Some Cultural and Linguistic Issues Involved in Translating the Theme of Love from Arabic into English in The Seven Odes Translated by Frank E. Johnson

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Abstract

   The aim of this research paper is to highlight some cultural and linguistic problems associated with translating the theme of the *Alghāzal* in *Almūlāqāt* translated by Frank E. Johnson who made a great effort to translate Pre- Islamic poetry. Although he lived in the East and studied Arabic literature, his knowledge of Arab customs, mood, traditions, humors and values were inaccurate. Thus, misconception of idiomatic expressions, poetic rules and general atmosphere of the poems of the source language lead to mistranslation in the target language. It is very clear that Johnson throughout his translation of *Almūlāqāt* tried to convey the meanings of the original poems literally, and not to translate the meanings and the ideas of each poem ideationally. Hence; the poems lost their essence as coherent verses because each line is linked with another strongly.

   The study discusses and explains some cultural problems which are apparent in translating the theme of *Alghāzal*, and also some semantic and syntactic issues which lead to distort the meanings of expressions in the source language and lost the original poem its value. In addition, the aesthetic problems will be discussed in details. Also, it presents solutions to the problems that the translator encountered throughout the translation of a literary text.

Keywords: translating Almualaqat, Pre-Islamic poetry, cultural issues, the Seven Odes.

Introduction

   Languages are good means of communication among human beings and there are different languages in the world and people oblige to learn more than one language in order to communicate with   other nations. So, the need for translation is so important to know about political, cultural, medical and social issues that may we employ and examine in our life as the world became a small village. Further, a translator should have an awareness of the fact that translating ancient Arabic poetry where the complex expressions, idioms and words in English language needs someone who has experience in both languages and cultures.

   Bell (1993:20) defines translation as "the replacement of a representation of equivalent text in a second language", also Jakobson (1995:233) indicates that " languages are differ from one another to a greater or lesser degree and the differences among language may cause translation problems. Here, what we concern is how to translate *Almūlāqāt* from Arabic into English and the problems related to translating the theme of   *Algāzal* and state that the relation between culture and language is inseparable.

   Az-Zawzaniy (2002:9) defines *Almūlāqāt* as " long narrative poems related to the Arab literature in the pre-Islamic era ". Thus, these poems reflect the habits customs, norms, values, virtues and the culture of the people who lived in that time.

   The pre-Islamic poets used to open the poems by flirting with the beloved woman , standing on *Alātlāl* and describing her body. According to Siraj Aladin (1985: 8), *Algāzal* is " one of the oldest poetic arts that was common among the Arabs as it is connected to human nature and his own experiences". Here, we notice that the pre-Islamic poetry has a strong relation with the poet's environment and this leads to the fact that the places and traces dominate all parts of the poem.

I. State of the problem

   Producing an equivalent translation and receiving the same effect that arouse emotional reactions towards the text or the poem are necessary to attain progress in the field of translation, but it is not an easy task to achieve adequate equivalence in translating Pre-Islamic poetry into English. Also, Grice (1978:58) has argued that" a text producer who means something from a text intends the utterance of the text to produce some effect on an audience by means of recognition of this intention". Hence, the problems of translation arise when the reader or receiver of the target text does not react to the text or what s/he hears. So, the English reader who reads the translation of *Almūlāqāt* translated by Johnson does not have the same impressions and emotions that the Arabic reader has or someone who lived in the sixth century.

II. Limitations of the study

The study only dealt with the theme of Algazal in Almūlāqāt and focused on literal translation , taking   Johnson's translation of Almūlāqāt as an example in order to prove that the equivalence theory in translation is necessary to reserve the aesthetic form of poetry. Also, the study only discussed the cultural, aesthetic, and linguistic problems involved in translating the theme of love in the Seven Suspended Poems.

III.1. Methodology and Data collection

The researcher collected some verses related to theme of Alghazal, focusing on the issues that faced Frank E. Johnson in translating Almūlāqāt. After gathering some verses related to the theme of love, the researcher investigated two different translations. One is literal and the other is free, but these two translations do not carry the same effects on the audience of the TL. The study dealt with the theme of love from different perspectives as the main core of the research that led to mistranslation. Therefore, the analysis of data was based on the following translation:

1. The Seven Poems Suspended in the Temple at Mecca, by Frank E. Johnson; and
2. Society, Religion and Pre-Islamic Poetry in Arabia by Abrahim Mumayiz.

