining such status quo of negligence would lead to forsaking the activity of poetic translation and then disappearing that vital industry and finally the genuine Arabic poetry may become restricted to Arabs but remains locked drawers for English audience, and likewise the genuine English poetry will be limited to either the Britons or the Americans accordingly.

The present study is supposed to sound the alarm of the consequences of indifference toward this sacred duty, since the job of the translator in the first place is a mediator between the English and the Arabic cultures in this case.

The results of the present research may help poetry translators to have background knowledge about different practical approaches and strategies employed in poetry translation. Since the selected poems in question are in different forms of verse, translators are expected to follow a specific model or pattern in translating these forms.

Besides, the findings of the current study may assist translation studies scholars, investigators, researchers, students and others who are interested in poetry translation to have some new notions about the methods of poetry translation.

7. Theoretical Framework

7.1 Lefevere's Seven Strategies

Kolahi & Shiraz (2012) state that in analyzing poetic translation the application of the seven strategies proposed by Lefevere is inclusive enough since they cover all poetic features: formal and contextual. The seven strategies are: (1) phonemic translation: reproducing the SL sound in the TL,(2) literal translation: word for word translation, (3) metrical translation: reproducing the SL meter, (4) verse to prose : distorting the sense, communicative values and syntax of the SL, (5) Rhymed translation: transferring the rhyme of the original poem into target language, (6) Blank/free verse translation: finding just the proper equivalent in the TL with a proper semantic result, and (7) interpretation: version and imitation.

Version occurs when the meaning of SL text is retained and the form is changed. Imitation occurs when the translator produces the poem of his/her own. From the analysis for three translators works in the translation Sohrab Sepehri's Poems; the study found out that: none of the translators applied strategy 1st (phonemic translation), the 2nd strategy (literal translation) are the most chosen by the translators, the 3rd strategy was the less frequent due to the fact that Sohrab's poems do not have fix meter. The 4th strategy named poetry into prose translation, is the fourth frequent used by the translators, in this strategy the translation product is fairly elegant in language, as it is closer to the SL and it is liberated from the limitation of word for word strategy. The fifth strategy was not apply due to Sohrab Sepehri's Poems are free -rhymed. The sixth

strategy is the second frequent used strategy - blank/ free verse translation, this strategy could be a good proper choice for translator because by applying it the translation can have accurate equivalent in the TL.

7.2 Lefevere's Taxonomy:

In addition to adopting the main approaches of Venuti's domestication and foreignization, the researcher has selected the seven strategies drawn by André Lefevere's (1975), which have been used by professional translators to deal with the problematic issues while translating poetry, in order to achieve the purpose of the study. The researcher has chosen this classification for it handles the dilemma of non-equivalence among languages, especially between English and Arabic. Lefevere lists the most applicable set of strategies in dealing with poetry rendering. Moreover, Lefevere attempts to tackle the problems of translating poetic text and his model aims to study translation in the poetic genre on an empirical basis. "They are founded in the belief that poetry is an item of beauty with specific poetic features". (Lefevere, 1975:64).

7.3 Phonemic translation

This method aims to imitate the ST sound. That is to say, it attempts to reproduce the SL sound in the TL while at the same time producing an acceptable paraphrase of the sense. Results such as these are, however, rarely obtained. The sounds of source and target texts usually diverge too widely. In the wider context of the evolution and interpretation of literature, phonemic translation on the whole rarely achieves an acceptable rendering of the source-language sound in the target text, so that it is positively harmful to concentrate on sound alone. In addition, phonemic translation distorts all the other aspects of the source text, and reduces it to a curiosity.

7.4 Literal translation

Literal translation is usually undesirable: the emphasis is on translating each word of the ST rather than giving the meaning of each expression or sentence using words that sound natural. Lefevere's view agrees with that of Nida: he sees no absolute correspondence between languages. Lefevere goes a further step, stating that literal translation is a myth and very often leads to fruitless results since it usually disregards the communicative value of a certain word of ST. However, he defends the literal translation method as one major strategy that tends to serve translators in comprehending the text at hand.

7.5 Metrical translation

The metrical translation strategy proposed by Lefevere emphasizes the reproduction of the original metre into the TL. This offers an easy way to remain as faithful as possible to the original where the dominant criterion is the reproduction of the SL metre. Such a strategy, therefore, may not be appropriate since each language has its own specific stress patterns and unique linguistic-phonetic systems. Consequently, this method will result in an inappropriate translation in terms of meaning and structure. Lefevere concludes that, like literal translation, this method concentrates on one aspect of the SL text at the expense of the text as a whole.

