

THE ROLE OF TRANSLATION IN THE GLOBALIZATION OF LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT This article focuses on the role of literary translation in the development and enrichment of national literature. Literary translation establishes complex mutual relations between nations. It can replace and strengthen original genres (for instance during the creation of national literature) and also influence fields where the national literary output is not yet sufficient. Moreover, literary translation can allow for the development of national literature and its literary language. This paper sheds light on the role of literary translation in elevating national literature; deepening and refining the artistic, aesthetic and literary ideas and tastes of readers; and laying the foundations for the advancement and modernization of national literature.

Key words: Literary translation, definition, role, popularity, enrichment of national literature, foreign literature, reception, influence.

INTRODUCTION

When it comes to translation, most often a distinction is made between literary and non-literary translation. Literary translation is in a way considered a form of art, whereas non-literary translation is viewed as a craft. This is owing to the fact that literature is the art of words. Therefore, there are opinions that literary translation is of a higher status compared to non-literary translation. Literary translations aim at influencing man's artistic sensibility in order to achieve a particular aesthetic effect. One of the main literary

translation's objectives is to be creative by trying to provoke the same artistic experience in target language receivers, as the original message would in the source language. Studies on literary translation are extremely important given that translation in cultural aspect is naturally more important for smaller rather than nations with larger population. Therefore, the paper focuses mainly on the function and importance of literary translation in enrichment and strengthening of national literature especially in those fields, genres, styles, narrative techniques, etc., where national literature is in the process of its development.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

In the second half of the 19th century translation studies became an important field for teaching and study in schools. What added value to the study of translation in schools was the creation of a variety of translation methods and models. For example, the grammatical translation method studied the grammatical rules and structures of foreign languages. The cultural translation method was also evidence of the development of translation studies in that period. Cultural translation was of particular importance because in addition to translation it was also concerned with the cultural analysis of different societies. Another model that emerged in this period is the translation method based on the message of the text which focused on the general idea of the text and not on words or sentences. Pragmatic and systematic approaches to translation are also part of this period. However, over the years, translation has been defined in different ways. Over the years, translation has been defined in different ways. According to Manfred, translation can be considered "both a process and a product". In support to this method of translation Bell suggests that a division be made between translation as process, translation as product, and translation in general, that is, what comes about as a result of the union of the two. According to him, "translation includes several types of texts ranging from literary to technical" point out that "today translation includes other forms such as for example audiovisual". On the other hand, according to Halliday "translation is a process which makes it possible to establish a connection between two languages and the readers of these two languages". While Hatim and Munday emphasize that "translation can be analyzed

from two perspectives: as a process which refers to the passage of a message from one language to another and as a product that refers to the translated text". In 1963, the French theorist Mounin defined translation as "a series of actions from which the starting point and the final product are indicative of a certain culture". Whereas according to Bassnett "in translation the emphasis is always placed on the reader and that the translator must bring the original text into the language of the translation in such a way that it is as similar as possible to the original. As a result, the idea that the translator is recommended to keep in mind that he / she cannot be the "author" of the text in the language of translation is emphasized. Then Munday emphasizes the fact that the translator does not only have to have the ability to translate but also the capacity to absorb the text in the original language and in the transmission of the intended message, emphasizing the fact that: "The need for proficiency in both languages, the original and the translation, is clearly not enough to become a competent translator". By the word "need" they refer to the ability that the translator must have to enter the interior of the text, to understand and why not even feel it in order for the final result, the translated text, to be as successful as possible in the transmission of the intended message from the author to the readers. Nowadays the research in the field of translation has started to take another path which is more automatic. The invention of the Internet along with new technological developments in the field of communication have enhanced cultural exchanges between nations. This led translators to look for ways to cope with these changes and to use practical techniques that enabled them to translate more and lose time less. They also needed to enter the world of cinematographic translations, which led to the birth of audio-visual translation. However, the art of translation is not more recent than the art of original creativity, and the role of translation mastery has been known since antiquity. Now, as the fields of culture are expanding, translation is taking on an increasingly important role. The translated works and masterpieces, despite the occasional reactions, remarks and criticisms, are expanding the cultural horizon of the people, giving them the opportunity to enrich their artistic taste as well. In general, there are three translation theories: philological, linguistic and socio-