III.2. Data Analysis

The researcher followed the descriptive approach of analyzing data and analyzed the literal translation of several verses of Almūlāqāt, especially those lines which dealt with the poets' beloveds. Through analysis of the verses and translation, the researcher found that both translators did well to convey the meanings. But, literal translation is an explanation of the verses in prose, and ignored some cultural and habitual values that prevailed in the Pre-Islamic era. Although free translation kept the form of poetry, some implied meanings disappeared, leading to loss translation.

IV.1. Hypotheses

- Literal translation of poetry leads to convey the literal meaning without paying attention to the form and the connotative meanings. Hence, the translation produces a prose instead of a poem, marginalizing the beauty, effectiveness, emotiveness and musicality of the poem.
- Mistranslation results from cultural differences and from the lack of experience in both SL and TL.
- Equivalent translation is applicable to produce poetry as the original.

Here, there are two variables in each hypothesis will be tested through translating some verses of the Seven Odes translated by Johnson and Mumayiz. The research will evaluate and examine the three hypotheses: (Literal translation: distorting some aspects of the poem), (Cultural differences: Mistranslation) and (Equivalent translation: Keep the original).

IV. Research Questions

The researcher expects that this research paper will answer the following questions:
1. Literal translation of poetry leads to cultural, linguistic and aesthetic problems, how?
2. How did cultural differences affect Johnson's translation of the theme of love in ? Almūlāqāt
3. How can translators achieve an equivalent translation in Almūlāqāt, especially the theme of Algazal?

V. The objectives of the study

The main objectives of the study are:
1. to analyze some translated verses related to the theme of Alghazal in the Seven Odes.
2. to show the problems associated with the literal translation.
3. to evaluate Johnson's translation, comparing it with Mumayiz's translation.
4. to suggest solutions to improve literary translation.

VI. Literature Review

Many scholars and translators attempted to translate the Pre-Islamic poetry and literature. Although they made endeavors and efforts to translate *Almūlāqāt* such as: Sir William Jones, A. J. Arberry, and Frank E. Johnson but they did not convey the meanings of the poems as the originals and faced cultural and linguistic problems during the translation process. Arberry said (1957: 28): " Sir William Jones' translation is a prose one, and its English of the eighteenth century, polite, Latinized, and little suggestive of the wild vigor of the original Arabic ". When the translator replaces the poem by the prose, the original text will lose its aesthetic core and this leads to producing scattered verses without sequential ideas and coherence. Both William's translation and Johnson's are prose and interpretation of the verses of the poems.

Many scholars and orientalists who tried to translate the Pre-Islamic literature failed in dealing with the theme of *Algāzal* because they lived in areas that differ from the poets' regions and they also have no knowledge about the autobiography of authors , their emotions, feelings, what they liked or disliked and why the poets followed the same pattern of poetry . So, it is not easy to compose a poem without having cultural background and poetic fluency. The translator must be familiar with syntax, pragmatics, semantics and discourse analysis of both the SL and the TL as well as his / her fidelity, accuracy, and authenticity towards the work, otherwise, his/her works will be classified as worthless . In this research paper, I outline some issues of translating the theme of *Alghazal*, and explain how Johnson dealt with the   theme of *Alghazal* and how he managed to replace its meanings. Furthermore, I list several points which I am going to discuss in the following pages and suggest humble solutions for producing a pure literary translation to cope with the original text:

1- Cultural Problems
2- Linguistic Problems
3- Aesthetic Problems

After discussing the aforementioned points, citing examples from F. E. Johnson's work in translating the theme of *Alghāzal* in Pre Islamic literature and how he dealt with the subject. Here, I present some suggestions to improve and flourish translating literary works:

1- Removing the cultural gap between the Arabs and the Westerners
2- Studying words and idioms throughout various contexts and contrastive linguistics.

After we discuss the following topic about the translatability of Pre-Islamic poetry and show the reader whether *Almūlāqāt* could be translated to English language or not. Then, we will explain the problems of translation that faced Frank. E. Johnson when he translated *Almūlāqāt*.