7.6 Poetry into prose

Prose translation is meant to reproduce the ST poem in another literary genre different in form, ignoring the rhyme scheme and the metre of the ST & TT. This method will result in the loss of some of the sense, communicative value and syntax of the ST. Lefevere sees translating poetry into prose as exhibition of different organizations of words in the target texts: because of its form, prose is unable to direct the reader's attention towards certain words in the way poetry can.

7.7 Rhymed translation

The rhyming translation method emphasizes the transfer of the rhyme of the original poem into the translation in the TL. This implies that such a translator has to rhyme the translation according to the schemes of the target language. This type of translation requires not only a deep understanding of ST poetic material, but also an emphasis on the realization of the author's process of his artistic creation, a grasp of the spirit of the original, and the search for the most appropriate confirmation in his own thought to create a poetic effect and flavor on the part of its reader in the target culture.

7.8 Blank verse translation

Blank verse is another type of translation strategy discussed by Lefevere in his analysis of the translations of poems by Catullus. Lefevere sees the translator choosing blank verse in attempting to produce a translation with the stylistic qualities of the TL culture. This implies that blank verse translators will therefore attempt to strike an even balance between adhering to a scheme and getting away from it, between the rule and the exception.

7.9 Interpretation approach

Interpretation is the last strategy proposed by Lefevere, which aims to make a complete change of form. In this approach, the translator tries to retain the substance of the original poem and makes changes in the form only. This is tantamount to saying that the translator produces a new poem of his own, except for the content which is of the original. Furthermore, a translator who chooses to interpret the ST may resort to paraphrasing the original lines of the poem creating a new poem depending entirely on the content of the ST. Here, the translator must be a master of both languages, and must understand both the characteristics and spirit of the original author, besides conforming to the aesthetic canons of his own age.

8. Methodology

The method adopted in this thesis is analytical and critical. The study holds an analysis and a critique of the translations of the given selected poems, in order to judge the quality of the product and to examine to what extent the translators manage to handle the difficulties and problematic issues.

The researcher applies Lefevere's seven strategies to the rendering of the selected translators in pursuit of finding out the hidden secret and the underlying truth behind the reluctance and the negligence of most translators to render poetry.

The reason for which Lefevere's model has been selected to be the theoretical framework of the study is that the researcher believes that these two paradigms fit the objectives of the study and can answer the research questions.

9. Analysis and Discussion

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

The Merchant of Venice

Act 4, Scene 1

Soliloquy by Portia

The quality of mercy is not strained.

It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven

Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest:

It blesses him that gives and him that takes.

'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes

The throned monarch better than his crown.

His scepter shows the force of temporal power,

The attribute to awe and majesty

Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;

ليس في الرحمة إلزام وقهر

إنها كالغيث يَنْهَلُّ رقيقا من سماه

دونما نهي وأمر!

بوركت تلك الفضيلة مرتين:

إنها تبارك الرحيم

مثلما تبارك المسترحم؛

وهي أزكى ما تكون إن أتت عن مقدرة

بل وأزهى من عروش المُلك والتيجان

إن يكن في الصولجان البطشُ أو ملك الزمان

إن يكن رمز المهابة والجلال

مكمن الرهبة والخوف من السلطان

فهي أسمى من جلال الصولجان

عرشها في الصدر في قلب الملوك الرحماء!

(Enani's Translation)

Analysis:

This extract is taken from Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. Enani here has neither committed himself to the correspondent number of lines strictly, nor stuck to the meanings that every line holds. free approach exists to offer a poetic form in Arabic acceptable by TRs, because if the translator abided by rendering the same form structure into Arabic, it would look like a prose that is not needed or required in that respect. On the one hand, the English version runs according to the "stress rhythm" meter, which is frequently used in Shakespearean English and by some modernist poets such as T. S. Eliot. On the other hand, the Arabic version follows "Al-raml" meter that is free for rhythmic aspects. Enani makes a rhyme in the translation, where Shakespeare did not for aesthetic purposes in Arabic. Both Lefevere's metrical and rhythmical translation strategies are adopted in this paradigm.

