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Formal Equivalence in the Translation of the Poem of “The Tyger”

A Paper

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

"إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ
وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا"

صدق الله العلي العظيم

(الأحزاب، الآية 56)

To My Family

Acknowledgments

Thanks are first due to Almighty Allah for giving me the strength and ability to reach this stage. I am grateful to my supervisor **Prof. Dr. Qasim A. Dhayef** for his effort and help to achieve this research. I am very thankful to my family.

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 The problem

Nida (1964, 165) states that formal equivalence is source-oriented, which is designated to reveal as much as possible the form and content of the original message, that is, to match as closely as possible the formal elements like grammatical units, consistency in word usage, meanings in terms of the source context, just to name some.

The present study tries to answer the following questions:

- 1-What is the definition of formal equivalence?
- 2-What are the types of equivalence?
- 3-What is the difference between formal and dynamic equivalence?
- 4- How can we use formal equivalence in the translation of some poems?

1.2 Aims

The present study aims to the following points:

- 1- Finding out the meaning of equivalence in the translation.
- 2-Detecting the types of equivalence.
- 3- Differentiating between dynamic and formal equivalence.
- 4-Using formal equivalence in the translation of some poems.

1.3Hypotheses

In terms of the aims above, it is hypothesized that:

- 1-There are two types of equivalence (Nida 1964:126)
 - a-Formal equivalence
 - b-Dynamic equivalence
- 2-There is a difference between dynamic and formal equivalence.
- 3-We can use formal equivalence in the translating of the poem of “The Tyger”.

1.4 Procedures

The present study will follow the following steps:

- 1- Review the literature related to formal equivalence
- 2-Using formal equivalence in the translation of some poems.
- 3- Presenting conclusions based on the hypotheses being presented previously.

1.5 Limit

This paper is limited to the study of formal equivalence in the translation of some poems.

1.6 Value

The study is significant in explaining how to use formal equivalence in the translation of some poems .Besides, it is hoped to be useful for all learners, especially those who work in the field of translation .

Chapter Two

Formal Equivalence in the Translation

2.1 Definitions

2.1.1 What is translation?

One of the most prominent definitions of translation is stated by Newmark (1988: 5) who defines translation as “rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text”.

Hatim and Munday (2004: 6) define translation as “the process of transferring a written text from source language (SL) to target language (TL)”.

2.1.2 What is equivalence?

Equivalence does not mean perfect correspondence. The translated text can never be identical to the source text. But in equivalence we mean that they have certain characteristic in common and similar function. That is mean that the translated text differ from the original text in linguistic structure but they equivalent in conveying the same message.

(Hasson, 2020: 12)

Vinay and Darbelnet (1995: 342) also define equivalence as the ideal method which the translator has to choose when he deals with proverbs, idioms, clichés, nominal or adjectival phrases and the onomatopoeia of animal sounds.

There are some problems which state that there is non-equivalence at word level because of cultural differences, where there are no equivalence words in both source and target language. Source and target

language may differ in meaning, or where there is no equivalent term in the target language. Baker (1992: 17)

2.2. Types of equivalence

Catford(1965)distinguishes between two types of equivalence which are formal correspondence and textual equivalence. Formal correspondence holds between items in the source text and the items in the translated text. And textual equivalence in which formal correspondence forms such an equivalence.

House(2009:31-2) cites Werner Koller's identification of five important types of equivalence: denotative equivalence, connotative equivalence, text/normative equivalence, pragmatic equivalence and formal-aesthetic equivalence.

(Hasson,2020:12-14)

Nida recognizes that there is no absolute equivalence between languages .However, closest there are two types of equivalence formal and dynamic

(Nida,1964:156-159)

2.2.1 Dynamic equivalence

Nida (1969: 22) states that dynamic equivalence “Intelligibility is not to be measured merely in terms of whether the words are understandable and the sentences grammatically constructed, but in terms of the total impact the message has on the one who receives it.” So dynamic equivalence is a way of translation in which the original language is translated “thought for thought” rather than “word for word” as in formal equivalence.

In dynamic equivalence we take each sentence (or thought) from the original text and render it into a sentence in the target language that conveys the same idea, but does not necessarily use the exact phrasing or idioms of the original.

<https://www.meritresearchjournals.org/er/content/2014/January/Shabnam.pdf>

For decades, dynamic equivalence has played an important role in moving translation studies into the realm of science and in demonstrating the value of linguistics as a potential tool for translation practice and research.

(Stine 2004: 135)

2.2.2 Formal equivalence

Formal equivalence, also called structural equivalence in which the translator tries to preserve as literally and meaningfully as possible the form and content of the original (Ibid,1964:159). As well as, taking into account the grammatical units and meanings of the source context

(Ibid,1964: 165)

We conclude that formal equivalence tries to remain as close to the original text as possible, without adding the translator`s ideas into the target text. So it is like literal translation .And it is called a word – for – word translation.

<https://www.meritresearchjournals.org/er/content/2014/January/Shabnam.pdf>

2.3 Advantages of formal equivalence

- a)High degree of clarity or readability
- b)focus on meaning -statement thought
- c)Provides opportunity for Bible study.
- d)Tries to find an equivalence for each word in the source language to transform the exact form of the original text.