VII. Translatability

Some people think that poetry is translatable, still others support the idea of translatability in terms of the use of rhyme and rhythm. What we mean by translatability is that the ability of translating of a text from one language to another linguistically and culturally. Steiner (1988:62) indicates that " translation can be possible, because those things which are deep-rooted in history and society can be found in all languages", and I partially agree with Steiner's idea, but the poem in the source language does not carry the same feelings and notions in the target language, and it loses its essence. In this paper, I will show the readers that the translator tried to translate *Almūlāqāt* linguistically in spite of committing some errors , especially the theme of *Algazal*, but he failed to correspondence the meanings and the content culturally. Catford (1965:63) states that " translatability appears intuitively, to be a cline rather than a clear-cut dichotomy", so the case of what may be translatable or untranslatable is debatable and depends on the translator's skills and competence. Rather, the problems of translation appear when there are no cultural equivalent terms in the target language . Hatem and Munday (2002:14) describe (UN) translatability as " a relative notion". They emphasize on the meaning, audience, and the purpose of translation, consequently, the translation process is not just a replacement of a text in the source language by an equivalent text in the target language, but the loss and gain are surrounding the translators' works. Bassinet (2002: 29) stresses " Exact translation is impossible", due to some linguistic, social, cultural, ecological and religious differences.

Un/translatability of Pre- Islamic poetry is a subject of discussion, and we can't generalize that *Amūlāqāt* can be translatable or untranslatable as what the poets narrated in the past is totally different from what the modern poets are composing these days. Sometimes it is difficult to interpret words or proverbs within the same language because there are multiple dialects in a particular society. For instance, the Arabic word *hodaj* is more familiar for the Bedouin than for the people who live in a city. So, we can say *hodaj* is a cabin made from wood   put on the back of

camel where the bride sits in the case of a wedding. Another example, the Arabic word *Saha* is a *yard* for who lives in a city, but for who lives in a tent means a *blanket* separate women from men in the same tent. Nevertheless, untranslatability occurs when the equivalent term is not found in the culture of the target language and this leads to borrowing or seeking modest translation to convey the message not the core of the content.

Could Pre-Islamic poetry be translatable into English? The answer, in my opinion, it could be translatable linguistically, but untranslatable culturally as each nation has its own culturally specific habits, norms, ecology, belief and customs. Hence, the English reader who wants to read *Almūlāqāt* as a translated copy, he will not interact with verses as the Arabic reader does as well the translator.

VIII. Cultural differences

Here, before talking about cultural differences, we will discuss the concept of culture and what we mean by it. Newmark (1989:94) defines Culture as " the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression". Hence, each language has its own linguistic and cultural features that may differ from another language. Also, Foley (1997: 108) writes " A culture is a mental system which generates all and only the proper cultural behavior". So, the individual behavior reflects the situation in which the society lives, as a result, each society is responsible to formulate its own specific culture. Nida (1964:130) points out" differences between cultures may cause more severe complications for the translator than do differences in language structure ". Consequently, if the translator lacks experience in the culture that translates into, s/he will face obstacles even he has knowledge in both the target language and the source language. So, the translation problems occur when there are cultural gaps between two languages and there is no equivalence in the target language.

Robinson (2002: 186) states that " cultural knowledge and cultural difference have been a major focus of translator training and translation theory for as long as either has been in existence". What we should emphasize on is the cultural coexistence, taking into account the practical training as a model rather than depending on abstract theories. Also, Pym (1989:177) points that the term 'interculture' refer to " beliefs and practices found in the intersections or overlaps of cultures, where people combine something of two or more cultures at once". He does not define culture and suggests that individual cultures can be formulated by negotiation. Thus, the translation from one language to another may vary according to the translator's understanding of the individual cultures .

We notice that there are cultural differences between the people who lived in the 6th century and those who lived in the 19th century. Unlike the Arabs, the Europeans and Americans have universal freedom of doing, learning, speaking, hearing and living even if the freedom opposites the religion and customs. However, the theme of *Algāzal*, remembering the beloved and the tribe , is a distinguish feature in the Pre-Islamic literature. The poets indicate that there are some places where they restore when they are exhausted or heartbroken and these places is a turning point in the life of each poet. Here, the poets lived in the desert, there were no buildings, cars, universities, roads, hospitals and shops as today. So, the audience of the pre-Islamic era was different from those who lived in the nineteenth century and as a result, it is not easy to translate what it was said and addressed in the sixth century. Not only is it difficult to follow   a particular pattern in translation a literary text, but also what was said or written in the past carries more than one meaning or interpretation.

