

**The translation of modern English poetry into Arabic: treating the
idiosyncrasies of content and form**

ترجمة الشعر الحديث من الانجليزية الى العربية: التعامل مع خصوصية المضمون والشكل

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Abstract

The new rhetoric of modern poetry which is characterized by conciseness and ambiguity has set it different from other poetic movements in English which in turn has made it the central focus of many researchers and scholars leading many of them to write about the 'distinction' of this type of literature. This study tackles the translation issue of modern poetry in view of the idiosyncrasies of content and form. The study investigates the issue of foregrounding following Geoffrey Leech's (1969) linguistic deviation theory with special focus on lexical, grammatical and semantic deviations with the assumption that the idiosyncrasies in the language of modern poetry are a result of the distrust modern writers demonstrate of the ability of language to convey meanings and the lack of communication that mars the modern reality of man. Through examining various excerpts of modern poetic texts, one could infer that some translators who were sensitive to the importance of these deviations opted for retaining them often by utilizing compensatory methods. This is mainly related to the fact that it is difficult to replicate the exact same idiosyncrasies, especially in a language that belongs to a different family and does not have much in common with English. Other

translators, however, were heedless of the implications of these deviations and decided to change them, or to translate them in harmony with their readings and Arabic language structure and norms. Nonetheless, the researcher claims that there is no 'wrong' or 'right' translation; there is always a better translation or a translation that is closer to the source text. Each translation offers a different 'reading' of a translated text that is influenced by the translator's metaphysics of presence and by his/her spatiotemporal realities. The study concludes that these deviations are essential in augmenting the meaning potential of texts and in obviating the fallacious notion of a 'transcendental signified' in addition to being a fundamental aspect in the formulation of a comprehensive reading of any modern poetic text. This results in making faithfulness in translating modern works imperative since any deviation from its modes of expression will blur the map of this forceful trend in the history of poetic evolution.

Keywords: Translation, Modern Poetry, Content, Form, Linguistic Deviation.

ملخص

تتناول هذه الدراسة مسألة ترجمة الشعر الحديث من اللغة الانجليزية الى العربية في ظل التحديات الناتجة عن التجديد في مضمون وشكل الشعر الحديث مقارنة بالحركات الشعرية الأخرى، وتهدف الدراسة بشكل اساسي للبحث في مسألة التقديم اللغوي بالاعتماد على نظرية ليتش (Leech, 1969) للانحراف اللغوي مع التركيز بشكل خاص على الانحراف في المعاني النحوية والدلالية مع افتراض أن الخصوصيات في لغة الشعر الحديث هي نتيجة لعدم الثقة في قدرة اللغة على نقل المعاني وانعدام التواصل الذي يشكل السمة الاساسية للمجتمع الحديث . ومن خلال دراسة الأمثلة المختلفة، استنتجت الباحثة أن بعض المترجمين كانوا على درجة عالية من الوعي فيما يتعلق بأهمية هذه الانحرافات، فاخترتوا الحفاظ عليها في كثير من الأحيان عن طريق استخدام الطرق التعويضية بسبب صعوبة تكرار نفس الخصوصيات، وخاصة في حالة اللغة العربية التي تنتمي إلى عائلة لغوية مختلفة عن اللغة الإنجليزية، في حين أن البعض الآخر أثر تعديل هذه الانحرافات في ظل قراءته للنص او من خلال ترجمتها في وثام مع اللغة العربية وقواعدها ومع ذلك، لا يمكن الحكم على أي من القرارات على أنها "صحيحة" أو "خاطئة"، بل يمكن وصف بعض القرارات بأنها أكثر وعياً من غيرها . وخلصت الدراسة إلى أن هذه الانحرافات ضرورية للحفاظ على إمكانات النصوص التفسيرية، وتجنب الاعتقاد الخاطئ حول "ثبات المدلولات"، بالإضافة إلى كونها جانباً أساسياً في صياغة قراءة شاملة لأي نص شعري

حديث، مما يحتم على على المترجمين تطوير وعي كامل بالمعاني التي تثيرها هذه الخصوصيات لتمكينهم من اختيار طريقة الترجمة المناسبة التي تحقق العدالة للنص المستهدف وقراءه.

الكلمات المفتاحية: ترجمة، الشعر الحديث، المضمون، الشكل، الانحراف اللغوي.

Introduction

“That’s not it at all, that’s not what I meant at all” (T.S. Eliot, 1915).

Eliot demonstrates the distrust in language that modern writers convey through the words of Alfred Prufrock; he is misunderstood and his words are misinterpreted leading to his hesitation, confusion and lack of confidence. Prufrock is a consequence of the new post-war civilization that produces, according to Eliot, mock heroic men who are incapable of carrying on a meaningful discourse.

