
THOMAS HARDY: THE CONCEPT OF FAITHFULNESS IN LITERARY TRANSLATION

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Abstract: Language and communication have always been considered through centuries, properties of humans regardless of the context in which they are used. As long as communication exists between humans, so does translation, linguistically interpreted as a two-way process of communicating in two languages or more between the interpreter/translator and the readership/listener. Translation/interpretation does not pursue exact patterns, as in Maths, physics, chemistry, etc. in any of its forms. It's a complicated linguistic “equation” aiming at preserving semantic features of the original text, may this be prose or poetry, newspaper or magazine article, autobiography or fiction novel, etc. So, the primary goal of translation, as it will be viewed in Thomas Hardy's poems, is that of seeking text equivalence between the source language and the target language taking into consideration grammar, phonetic, linguistic, semantic constraints between both languages. Contrastive analysis in the field of translation is considered of great significance in emphasizing the role and the impact of the source language text and culture, and the target language text and culture as well to make far distinct systems and civilizations come closer and become comprehensible for different readerships sticking on the proper individual characteristic tastes with awareness to the specific culture and identity they possess. Border crossing by the aid of translation process, notes the support of the rights and the empowerment of the systems that facilitate the text right faithfulness or text rights fidelity.

Keywords: equivalence, source language, target language, contrastive, fidelity

Translation has always been considered as an intricate process for the translator particularly in the field of literature. Both the translator and the interpreter have the same purpose, translating from the source language into the target language, but the means they employ to perform the process are quite different. The fact that the interpretation process is performed orally facilitates the task of the interpreter. (Bell, 1993, p. 4-5) However, we can not pretend that the translator follows the same procedures in the accomplishment of a specific literary work as the interpreter. In translation, there is no room for representing various opinions, in it the linguistic signs and sentence structures are supposed to express one particular meaning transmitting “one particular culture to another peculiar culture preserving the faithfulness of the original characteristics and the translated ones from the view point of the linguistic and cultural structures.” (Ristani, 2010, p.14)

So, the translator besides being competent in selecting the right expressive devices, he/she also needs to be clear and concise to avoid misunderstandings and ambiguities for the readership. He/she in his/her pursuits is expected to produce an equivalent rather than an identical one. Expressed otherwise, the translator is supposed to exercise competently and skillfully the task of the cultural mediator. The cultural mediator according to Taft (Robinson, 2002, p. 197) smooths the ambiguities and moves the barriers that exist between two different nations, cultures in different space and geographical extend. Translation is further complicated in literature for certain specific reasons. Literary works themselves are complex and difficult to analyze, especially when talking about poetry. Poets tend to utilize unusual grammatical sentence structures and a rich idiomatic language as a feature and symbol of their unique individual style. “So the translator encounters with the necessity of maintaining the same relationship between form and content, with minor alterations from the original version into the translated one, still attempting to preserve the form and content of the first, through a number of hybrids according to the hybridism in the second.” (Eco. U., 2006, p.28-29)

Thomas Hardy is one of the most outstanding English novelists (Abrams, 1993) and poets in literature. Though a traditionalist in the techniques he used, he employed a highly original style combining rhythms and diction with an extraordinary variety of meters and stanza forms. He has a significant influence on later poets which increased rapidly in the course of the century. Hardy is distinguished for his rich literary creativity. He wrote novels (Poetry Foundation, n.d.) like “*Tess of the D'Urbervilles*”; “*Under the green wood tree*”; “*Desperate remedies*”; an epic drama of the Napoleonic wars “*The Dynasts*”. After that he wrote mostly lyric poetry like “*Neutral tones*”; “*The trumpet major*”; “*A pair of blue eyes*”; “*Little life's ironies*”; “*The well beloved*”, etc.

The Albanian readership becomes acquainted with him through his masterpiece “*Tess of the D'Urbervilles*” translated by Bujar Doko in 1994, which is the first translation performed by him for this writer. In 2000 he presented the second translation of the same literary work. The difference between the first and the second translated version is that in the latter one, he has included the letters written by Tess and her partner, whereas the first one excluded this emotional atmosphere generated by Thomas Hardy with the view of accepting the policy of

ensorship exercised by the communist regime of the time. Besides his work, the Albanian readership did not know other literary works of Thomas Hardy, excluding the case of reading him in original by those who were speakers of the English language. However, discussing upon Th. Hardy we are supposed to say a lot about his style and the diction he has employed in his creativity smoothing the path of the strenuous task of the translators, to make Th. Hardy speak Albanian again through other masterpieces of his.