The Arabs loved the women who had black eyes, black long hair and white skin and some poets described their slim beloved, focusing on physical beauty and appearance in a vulgar way which is called " *Algāzal Almājūn* " as *Imru' Al-Qais*. Even though he flirted with his beloved *Unaizah,* his feelings and emotions are spontaneous and express sincere passion and intentions. *Imru' Al-Qais* in his poem describes his beloved *Unaiza* in the following lines:

Mūhafhafātūn bīdā gāirā mūfādātīn
tārā'abūhā   maskūlātūn kāsājanjālī (l.33)
" Thin-waisted, white-skinned, not fat in the   abdomen, her breastbone shining polished like a mirror " (l.31 tr.Frank. E. Johnson)

Here, Johnson was not an expert one who lived in the desert where high temperatures, many women who were suffering from sun-burned, hence the men liked

the whitish , slim-waisted , and black long-hairy woman and this kind of women was rare at that time, whereas the thin-waisted and short women were undesirable of being chosen as a wife . Also, the shortage of water was common at that time and the women brought the water from springs, walking long distances and the men saw them in the paths.

Az-Zawzaniy (2004) points out that "*Mūhafhafātūn*" refers to *a slim-waisted woman;* the woman that her weight

and height in consistency, whereas Johnson does not differentiate between *thin-waisted* and *slim-waisted* and consequently, he renders *Mūhafhafātūn* as *thin-waisted*. The poet in this line classified the women in two categories according to their height and weight: *the slim-waisted* woman who is loved by many men, and the *thin-waisted* woman who is abhorred by the men because whether she has an infectious disease or has a deformity since birth.

Jonson translated *tārā'abūhā*   into *breast bones*, while *tārā'abū* is a plural of *tārībā* which means according to Az-Zawzaniy (2004) *the position that the women wear a piece of jewelry in*. Also he translated *maskūlātūn* into *shinning   polished* , while the root of *maskūlātūn* in Arabic is *s-k-l* which means as Ibn Manzour (1970) says *clean from impurities*. Here, he rendered *āsājanjāl which is a Roman word*   as a *mirror* , but in fact it is a *necklace* as Az-Zawzaniy (2004) points out   that the women used to wear in the pre-Islamic era in the occasions as a source of beauty, but this habit means nothing for the women in the west and they tend parties and concerts without wearing jewelry or something like that.

Imru' Al-Qais in this line describes his beloved and lists several qualities of the best woman whose eyes can be admire with her.

Kābīkrī   almūgānātī   albīādā   bīsūfrātīn

gāthāhā   nāmīrū   almāī gair ālmūhalāli (l.32)

"*In complexion she is like the first egg of ostrich- whiteness mixed with yellowness pure water, unsullied by the descent of many people in it, has nourished her.*" *(l.32 tr. F. E. Johnson)*

Here, the complexion of his beloved is like the first egg of the ostrich that is white and tends to be yellow, and the Arabs love the women who has yellowish-white complexion. Hence, the beautiful women are rare and many men look at them with admiration.

Johnson did not know the connotations that associated with the Arabic word *almūgānātī* such as *pearl*, *diamond*, *oyster*, and *emerald*, rendering the meaning according to Az-Zawzaniy (2004) into *the egg of the ostrich* which seems meaningless and worthless. Also *nāmīrū* versus *mūhalāli* , while *nāmīrū* means *pure, mūhalāli* denotes *impure* .

The egg of the ostrich, the pure water and the impure water have great significances in the life of the poet. So, the pre-Islamic poetry is rich in similes, puns, metaphors, personification and paradox. The connotations of *nāmīrū* are *pure*, *virgin*, *calm,* and *simple*. Jonson translates *mūhalāli* into *unsullied by the descent of many people in it* and this misunderstanding leads to mistranslation and distortion of the original.

In the following line, *Turfa Bin Alabid* flirts with *Kholah*, the women who devotes his life to her.

Wafī   alhii ahwā yanfūdū   almardā shādīnun

mūdāhīrū   sīmtī   lū'lū'īn   wā   zābarjādī (l.6)

" *And in the tribe there is one like a young gazelle, with deep-colored lips, shaking the Arāk tree to obtain its fruit, but wearing double strings of pearls and emeralds.*" *(l.6 tr. F. E. Johnson)*

The poet's beloved has blackish - red lips, wide black eyes like the eyes and the lips of a gazelle. Johnson renders *ahwā* as a *young gazelle*, but the most important thing that concerns the poet is the wide black eyes. The Arabs women put *Kohl* in their eyes as well as their eyebrows, but we do not find this habit in the West any more. Here, the poet depicts *Abla* like a *gazelle* in her beauty, describing her eyes, waist and lips.

Turfa in the following verse describes *Kholah's* face when she smiles like the sun in a sunny day.