Modern poetry differs drastically from its antedate nineteenth century Victorian poetry. The Victorian period was “a rather blurry, messy sort of period, a rather sentimentalistic, mannerish sort of period” (Pound, 1968:11). Whereas modern poetry was characterized with experimentation, skepticism and questioning as is maintained by Parab (2013: 2410)

Modern poetry is seen as a total break-down of old faith, idealism and convictions. Modern poetry appears quite skeptical of the old certainties and values governing Victorian poetry; it is dominated by the strong trend to question, examine and test whatever is accepted and followed consciously; there is a clear revolt in Modern poetry against its sense of stability.

In fact, the “Make it New” motto advocated by Pound seems to have been the prevalent spirit of that century. This ‘newness’ has resulted in a maximal exploitation of poetic license reaching a ‘pathological degree of abnormality’ (Leech, 1969:36). This exaggerated estrangement has led some literary figures the likes of William Carol Williams to describe Eliot’s master piece -which later came be an emblem of modernism- *The*

Waste Land as a “great catastrophe to our letter” (as cited in Rainey, 2005).

This constant search for ‘the new’ and for meanings led modern writers to ‘quarrel’ with language, and the quarrel in turn led to different idiosyncrasies related to the content and form of what they wrote making the task of a translator difficult and, in most cases, not final. In addition to the experimentation in form, modern writers, particularly poets, did away with the unity of the line in favor of the unity of the poem that is to be reconfigured by the readers. The poem is seen as a unit that consists of a series of signs whose meanings are determined by each reader/translator.

Since the relationship between language structure and function is a symbiotic one -in the sense that the way the author decides to structure his/ her sentences has a direct impact on the sentence’s function- (Halliday, 1978), these deviations that modern poets deploy in their texts are not coincidental; rather they are meant to foreground critical and strategic aspects of meaning and to open the text for interpretation, especially since the poem “could not survive without a readership who were willing to be active readers and active interpreters” (Whitworth, 2010:14).

As a result of the cultural and literary exchange between Western and Eastern traditions, modern English poetry has come to exert massive influence on Arab poets, so translating modern poetry from English into Arabic has become a necessity of cultural dialogue and was carried out at a massive scale by renowned Arab scholars the likes of Jabra Ibrahim Jabra and Badr Shaker Alssayab (Naser, 2012).

Naturally, any translation venture into any literary text (novel, short story, poem... etc.) would pose serious challenges to the translator as s/he will encounter different aesthetics that are usually language specific. Of all literary genres, the translation of poetic texts is usually the most challenging as those are laden with literary devices and figurative expressions that are typically tied with phonetic and rhythmic features. In modern poetry, the challenge is taken to a higher tier, particularly

because added to the ‘usual predicaments’ that translators of poetry encounter, those translating modern poetry have to deal with unorthodox, deviant linguistic and paralinguistic structures that modern poets harness and play with.

The problem that this paper wishes to address is double-faced. First, almost all translation scholars agree that the existence of a referential or connotative meaning is a prerequisite to translation. In fact, the first attempt to verbalize a systematic translation theory proposed by Dolet suggests that the first ‘principle’ to be followed in the process of translation is to “perfectly understand the sense and material of the original author” (Munday, 2008:27). Drawing on Dolet, Tytler (1978:15) also maintains that the first step in any translation is to “give a complete transcript of the ideas of the original work”. This emphasis on the referential meaning of the ‘original work’ which is a ‘coherent whole’ continued up until the twentieth century when modern poetry first came into being and parallel to it emerged new reading approaches.

Poems are chaotic and fragmented, ‘the author is ‘dead’ (Barthes, 1994:1), meaning is fickle, ‘deferred’ and ‘differs’, subsequently language is no longer trusted as a vehicle for conveying meaning and translation is no longer a straightforward transferring of the now contested ‘meaning’ from one language into another.

The translator’s duty is to prepare a reading that accounts for all the parts of the poem and preserves all possible readings induced by the source text (ST), but is such a comprehensive reading attainable in the light of the inherently problematic translation situation and the translators’ tendency to “resolve the polyvalence... and to impose a particular reading of the text”? (Hatim & Mason, 2014:11)

Moreover, since the production of myriad readings in modern poems is usually a consequence of foregrounding which in turn is the result of what Leech (1969) refers to as a linguistic deviation, the translator, hereby, should exert every effort to cover all perspectives implied in these deviations with the mildest imposition possible, but to what extent is this feasible?

Questions of the Study

This paper aims to give an answer to the following main question: how do translators deal with non-stable and often incomplete structures of modern writing that are responsible for the production of multifarious readings in modern poetry?