Shakespeare

Take, oh take those lips away ,

    That so sweetly were forsworn ,

And those eyes: the breake of day ,

    Lights that do mislead the Morn ;

But my kisses bring again, bring again ,

Seals of love, but sealed in vain, sealed in vain.

إبراهيم عبد القادر المازني (1889-1949)

كن يطفئن من أوار الصادي   أبعدوا عني الشفاه اللواتي

هن فجر يضل صبح العباد   أغمضوا دوني الجفون اللواتي

لثماتي من الخدود النوادي   واستردوا إن استطعتم مردا

عبثأ ما طبعن في الأجياد   كن للحب خاتمأ وأراها

Analysis:

The poet and the translator, Al-Mazini has come up with an original Arabic poem, so to speak. He adopts a Classical Arabic Meter that is called "بحر الخفيف" which matches the English Meter "Iamb". As Enani confirms that the translator in question did not make an absolute balance between the two meters, however, he creates an Arabic meter that sounds acceptable and satisfactory to TRs. As a result, Al-Mazini has domesticated the poem, employing the metrical strategy.

Rupert Brooke (1887-1915)

HOT through Troy's ruin Menelaus broke
To Priam's palace, sword in hand, to sate
On that adulterous whore a ten years' hate
And a king's honour. Through red death, and smoke,
And cries, and then by quieter ways he strode,
Till the still innermost chamber fronted him.
He swung his sword, and crashed into the dim
Luxurious bower, flaming like a god.

يندفعُ الملكُ الزوجُ الهائجُ

فوقَ الأشلاء -حطامِ الحرب-

يدخلُ قصر الوالد بريام-

والد ذاك الغاصب-

يحمل سيفا،

علّ السيفُ يردُّ الشرف

ويسكت عنه الغيظ،

غيظ الزوج الملك المخدوع،

وقد باتت زوجته عشر سنين

عهرا في حضن غريم محتلّ.

يندفعُ الملك الزوج

يجوز دماء الموت، دخان الحرب،

ثم يسيرُ وئيدا   صرخات الجرحى.

حتى يبلغَ قلب القصر.

يشرع سيفا يدفعه الثأر.

يجوز ظلاما.

يدخل مخدعها الباذخ-

مخدع زوجته المخطوفة-

منطلقا كالسهم شرارا،

غضبا علويّا ينهلّ.

(Mazid's Translation)

Analysis:

This is a good example of free verse. Mazid endeavors to maintain the fierce atmosphere of the original, and draws a vivid portrait of the event in order to get the reader involved in what is going on as we were in the battlefield itself. Mazid employs the strategy of blank/free verse in rendering such a poem, he delivers the same semantic result, following the stylistic qualities of the TLC.

قيس بن المُلوّح (645-688)

ألستُ وعدتني يا قلبُ أنّي

إذا ما ثُبتُ عن ليلى تتوبُ؟

فها أنا تائبٌ عن حبِّ ليلى

فما لكَ كلمَا ذُكرت تذوبُ؟

Haven't thou,

O my heart,

promised me,

once I stop

loving 'r

thou shalt stop, too.

As of now,

I've given up; yet,

every time she's remembered

thou melt'st away

and rue.

(Mazid's Translation)

Analysis:

This is an explicit example of adopting free verse through keeping the old taste of the source, which was written over the centuries. Mazid renders the poem in Classical English to keep pace with that of the original. He also applies free verse translation, as much as possible, that requires full awareness of both SL and TL metres, which is not easy anyway.

William Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*

Act 3 Scene 2

Line 219 : 225

ANTONY says:

I am no orator, as Brutus is,

But, as you know me all, a plain blunt man

That love my friend. And that they know full well

That gave me public leave to speak of him.

For I have neither wit nor words nor worth,

Action nor utterance nor the power of speech,

To stir men's blood. I only speak right on:

لست خطيبا مفوها مثل بروتس

لكني ─كما تعرفون جميعا─ رجل بسيط ساذج

يخلص الحب لصديقه، ولأنهم يعرفون ذلك خير المعرفة

سمحوا لي أن أتحدث معه أمامكم

فأنا أفتقر إلى البديهة الحاضرة، والألفاظ المنتقاة

والمكانة المرموقة، وبراعة الأداء، وحسن الإلقاء

وذلاقة اللسان التي تثير مشاعر الناس

لكنني أتحدث عفو الخاطر فحسب

(Enani's Translation)

Analysis:

This is an excerpt of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. Foreignization is so manifest in the given instance, notwithstanding the added adjectives to the translated version. In fact, these additions are necessary; they are due to the discrepancies between the English and Arabic textures and structures and also due to semantic results of the words. Moreover, these additions depend on Enani's interpretation of the text itself because of the nature of the source text genre, called Verse Drama. He transfers the same ST wording, which inevitably affects the form in the Arabic version consequently. Lefevere's free verse translation strategy is adopted here by Enani.