 Wā wājīhīn ka'anā ā'shamsā   alkat rīdāūhā

Aīlīhī   nākīū   alūni   lam   yātakadādī (l.10)

" *And she smiles with a face, as if the sun bad thrown his mantle of brightness upon it, pure of color, which is not wrinkled.* " *(l.10 tr. F. E. Johnson)*

When we say: *Maha is like the sun*, this means *Maha* is so beautiful. But it is unfamiliar to hear an American or an English , flirting with his girlfriend , saying to her you are the sun. Also the connotations of the sun in Arabic language are *beauty, warmth, life*, but the Western culture the sun may represent *power, energy, clarity and self*.

The poet uses *rīdā* as a metaphor of *the brightness of the sun* . So the poet compares the *cloak* that she wears with the *beauty and the brightness of the sun*. We notice that the translator renders *rīdāūhā* into *his mantle*, *hā* is a possessive feminine pronoun in Arabic which carries the meaning of *her*.

Labid Bin Rabia'a addresses *Nawar* who is the best woman in the tribe and distinguishes her from other women as in the following line.

Aw raj'aū   wāshīmātan   aūsīfa   nā' aoūrūhā

Kīfāfan   tā'ārādā   fāūkāhūnā   wīshāmūhā (1.9)

" Or as the repeating of a tattooer the operation of tattooing, her indigo or soot is sprinkled in circles, above which her tattooing appears"(l.9 tr. F.   Johnson)

The women in pre- Islamic era used to *tattoo* their cheeks, lips and hands as a token of beauty and maturity as Suliman(2002) stated. The woman puts the smoke of tallow or the soot on her skin, stitching it with a small needle, becoming greenish after a short time. Thus, the *tattoo* was a part of the pre- Islamic culture, whereas the West looked at it as a source of agony or even a physical abuse since the lower class people used to tattoo their skins in the 19th century.

The poet depicts the traces of his beloved which are apparent because of heavy rains and her appearance again as the repeated tattoo. So, the absence and the appearance of the beloved play the important role in the poet's internal conflict. The word *aūsīfa* as Az-Zawzaniy   (2004) mentions it means in Arabic *put the powder on the wounds* during the operation of tattooing and this is a hint of *Labid*'s   suffering. Johnson's misconception makes him commit mistakes, consequently, the verse becomes meaningless and unreadable as poetry. Depending on what is written in the books about *Almūlāqāt* is not enough to produce a readable translation.

To sum up, *the gazelle*, *the sun*, *the thick- black hair*, *the lined-eyebrows*, *the tattoo*, *the egg of the ostrich*, *the slim-waisted* and   the *yellowish- white colour* have several connotations and what are great and valuable   in the pre-Islamic culture may be worthless and meaningless in   the Western culture. Also, the habits, norms, ecology and belief in Pre-Islamic era are different from those the Islamic and Arabs that follows today. We sometimes notice that the new generation of Arabs and civilized people ignore the old literature and the meanings of some expressions within the same Arabic language.

IX. Linguistic problems

Johnson encountered different linguistic problems during the   process of translating *Almūlāqāt*, but what concerns us in this chapter is the translating the theme of *Alghazl*   which is called in English *Flirtation* from Arabic into English. Here, we discuss semantic and syntactic problems that faced F. E. Johnson.

IX.1. Semantic problems

What causes a semantic problem is a single word when it is put in a sentence or a phrase its meaning will change according to the context. So the word may carry more than one meaning. Here, we list some examples of the semantic problems that the translator faced .

Imru' Al-Qais is proud of himself as he slaughtered his mount for the virgins to eat, he said the following line.

wā yūmā   akartū   līlādārā   mātītī

fāyājāban mīn kaūrīhā almūtāhamalī (1.11)

" And the day on in which I killed my riding camel for food for the maidens. Then how pleasant was their dividing the riding camel's saddle, which had to be which had to be

carried on their camels" (1.11 F. E. Johnson)

Ibn Manzour *(1970)* defines *Alādārā* as *the women who has never been touched,* Johnson translated *this* word into *maidens: the woman who is never married,* but the equivalent which is more accurate in English is *virgins*. Too, Johnson renders *mātītī* as *my riding camel*, but *mātītī* denotes in Arabic *rāhīlātī*, *rakūbatī*, and *sīārātī*.   Every animal we ride on its back is called *mātīā*   and so the word *mātītī* could be a horse, camel, elephant or donkey, Suliman (2002). However, the word *mātītī* has an equivalent in English language, and so it is translated as *my mount* not *my riding camel*. Also the simple past tense *ākrā* was rendered into killed, but *ākrā* in Arabic means *thābāhā*, *thā'kā*   and *nāhārā* according to Az-Zawzaniy (2004),   but it is confusing when one says *I killed a camel as a sacrifice*. So, the appropriate meaning of *ākrā* in English is *slaughtered*.