More specifically, this paper aims to give answers to the following sub questions:

1. How do translators deal with lexically deviant elements (neologisms) and semantically idiosyncratic elements in modern poetic texts? Do they abandon their quest and fit those into the realm of the 'untranslatable'? Or are there strategies that can be used to compensate for the losses that might accompany their translation?
2. How do translators deal with paralinguistic ST deviations? And how do deviations contribute to the multiplicity of meaning?

Methodology

This paper will be able to answer the raised questions via adapting a descriptive, qualitative approach of analysis. Drawing on Leech's (1969) model, a number of linguistic and paralinguistic deviations and idiosyncrasies encoded in a selection of modern English poems written by the modernist poets T.S. Eliot, E.E. Cummings and Ezra Pound will be thoroughly examined describing their relation to "meaning potential" or what Maleki & Navidi (2011: 30) call "innovative perception" and how they support or invalidate this concept. The paper will rely on a number of excerpts from representative modern English poems followed by Arabic translations; some of these are rendered by professional, published translators (Nabil Rageb, Mohammed As-Sayed Yousef, Abdul Wahed Lu'lu'a and Ahmed Al-Sha'lan) while others are produced by graduates of the Applied Linguistics and Translation Master program at An-Najah National University, Palestine.

Moreover, after describing the texture of these deviations, the researcher will provide a deep analysis of the lexical, grammatical and

stylistic choices that translators have opted for and the extent to which these preserve the implications of the deviant structures.

Finally, the data will be reshaped (perhaps retranslated) –if needed– in a manner that would account for their potential of producing various interpretations.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

The selected framework for this study is the “Foregrounding Theory” which has its origins in Prague linguistic school (Leech, 1969:18). Leech assumes that foregrounding can occur as a result of deviation and parallelism or what he calls “paradigmatic and syntagmatic deviation”, respectively. The former refers to “unexpected irregularity” (Yeibo & Akerele, 2014) which occurs when poetic discourse “deviates from norms characterizing the ordinary use of language (e.g. at the phonological, grammatical, semantic or pragmatic levels)” (Shen, 2007: 1) while the latter is the result of repetition.

This paper will focus on foregrounding resulting from deviations, especially since foregrounding is not uncommonly defined in terms of deviation (Leech & Short, 2007).

These deviations can be seen with clarity in the case of modern English poetry and are to be collected and classified in accordance with Leech’s (1969) linguistic deviation theories which he identifies in his book *A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry* (1969), and are sketched briefly in this section:

1. Lexical deviation: this type of deviation is usually associated with neologisms which are constructed via means of “affixation, compounding, or functional conversion.”
2. Grammatical deviation: in this category, Leech distinguishes between surface and deep structure. He argues that “[v]iolations of surface structure are superficial”, thus having no fundamental impact on sentence comprehension. As for deep structure violations, there are cases where “a position reserved for a word of a certain class is

filled by a word from a different class" and these are treated as "mistaken selections".

3. Phonological deviation: this type of violation refers to cases where the pronunciation of the original words is deliberately modified to suit the rhythm of the poem and is said to be of limited importance in poetry.
4. Graphological deviation: this deviation concerns the visual representation of language whether with regards to the text's shape, spacing, punctuation.
5. Semantic deviation: is a deviation from the commonly accepted facts and realities only to express reality in a more vivid way.
6. Dialectal deviation: "Dialectalism refers to the borrowing of features of socially or regionally defined dialects." It occurs when the poet uses words or structures which are from a dialect different from that of standard language.
7. Deviation of register: the use of unrelated and sometimes paradoxical registers in the same text.
8. Deviation of historical period: refers to a deviation from the "synchronous system shared by the writer and his contemporaries."

The deviations of the prospected study material will be classified in accordance with this model which will be further stratified by the researcher into linguistic and paralinguistic deviations with the former encompassing lexical, grammatical and semantic deviations and the latter graphological deviation whereas the remaining categories are beyond the scope of this paper and will not constitute a part of its analysis.

Since these deviations are in essence but defamiliarizations of language meant to give prominence to certain aspects, they are what "creates a fresh awareness in the beholder, beyond the stale routines of automatized schemes" (Pourjafari, 2012: 201).

From this point, defamiliarization which is defined as "a making strange [...] of objects, a renewal of perception" (Jameson, 1974:51) and

which is the main premise underlying Leech's model of foregrounding can be aligned with the Derridan concept of '*différance*'.