Hardy's poetic style is simple but wordy. His sentence structures are not complicated compound ones, but the complexity in his works comes from the arrangement of several linguistic systems. If one sentence structure is not difficult to analyze, it's the way these sentences are organized that give shape to the entire picture and linguistic expressive clearness too. Though Hardy uses a lot of imagination, his poetry is considered to be spare, unromantic and unadorned. The poems' and novels' dominant themes are: the perversity of human destiny; the disastrous and ironic coincidence, the bleakness of the human condition, and the man's futile struggle against cosmic forces. The reader comes across philosophical and historical data in his works. The sadness and gloomy atmosphere of the author is noticed not only in the themes he treats but even in the language he uses. So the diversity of the figures of speech, his fluency of thoughts that run freely from one line to another, and his unique, exceptional style have made him a distinguished novelist but also a great English writer. But unfortunately the Albanian readership is not so familiar with Hardy's literary creativity. If we have read the Albanized version of Shakespeare's plays, Daniel Defoe's and Daniel Steel's novels, etc. we have not yet had the opportunity to be fully introduced with his works as it is already mentioned above. It is probably his philosophical point of view that accelerated the Albanian literary censorship upon him, his rich idiomatic language, his characteristic features that make him difficult to be translated even by a professionally competent translator.

"Hap" (Abrams, 1993) is the poem I have chosen from his remarkable literary activity not only to make him known for his verses but also to pave the way for the other writers to follow me in this undertaking.

Hap

If but some vengeful god would call to me
From up the sky, and laugh: "Thou suffering thing,
Know that thy sorrow is my ecstasy,
That thy love's loss is my hate's profiting!"

Then would I bear it, clench myself and die,
Steeled by the sense of ire unmerited;
Half-eased because a Powerfuller than I
Had willed and meted me the tears I shed.

But not so. How arrives it joy lies slain,
And why unblooms the best hope ever sown?
-Crass Casualty obstructs the sun and rain,
and dicing Time for gladness casts a moan...

These purblind Doomsters had a readily strown
Blisses about my pilgrimage as pain.

The Albanized version of the poem is as follows:

Nëse një zot hakmarrës do të më drejtohej mua
lart nga qielli dhe të më qeshte: " Ti qënie e mjerë,
dije se hidhërimi yt është kënaqësi për mua,
se humbja e dashurisë tënde është përfitimi i urrejtjes sime!"

Pastaj do ta duroja, do të shtrëngoja veten dhe do të vdisja
i kalitur nga ndjenja e inatit të pamerituar;
i çliruar se një qenie më e fuqishme sesa unë
kishte dëshiruar dhe më kishte dhënë lotët që unë derdha.

Por jo kështu. Si është e mundur që vrasja të sjellë kënaqësi,
dhe pse nuk lulëzon shpresa më e mirë e mbjellë ndonjëherë?
Fatkeqësia e marrë pengon diellin dhe shiun,

të luash me kohën për kënaqësi çliron një rënkim...
Këto gjykime dritëshkurtëra kishin shpërndarë aq shpejt,
lumturinë rreth shtegtimit tim si dhimbje.

Obviously, we can not claim these two poems (the original and the translated one) to be absolutely identical with each other. They differ from the linguistic and cultural point of view as well. If in the first stanza the author's idea is expressed through 33 words, in the translated version the same idea is expressed through 38 words, so five more linguistic units. Likewise in the third stanza, which is longer than the two first ones, thoughts and ideas are transmitted to us through 45 words (in the original version) and 53 words in the translated one, so eight more linguistic units. This implies that the translated works are usually more extended (or reduced) in comparison to the original ones, depending on the nature of the language and the culture of a specific nation that suffers from the translation process. This expansion or reduction (in the treated case it is expansion) is due to the translator's attempts to make it more comprehensible for the readers preserving the position of being faithful (Qafleshi, 2002) to the original version and faithful to the readership of the target text emerged by the translation process. The translator should produce the same effects as the source language; the ones that were produced by the author in the original version. This is known as free translation, which produces the matter without the manner or the content framework of the original. On the other side translation through adaptation allows these changes, and a work is best translated if it incorporates mixed types of translation, word for word one and adaptation.

In "Hap" the terms "suffering" and "profiting", though two derivatives having the same suffix, they refer to different parts of speech (respectively belonging to the grammatical classes of an adjective and a noun) understood only by the context. Therefore, contextual comprehension provides with the possibility to transmit the message faithfully. In the meantime, in the Albanian translated version there is no room for such ambiguities. Concerning the above mentioned terms there are the equivalents in Albanian language such as " e mjerë" and "përfitim" which are clear enough to distinguish the parts of speech they belong to. When the author says "my ecstasy", this "my" plays the role of a possessive pronoun whereas in "Fati" it is transformed into a prepositional indirect object, which in Albanian has its equivalent "për mua" following the noun it qualifies. And this goes beyond of what it is called faithful translation where the translator tends to reproduce the precise textual meaning of the original within the constraints of the target language.