Turafa bin Alabid opens *Almūlqāt* with the remembrance of his beloved *Kholah*, standing on the traces of the plains in *Thahmad* region.

līkāwāltā   ātlālūn   bībūrkātī   Thāhmādī

tālūhū   kābākī   ālūshmī   fī   dāhīrī   alīdī (l.1)

"There are traces of Kholah in the stony, sandy plain of Thahmad, which appear like the marks,(lit. remains,) of tattooing on the back of the hand." (l.1 tr . F. E. Johnson)

The root of *tālūhū*   is *l-a-h* which   denotes in Arabic *lamā'ā, dāhā, āthā'ā* as Ibn Manzour (1970) said. When we say that *lamā'ā* ālbārqū which means *the lightening glittered*. The translator renders *tālūhū* into *appear*, whereas the adequate meanings in English are *glittered*, *gleamed*, or *shined*.

Antara Bin Shadad opens the first line of his poem with two negative inquiries. The first inquiry does the poet leaves an event that did not describe? , but the second is did I know the home of my beloved without doubt.

hal gādrā ashūārāū mīn mūtāradāmī   (l.1)
am hal araftā ad'dārā b'adā tāūhamī

"Have the poets left in the garment a place for a patch to be patched by me; and did you know the abode of your beloved after reflection ? ".   (l.1tr. F. E. Johnson)

   We notice that Johnson renders *mūtāradām*   into *a place for a patch* whereas the root of *mūtāradām* in Arabic is *r-d-m* that denotes *sadā'ā, tāmārāh, rākāh* as Ibn Manzour (1970) explained. Here, the contextual meaning indicates that *mūtāradām* are *all events and occasions in which the poets create poetry in the past*. According to AZ-zawzaniy (2004) *tāūhamī*   means *doubt* , but Jonson renders *tāūham* into *the reflection* that means *blaming* or *accusing*.

IX.2 . Syntactic problems

   Syntactic problems appear when the order of sentence in the source language is different from the order of sentence in the target language or when the sentence carries more than one interpretation. Here, we notice
that the English sentence order is Subject + Verb + Object or Complement while the order of sentence is totally different in Arabic that follows Verb + Subject + Object or Complement. For example, when we say " *Ali studies Islamic Culture*", the sentence means in Arabic" *yadrūsū Ali thākāfā islāmīāh*" . Also the adjective *Islamic* precedes the noun *Culture* in English (*Islamic Culture*) , whereas it follows the noun *Culture* in Arabic (*thākāfā islāmīāh*). So, the translators faced syntactic problems when they translated *Almūalāqāt* into English and we will take some examples from Johnson's translation of *the theme of Algāzal* in order to highlight the syntactic problems and how the translator can avoid them. For example, *Imru' Al-Qais* in the first line of his poem said:

Kifā nabkī mīn thèkrā hābībīn wa manzīlī
Bīsktalīwā bīnā adakāūlī fa hāūmalī (l.1)

"Stop, oh my two friends, let us weep on account of the remembrance of my beloved, and her abode situated on the edge of a sandy desert between Dakhool and Howmal."
(l.1 tr. F. E. Johnson)

   Here, the conjunction *wa* connects two similar   objects, so this conjunction does not carry the same meaning of the conjunction   *fa* which connects two objects, but one of them follows the other. In this line, the translator renders *fa* into *and,* but fa should be translated into *then*. Here, the poet first stood on *sktalīwā* and this hill is in the *Adakāūl* region and surely he spent a lot of time in that place, then he moved to *Hāūmal*. Hence, the rendering of the conjunction *fa* into *and* leads to mistranslation.

   Another example, *Amru' Bin Kalthoom*   said in the eleventh line in his poem:
Bīwmī Karihatin tharban wā ta'nan
Akar'rā   bīhī   māwālīkī   alaiyūnā (l.11)
" We may tell you of the day of battle, when we were striking such a blow and piercing, that your cousins became glad by reason for it " (l.11. F. E. Johnson)

   Here, Johnson put the pronoun *we* as the subject, but the poet does not use a subjective pronoun in this verse, and the translator used the modal *may* to indicate that it is *probably* to tell your cousins about the victory in spite of the severe battle. The translator should not use *may* because they obtained the victory, and the model *may* mean they wait the triumph. Sometimes, the translators use modals, but do not pay attention to the meanings that the modals carry out definitely as Johnson used the model *may* although the battle ended with the triumph of the poet's cousins. In the third example, *Antara Bin Shaddād*   in the eighth line of his poem said the following :
Hūīīātā mīn tālālīn tākādāmā ahdūhū
Akwā wā akafrā ba'adā ūmī ālhāithāmī (l.
" May you remain long amongst the ruins, whose time is old, and which became desolate and empty, after the departure of Umm-ul-Haitham."   (l.8tr. F. E. Johnson)

   As we notice that Johnson translated the passive past tense of Arabic *hūīīā* into active present tense *remain*. Here, the translator should use the passive and renders *hūīīātā* into *you were greeted*.