ابن الفارض (1181-1234)

زدني بفرطِ الحبِّ فيكَ تحيُّرا

وارحمْ حشىً بلظى هواكَ تسعَّرا

وإذا سألتكَ أنْ أراكَ حقيقة

فاسمَحْ، ولا تجعلْ جوابي: لن تَرَى

Get me clouded even more

with more love of thee,

but do have mercy 'n me -

on a heart burning in thy fire.

If I ask to see thee in truth,

grant thoust me that wish

and sayest not

"No, you won't"

(Mazid's Translation)

Analysis:

Here, Mazid strikes some sort of compromise between free translation and foreignization, he prefers that approach for two reasons; the first is that he wants to make the poem suitable for the target readers to win their approval. The second is that the original poem was written by Ibn al-Farid (1181-1234), an Arab poet whose poems were written in Classical Arabic, consequently, there might be uncommon words. Mazid's free translation shows in choosing the common equivalents of some difficult words, while Mazid's foreignization appears in maintaining the old use taste of the original when rendering into English. Mazid employs Lefevere's free verse technique.

حافظ إبراهيم (1872-1932)

يقولون إنّ النار شوق ولوعة

فما بال **شوقي** اليوم أصبح باردا

There's fire and agony in missing,

They say.

Why, thus is my missing so **Chalky**.

(Mazid's Translation)

أحمد شوقي (1868-1932)

أودعت إنسانا وكلبا أمانة

فضيّعها الإنسان والكلب **حافظ**

I have entrusted a human,

I have entrusted a dog,

both with something I value dear.

The human my trust did waste.

The dog, though, was a **Havez**.

(Mazid's Translation)

Analysis:

These two lines are striking examples of ambiguity in rendering poetry. The first line written by Hafez Ibrahim, known as the Poet of the Nile, is a satirical line addressed to Shawky, while the second line written by Ahmad Shawky, nicknamed Prince of Poets, is also a satirical line addressed to Hafez. These are clear instances of wordplay, pun or ambiguity that are considered a challenging task to render a verse, which contains such confusing element. Mazid did not give up, he has tried to render the two lines preserving the ambiguity and pun in peace. The difficulties lie in rendering two words and/or proper nouns exactly as the original version did. Hence, Mazid plays on words that have different denotations. In such a case, rendering "شوقي" which means either "Shawky" or "my feelings became cold" into "Chalky" that means without resonance, color, warmth and has a variant spelling of the name of the poet in question. Similarly, rendering "حافظ" which means either "Hafez" or "someone who keeps a trust" into "Havez" that means the name of a mighty, magical hero and has a variant of the name of the poet in question. Mazid adopts neutralization after Venuti's concepts have gained ground. At its best, Mazid applies the previous approach with using Lefevere's phonemic translation, which is a tough task for translators.

Endnotes

(*)

ولا بد للترجمان من أن يكون بيانه في نفس الترجمة، في وزن علمه في نفس المعرفة، وينبغي أن يكون أعلم الناس باللغة المنقولة والمنقول إليها، حتى يكون فيهما سواء وغاية، ومتى وجدناه أيضا قد تكلم بلسانين، علمنا أنه قد أدخل الضيم عليهما؛ لأن كل واحدة من اللغتين تجذب الأخرى وتأخذ منها، وتعترض عليها، وكيف يكون تمكن اللسان منهما مجتمعين فيه، كتمكنه إذا انفرد بالواحدة، وإنما له قوة واحدة، فإن تكلم بلغة واحدة استفرغت تلك القوة عليهما، وكذلك إن تكلم بأكثر من لغتين، على حساب ذلك تكون الترجمة لجميع اللغات. وكلما كان الباب من العلم أعسر وأضيق، والعلماء به أقل، كان أشد على المترجم، وأجدر أن يخطئ فيه. ولن تجد البتة مترجما يفي بواحد من هؤلاء العلماء.

الجاحظ، في: كتاب الحيوان (2003) ص. 76

ترجمتي.

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