The opening line of the second stanza represents a pure example of diffusion strategy. This "would" which represents a linguistic unit that serves to form the future in the past, in "Hap" stands for "clench" and "die" besides the verb "bear", though it is not repeated. Whereas in Albanian language we need to use the future structures of each of the respective verbs to make it semantically fit. In addition to this, the English genitive case in "love's loss" and "hate's profiting" is substituted by the Albanian genitive marker.

A different impression is felt when reading the translated one. The former is more powerful, the words carry the meaning they intend to convey, while the other, despite the adaptation that is made to its structure, it does not have the same power. If we thoroughly see through lines, we can notice that words with capital letters are given purposely for emphasis, whereas in the Albanian version it is not observed this stress in the same words thus influencing the writer's intention in the meaning of this poem.

It is true that the translator has chosen appropriate words for translating the poem but it is unknown what the meaning of these words is in relation to the context. "However, this is absolutely justified by the fact that some words or collocations do not have their corresponding equivalents in the target language they are supposed to be translated literally. So the translator attempts to adapt the terminology to fit the original meaning." (Munday, 2008) For example the word "Powerfuller" (deriving from the adjective "powerful" but transformed into a proper name written in capital letters) does not possess its Albanian equivalent. The term is translated referring to the context, like "një qenie më e fuqishme". On the other hand, the hyphenated adjective "half-eased" is translated merely "i çliruar" (only one word instead of two) due to the strategy of reduction employed by the translator. What is also noticed while reading or just looking at these two poems is the different form and shape of them. The poem in its original version is written in three stanzas each having four lines while the poem in its translated version is in three stanzas, but one is longer than the other two ones.

It is known that the Albanian language is an inflective one, thus the words need all their prefixes and affixes to convey us the meaning of the sentence, it needs pronouns to be emphasized, etc. We can see that the translator has done this work perfectly well, by adapting words, nouns, verbs, pronouns, adjectives, etc.

Furthermore, in the subsequent lines the word "unblooms" consists of just one single lexical unit. In this case the negative meaning is created by attaching the prefix "un" to the stem. But in Albanian language it would be translated like "nuk lulëzon", which implies extending the number of units it consists of, to fit the rules of the Albanian language. The same can be applied to the term "purblind" which is translated into a compound adjective

“dritëshkurtra”. It often occurs while translating that some terms or phrases bearing a significant meaning in the source language lose their significance in the target language and count as common concepts. For example the word “Doomsters” or “gjykime” is regarded as a simple one in the translated version of the poem with no particular shade of meaning. Sometimes characteristic features such as capitalization, font, etc. do serve as semantic markers or indicators of such lexicon in the source language. Even the following inversion used for emphasis, which dominates the poem creates difficulty for the translator due to syntactic peculiarities, for example:

“then would I bear it...” instead of

“the I would bear it.

“*Her secret*” is another poem of Thomas Hardy to be considered for translation analysis. Below there are presented both the English version and the translated one.

Her secret

That love's dull smart distressed my heart
He shrewdly learnt to see,
But that I was in love with a dead man
Never suspected he.

He searched for the trace of a pictured face,
He watched each missive come,
And a note that seemed like a love-line
Made him look frozen and glum.

He dogged my feet to the city street,
He followed me to the sea
But not to the neighboring churchyard
Did the dream of following me.

Sekreti i saj

Që dashuria ishte e zymtë, dhembja hidhëroi zemrën time
Me dinakëri ai mësoi ta shihte
Por që të dashuroja një njeri të vdekur
Asnjëherë nuk e mendonte

Ai kërkonte gjurmën e një fytyre të pikturuar
Shihte çdo letër që më vinte
Dhe një shënim, që dukej si një varg dashurie
E bëri të dukej i ngrirë dhe i vrenjtur.

Më ndiqte nëpër rrugët e qytetit
Më ndiqte në det,
Por jo në varrezën fqinje,
Kishte ëndërruar të më ndiqte mua.

“*Her secret*” or “*Sekreti i saj*” is another poem by Thomas Hardy, translated in Albanian language giving the Albanian readership the opportunity of knowing more about Hardy’s literary works and his style too. If we analyze this poem and the way it is translated trying to make a comparison with the first one above, we will not encounter the same difficulties and challenges during the translation process. This is mainly due to the translator’s work. As far as the second poem is concerned, it can be easily noticed that the use of capital letters is respected since the lines of both of them begin with capital letters. The number of lexical units is nearly the same, that is 83 in the original poem, and 85 in the translated version. However, besides the similarities between the two poems, the power and the emotions they transmit differ a lot. The original poem is more forceful, it is exciting and leads you to imagination, while the translated one, although it has gone through a skillful adaptation process it does not transmit the same literary power for the readership.

In conclusion, it is to be said that the maintenance or preservation of the originality of a literary work in the target language still remains a key question and a debatable issue in the process of translation.

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