IX.3. Aesthetic problems

Translating a literary work is more difficult than translating other types because the literary work has aesthetic and expressive value. Hence, poetry has aesthetic values that represent in metaphors, allegory, personification, simile, alliteration, assonance, rhyme, rhythm and meter. If the translator ignores these components which form the poem gives it the beauty, the poem will lose its aesthetic values in the target language.

The translator should keep the poetic structure of the source language. Here, what we mean by the structure is that the unity of the poem, the shape and the balance of sentences. The simple example below show one verse of *Imru' Al-Qais' Mūālāqā* and its two translations:

Kābīkrī   almūgānātī   albīādā   bīsūfrātīn

gāthāhā   nāmūrū   almāī gair ālmūhalāli (l.32)

"In complexion she is like the first egg of ostrich- whiteness mixed with yellowness pure water, unsullied by the descent of many people in it, has nourished her." (l.32 tr F. E. Johnson).

"In the depths of seas, lie yellowish-white pearls.

In love's fluids, my pearl from clam unfurls." (l.32 tr. Dr. Ibrahim Mumayiz).

Here, we notice that the expression of *Kābīkrī almūgānātī* in Arabic language literally means *like the first egg of ostrich*, and F. E. Johnson translated the explanation of the expression which exists in the Arabic references. We notice that the rhyme of this verse is the two sounds : *n* and *I* respectively, while the first translation is an explanation of the verse and contains no rhymes and the translator ignores the metaphors, hence; the target translation   is not a verse of poetry, but arranged composition.

In the second translation, the translator keeps on the same rhyme in the two sections of the verse, as a result, the rhyme and rhythm have gone in harmony. So, "pearls" and " unfurls" contain musical tone. Also, the translator renders the metaphors into English perfectly. He renders *bīkrī almūgānātī* into *white pearls*, *nāmūrū* into *fluids* and *gair ālmūhalāli* into *calm unfurls*. The translator keeps the same expressions of the target language, renders the content correctly, the musicality and harmony may catch the foreigners, but the translation might not have the same impact and effects on the English hearers. Mumayaz translated Almualaqat in rhymed and rhythmic poetic meter, rather than in free verses, or prose translation as Johnson's.

X.1.   Removing the cultural gap between the Arabs and the Westerners

The skillful translator is the person who tries to translate the conceptual and contextual meanings of the words and expressions , putting the feelings and emotions that   the author of the original text   has , examining   not only the surface meaning of the word or expression but also the inner meaning and its connotations that differ from one culture to another.

How do we can remove the cultural gap between the Arabs and the Westerners? In my humble opinion, firstly, the translator should live in both environments and have good command of English and Arabic language. Next, the translator should keep in touch with the changes in both the Arab and the Western society.Thirdly, s/he should recognize the connotations of the words and expressions which lead to the cultural differences. Finally, s/he should make ideation in order to keep the essence of the original text.

If an European translator wants to translate the pre-Islamic literature, s/he should be an expert in the habits, traditions, customs, conventions, and notions of the pre-Islamic society. Also s/he should have the perfect knowledge of the morphology, syntax, semantics , pragmatics and idiomatic meanings of the words and expressions in both Arabic and English language and their equivalence. Any one tries to make an effort to translate the pre-Islamic poetry he / she should do the following:

1- to visit the places that the poets mentioned in their poems and imagine himself/ herself   living the situations and sufferings of the poets.
2- to read and investigate several reverences and books that concern in the pre-Islamic poetry and literature, not depending on one reference .
3- to study the biography, emotions, relations, behaviors and feelings of the poet and this leads to avoiding rendering the meanings literally.

4- to meet tribal   people and analyze what they say about the desert life and the connotations of some words.