linguistic theories. Philological theories deal with literary translations and with the problem of equivalence of literary genres between the source language and target language. They focus on questions whether poetry should be translated as poetry or prose or whether an epic in the source language should be rendered as such in the target language. Namely, literary translation enriches national literatures on the one hand and it also enhances and advances the development of different literary kinds and genres of national literatures. Many national literatures begin with translations. The importance of literary translation is compared to the motors of change of history of literature. Therefore, the article focuses on the role, function and on some of the most important aspects of literary translation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to Nida, “translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style. But this relatively simple statement requires careful evaluation of several seemingly contradictory elements” In other words, according to Steiner: “The schematic model of translation is one in which a message from a source-language passes into a receptor-language via a transformational process. The barrier is the obvious fact that one language differs from the other, that an interpretative transfer, sometimes, albeit misleadingly, described as encoding and decoding, must occur so that the message ‘gets through’”. The ultimate aim of this process is to “reproduce the message” hence an inability to do so would constitute a failure. However, in order to reproduce the message a translator should successfully introduce many changes, which in literary translation extend to the artistic, aesthetic, cultural, stylistic spheres (Steiner, p. 28). When deciding what should be done in order to come up with a lucid and comprehensive translation from one language into another, Nida considers that it is paramount to adhere to the following principles: “(1) contextual consistency has priority over verbal consistency (or word-for-word concordance), (2) dynamic equivalence has priority over formal correspondence; (3) the aural (heard) form of language has priority over the written form. (4) forms that are used by and acceptable to the audience for which a translation is intended have priority over

forms that may be traditionally more prestigious. Therefore, according to Nida: “These four priorities reflect four different perspectives. The first views the translation in terms of its linguistic forms. The second is based upon the reactions of the receptors. The third deals with the typical circumstances of communication and is especially applicable to Bible translation since the Bible is generally heard far more (as the result of being read in worship services) than it is read personally. The fourth priority, which consists of a complex set of factors, e.g., age, sex, education and background experience, analyzes the problems of translation from the standpoint of the types of audience.” (Nida & Taber, 1974, p. 14). Translation encompasses a verbal transfer of text, but also cultural patterns, elements, and fragments, from one language and literature to another. In such cases, translation can be considered an innovative act and cultural initiative insofar as the receptor public is concerned. For example, in translating Pessoa, Octavio Paz translator not only reproduces the Portuguese writer’s work in Hispanic letters, but also introduces him to a Hispanic audience. On an even more transformational level, translation of Bible into vernacular (at one point considered a risky undertaking) gave impulse to the Protestant Reformation, just as the translations of Greek classics into Latin accelerated the coming of the Renaissance. However, it is important to note that literary translation can sometimes be an extremely difficult undertaking because of the specific social, historical and cultural circumstances of different nations and languages. Therefore, one of literary translation’s most important and arduous tasks is to take into account all these elements and use appropriate resources to remedy the absence of any words and expressions during translation. Historically speaking, literary translations that succeed and endure are those that are published and read, regardless of how transparent their ideological or political ends may be, or how many linguistic “betrayals” translators might have committed. It is well established that translation becomes more complex and complicated when concerned with messages that are not simple declarative statements of fact. One may think that translation of literature, songs, poems, or other artistic works is done best by a writer who has learned both languages. However, a thorough knowledge of the source and target languages is not

sufficient; when the translator translates the work of another foreign literature and culture, he must first learn about and develop a deep understanding of the culture surrounding the source text. Afterwards, when returning to the target language, he simultaneously returns to his own nation and its own cultural context. By crossing the borders of their original language and literary traditions through translation, many writers and works have become greatly loved and appreciated abroad and gained new and unexpected interpretations. The translated literature usually is involved in complicated and reciprocal relations with the original text, and in general it assumes the form and status of a literary creation. It can enrich and strengthen national literature (for instance, during epochs of the development of national literatures), especially in those fields and regions where national literature is in the process of developing. This mostly happened in the second half of the XIX century. Moreover, translation can detect and open new possibilities for the development of national literary language. It is important to note that when it comes to the function of literary translation in national literature and culture, translated literary works become a phenomenon of national attention and thereby have the similar cultural functions as works of national literature. In particular, translated literary works have a certain, specific and significant value vis-a-vis national literary works because the former inform us about the foreign literatures and cultures.