2.4 Disadvantages of the formal equivalence

- a)Not faithfully depend on the original text because it is word for word translation.
- b)less objectivity
- c)It is impossible to find an equivalence for each word.
- d)The structure of the source text in a very respect cannot be reproduced in an understandable language.
- e)It could lead to ambiguous sentences and misunderstanding.
- f)Tendency to produce multiple meanings.

https://www.academia.edu/7962364/Theories_of_Translation_Formal_Equivalence_Dynamic_Function_and_Deductive_Translation

Chapter Three

Formal Equivalence in the Translation of “The Tyger”

Tyger Tyger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies.
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand, dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, & what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain,
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp,
Dare its deadly terrors clasp!

When the stars threw down their spears
And water'd heaven with their tears:
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger Tyger burning bright,
In the forests of the night:
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

النمرُ ! النمر ! أيها القط البري
يا من تشتعلُ بهاءً في الغاباتِ الليلية
أي أيديٍّ وعيونٍ أبديةٍ
شكلت هذا الجمال البري
في عذوبةٍ وعفويةٍ ؟

من أشعلَ النارَ
في تلكَ العيونِ العسليةِ ؟
وبأي أعماقٍ أو سماواتٍ علويةٍ
شكلت هذا الجمال
وأي جناحٍ يجروُ ان يتمنى أو يختار
وأي يدٍ يمكنها أن تصطادَ النارَ ؟

أي قدرةٍ أو أي مهارةٍ خلقت تلك الثنايا
وزرعت فيكَ الجسارةَ
عندما يبدأ قلبكَ في الهجوم
بمخالبٍ قويٍ ويدٍ من حديدٍ
كالمطرقةٍ أو سلاسل الفولاذ المتينة
تقبض على الفريسة المسكينة
بإرادةٍ صلبةٍ وقوةٍ شكيمةٍ

عندما ترسلُ النجومُ أشعتها الذهبية
وتروي السماءَ الأرضَ بدموعها الندية

هل يشعر بالسعادة من خلق هذا الصنيع ؟
هل من خلقك هو الذي خلق الحمل الوديع ؟

النمرُ ! النمر ! أيها القط البري !
يا من تشتعلُ بهاءً في الغاباتِ الليلية
أي أيديٍّ وعيونٍ أبديةٍ شكلت هذا الجمال البري
في عذوبةٍ و عفويةٍ ؟

3.Data Analysis

(1)

Tyger Tyger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

النمرُ ! النمر ! أيها القط البري
يا من تشتعلُ بهاءً في الغاباتِ الليلية
أي أيديٍّ وعيونٍ أبديةٍ
شكلت هذا الجمال البري
في عذوبةٍ و عفويةٍ

In the first line we notice that the word “Tyger Tyger”, is translated by using formal equivalence because the translator tries to preserve as literally and meaningfully as possible the form and content of the original. While the phrase “أيها القط البري” it does not have the same words in the original text so it is not a formal equivalence.

The rest of the stanza it is clear that it is translated by using formal equivalence.

(2) In what distant deeps or skies.

Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand, dare seize the fire?

من أشعلَ النارَ
في تلكَ العيونِ العسليّةِ؟
وبأيّ أعماقٍ أو سماواتٍ علويةٍ
شكّلتَ هذا الجمالَ
وأبي جناحٍ يجرؤُ ان يتمنى أو يختار
وأبي يدٍ يمكنها أن تصطادَ النارَ؟

In the second stanza it is clearly that it is translated by using formal equivalence because the translator tries to remain as close to the original text as possible, without adding the translator`s ideas into the target text.

(3)And what shoulder, & what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain,
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp,
Dare its deadly terrors clasp!

أي قدرة أو أي مهارة خلقت تلك الثنايا
وزرعت فيك الجسارة
عندما يبدأ قلبك في الهجوم
بمخالب قويٍ ويدٍ من حديد

كالمطرقة أو سلاسل الفولاذ المتينة
تقبض على الفريسة المسكينة
بإرادةٍ صلبة وقوة شكيمة

In these two stanzas, the translator reduced the two stanzas into one stanza in the target text.

the second lines” Could twist the sinews of thy heart? “ is translated as “وزرعت فيك الجسارة” it not translated as literal translation “The translator ablogised to not use the formal equivalence because it will not give the text its real meaning. We also notice the phrase “الفريسة المسكينة” has not the same phrase in the original but the translator used this phrase to keep as close to the original, so again it is not formal equivalence.

(4) When the stars threw down their spears
And water'd heaven with their tears:
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

عندما ترسلُ النجومُ أشعتها الذهبية
وتروي السماء الأرضَ بدموعها الندية
هل يشعر بالسعادة من خلق هذا الصنيع؟
هل من خالقك هو الذي خلق الحمل الوديع

This stanza is clearly translated by using formal equivalence because the translator tries to preserve as literally and meaningfully as possible the form and content of the original. Every word in the text is corresponds to an equivalent word in the target text except the word “النديه” the translator added to the target text to transform the same idea of the original text.

(5)Tyger Tyger burning bright,
In the forests of the night:
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

النمرُ ! النمر ! أيها القط البري !
يا من تشتعلُ بهاءً في الغاباتِ الليلية
أي أيديّ وعيونٍ أبديةٍ شكلت هذا الجمال البري
في عذوبةٍ وعفويةٍ ؟

This stanza is as the same as the first stanza , so we have the same translation.

Chapter Four

Conclusion

- 1-This study has revealed that the best translation should consider both contextual factors and cultural factors in SL and TL.
- 2- It is better to use formal equivalence in the translation of the poems to keep the same features of the original text.
- 3-Formal equivalence can be defined as equivalence in which the translator tries to preserve as literally and meaningfully as possible the form and content of the original .As well as,taking into account the grammatical units and meanings of the source context.
- 4- There is a difference between dynamic and formal equivalence.

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