Hence, if you want to translate a pre-Islamic *Qāsīdā* or *Mūālāqā*, for instance, *Imru' Al-Qais' Mūālāqā*, in the first place , you should imagine yourself a poet, having the psychological and physical appearance of *Imru' Al-Qais,* living in the deserts of *Hejaz* moving among the places that the poet mentioned in his poem because each place has a special position in the poet's life. Then, you should pay attention to the tone, the sounds and the rhymes and produce a poem resembles the original. How to choose the close meaning to the original is the ultimate goal of translation process, keeping on the rhyme, changing and playing in the words in order to harmonize with the same tone of the original. Due to the fact that, the pre-Islamic poetry is not sacred, translating the poems should be ideational, contextual, and not literal, forming a poem that is coherent and rhythmic, not prose.

What broadens the cultural gap between the West and the Arab is that the Western perspectives in studying and translating the Arab literature are not for building cultural bridges that connect the whole world, but for colonial reasons and purposes in order to communicate with others without considering their culture and language. Another point, to reduce the gap, the translators should be aware of cultural differences that emerge through translating a literary text. Hence, the knowledge of other cultures is necessary, especially when there are different cultures within a nation.

X.2.   Studying words and idioms through various texts

The study of abstract word and looks at its meanings in the dictionary is inappropriate way to convey its implied meaning as each word has denotative and connotative meanings and contextual nuances when it has been put in a context. So, if the translator depends on the literal meaning of the word within the text, he will face severe complications because the meaning of word varies and changes from text to another according to the author's cultural background, the audience's reception and the reader's emotiveness. For example, the Arabic   phrase " بيض المقاناة " translated into English as " *the egg of ostrich* " , but in *Imru' Al-Qais' poem* " بيض المقاناة " is a metaphor that stands for beauty. Another example, the Arabic noun phrase " الذهب الأسود " translated into English " *Petrol* " because the phrase *" the black gold "* has none sense for the English reader or listener. Baker (2007:65) points out " the first difficulty that the translator comes across is being able to recognize that s/he is dealing with an idiomatic expression ". Hence, the idiomatic expressions often cause some problems if the translator renders the meanings into the target text literally. So, the translator should concern the idiomatic meanings which people use in their daily life.

The studying of various texts and phrases and communicating with the natives are essential factors that improve the translation process. For example, if we say " it rains cats and dogs", this means it rains heavily or the levels of rain in a particular region are very high and above the normal average and this idiomatic expression leads to exaggeration. However, if the translator conveys the meaning into" إنها تمطر قطط وكلاب", s/he will distort the meaning and so the idiomatic translation is" إنها تمطر بغزارة ". Many translators commit mistakes when they render the meanings literally.

Studying contrastive linguistics and comparative literature help the students and the translators overcome cultural and linguistic errors. So, it is necessary for the translator to learn contrastive linguistics before doing the translation. Malmkjaer (1999:37) points out " the issue of comparative/contrastive descriptions of languages as a prerequisite for translation study" . So, the knowledge of syntax, semantics, pragmatics and grammar of both the target and the source language enables the translators to avoid linguistic errors, but the cultural and social problems are too complicated and need more trainings. Percival (1989: 88) manipulates five features for a practical translation:
- Read through the text to be translated, in order to establish the style of the original and to ascertain the
  exact meaning given to important terms by the original author.
- Research the subject in order to fill any gaps in translator's knowledge of the subject matter before actually
  attempting it.
- Translate in draft (optional, depends on translator's time).
- Put the draft translation aside forty-eight hours. The translator concentrates on the style and expression of
  the target language rather than on the meaning of the original.
- Read through the translation again checking, revising, and editing.

These steps help the translator to produce a pure translation, but the emotive value of the translated text differs from that in the original text. For example, the theme of *Algazal* celebrates the women although it describes the

women and their bodies, and the poets' emotions and feelings when they delivered a poem evoke and arouse the feelings of the audience in order to interact and react against what they heard. Hence, the sounds, moods, intonations and the characteristics of the author of the source language differ from what has been translated.

Conclusion

   This paper has investigated some cultural, linguistic and aesthetic problems related to the theme of *Algazal* in Pre-Islamic poetry, especially in *Almūlāqāt* that Johnson in his translation of the verses tackled. We notice that the problems can be traced back to several reasons: the translator had not perfect knowledge in both languages, and also the translator had no experience in the Arabic culture. The Third reason is that the translator depended on literal translation and used fewer resources. Again, the paper does not attempt to undermine the great effort done by Johnson but a humble contribution to improve translating a literary text. Moreover, translating Pre-Islamic poetry from Arabic into English is a big challenge for those who are not experienced in the nature, landscape, and the desert life of people. Consequently, translating poetry demands equivalence and correspondence rather than resorting to convey the literal meaning.

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