According to Munday: “In the preface to his translation of Ovid’s Epistles in 1680, the English poet and translator, John Dryden distinguishes between three categories (kinds) of translation: (1) ‘metaphrase’: ‘word by word and line by line’ translation, which corresponds to literal translation; (2) ‘paraphrase’: ‘translation with latitude, where the translator relies on the original, but his words are not so strictly followed as his sense,’ which involves changing whole phrases and more or less corresponds to faithful or sense-for-sense translation; (3) ‘imitation’: ‘forsaking’ both words and sense (Dryden 1680/1992: 17).” Therefore, Munday explains that: “Dryden criticizes translators who adopt metaphrase (such as Ben Jonson), as being ‘verbal copier[s]’ (Dryden 1680/1992: 18). Such ‘servile, literal’ translation is dismissed with a now famous simile: ‘Tis much like

dancing on ropes with fettered legs – a foolish task.’ Similarly, Dryden rejects imitation, where the translator uses the ST ‘as a pattern to write as he supposes that author would have done, had he lived in our age and in our country’ (p. 19). Imitation, in Dryden’s view, allows the translator to become more visible, but does ‘the greatest wrong . . . to the memory and reputation of the dead’ (p. 20). Dryden thus prefers paraphrase and suggests that metaphrase and imitation be avoided. Therefore, Dryden and others writing on translation at the time, are generally prescriptive, setting out what has to be done in order for successful translation to take place.” (Munday, 2008, p. 25-26) However, the process of translation does not end with the creation of a translated text, and the translated text itself is not the final objective of translation. The resultant translation (and the original) carries out its social function only during reading. During the reading process, we encounter the subjective transformation of the objective material. In fact, because the translation is not the original text itself, but rather the information that is contained in the original text, the purpose of translation is the communication of certain content, which the text offers to the reader. This means that the translator must be oriented to the reader for whom he/she translates. During this process, the translator creates again and thus, translation of a literary work can be considered a real, original creation. Thus, literary translation as a produced work is an artistic reproduction; the translation as a process is an original activity (creation); the literary translation as an activity and a type is an art, or at least an intermediate category between fine arts and original creation.

CONCLUSION Literary translation both enriches national literatures and advances the development of different literary kinds and genres within national literatures. Moreover, many national literatures begin with translations. Many readers depend on literary translations in order to learn, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate masterpieces of literature. In other words, the literary translator is an interpreter of themes, attitudes, and cultural values and is also in certain cases a wonderful critic who explains distant words and themes and helps us understand them better. The most significant difference between literary translation and other types of translation is that the former is a creative process.

While most translation strategies, techniques and general concepts (e.g., transfer between languages, cultures and contexts, faithfulness, accuracy, creativity) are applied in almost all other types of translation, literary translation requires specific skills that fall into the domain of stylistic and poetic creativity and can thus be considered a specific kind of translation. Literary translation has enabled people to broaden and expand their knowledge about the cultural values and traditions of various nations. Only through literary translation could the seminal works of Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, Balzac, Dostoyevsky, Cervantes and Tolstoy, Byron and Pushkin, Eliot and Joyce, etc., become cultural treasures of mankind as a whole. Through translation, a foreign writer may not only become more popular through greater readership, but his/her translated literary work can also thereby enter meaningfully into a new literary milieu; in such cases, translation exerts a fruitful, productive and creative influence. Literary translation is part of national literature; as a matter of volume, translated works make up an even a bigger part of national literature. That is why teaching and learning literary translation cannot be ignored: it is essential to a full understanding and development of national literature.

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