'*Différance*' refers to meaning being both different and deferred in the sense that we cannot predict what a sign would mean in the future; meanings are decided by the context and by the spatiotemporal realities and the metaphysics of the reader's presence. By the same token, the theory of defamiliarization claims that "the purpose of objects like images or poems is not to be permanent referents for states of affairs or meaning, but to lead to a particular form of impeding perception, which is opposed to automatization." In this sense, "defamiliarization both differs and defers because the use of the technique alters one's perception of a concept (to defer), and forces one to think about the concept in a different, often more complex way (to differ)" (Crawford, 2008: 209-219).

Review of Related Works and Theoretical Background

What it means to translate and what we actually translate (meaning, function, or form) have been central issues in translation studies since the beginning of discourse on translation. In fact, Aveling (2004) argues that talk on translation is essentially repetitious and cyclical presuming that the meeting points in translation studies, 'the continuities' supersede the departures. One of these continuities that Aveling refers to is the relentless talk about the translation of poetry in the light of its openness to interpretations and various readings.

This talk has climaxed in the discourse on modern poetry, especially since modern poetry is equipped with certain characteristics that make it inherently conducive to multiple interpretations.

Views on Modern Poetic Discourse

Modern poetic discourses

make us see, make us perceive, make us feel something which alludes to reality...what art makes us see, and therefore gives to us in the form of 'seeing', 'perceiving', and 'feeling' (which is not the form of knowing) is the ideology from which it is born, in which it bathes,

from which it detaches itself as art, and to which it alludes (Althusser, 1971: 222).

Althusser contends that artistic production in general (literature included) is not born in a vacuum, rather it sometimes 'alludes' to reality working as a vehicle which manages to translate and convey the attitudes and the precepts of a given era. Sometimes it takes a step further and attempts to revolt against this reality, at others it 'makes us see, perceive, and feel' driving us into reconceptualizing our understanding of representation. In this manner, literature has a discursive function not only reflecting, but also constructing the world around us, thus stepping out of its representational shell into the broader constructivist function.

In a similar vein, modernism in poetry as Lakfjsdfsh (2013) argues is applied retrospectively to the wide range of experimental and avant-garde trends in the arts that emerged from the middle of the 19th century as artists rebelled against traditional Historicism, and later through 20th century as the necessity of an individual rejecting previous tradition.

This both puts into frame and mirrors the 'reality' in that period and tries to construct a new era of experimentation that breaks away from traditional ways of thinking and writing.

The representational aspect, to start with, can be noticed with clarity in the focus on virtues of experimentalism, individualism and "[i]ntellectualism rather than vulgarity and Philistinism" (Asadi & Salimi, 2013:3) which are mimetic of the rapid growth of modern sciences, technological evolution and industrialization which characterized that period. Such shift in themes is also accentuated by the drift from social, political, religious, and artistic certainties that had been the fulcrum of the Victorian era and which have been described by Ezra Pound –a pillar in modern poetry- in his "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley" to be 'Wrong from the start' as is illustrated in the excerpt taken from the first part of the poem below:

For three years, out of key with his time,
He strove to resuscitate the dead art

Of poetry; to maintain “the sublime”

In the old sense. Wrong from the start—

The constructivist dimension of modern poetic discourse, on the other hand, can be noted in the feelings evoked from reading this type of poetry which, through its eccentric linguistic and paralinguistic formulations, constructs feelings of “discontinuity, fragmentation, and self-consciousness” (Mandal & Modak, 2013: 5) which in turn are then projected unto reality.

From the above, the dialectical relationship between discourse and reality (both reflective and constructivist) can be stretched to encompass and characterize the relationship between reality and different literary genres.

‘Make It New’ and the Constraints of Intertextuality

The experimental orientation of modern poetry is best reflected in the emblem ‘Make It New’ which has been proclaimed by Ezra Pound. This motto has constituted the foundation of modern poetry and is considered the ultimate characteristic that has set this movement apart from its precursors. This idea of novelty in literary creation and total creativity, however, has been questioned by many who pondered upon questions of originality and newness. Of those is Johnstone (2008:193) who claims that

[a]ll creativity has to be embedded in the familiar. Even the most boundary-bending performances-Dada nonsense- syllable poetry, a musical composition consisting of silence, a monochrome black painting, a science fiction alien world – work only insofar as they arise out of a comment on more familiar forms of talk, music, art, or life, and, like writers and conversation-, composers and visual artists sometimes borrow consciously from prior works.

Here, Johnstone asserts that texts are never completely new or totally creative, even the most avant-garde productions are described as such by being juxtaposed to present, or previous texts; ‘familiar’ ones and ‘the verbal artists we think of as speaking in the newest, least conventional

ways...are mostly repeating" (ibid: 163), they are repeating words, grammars, genres and even activities such as book publishing (ibid).

Subscribing to Johnstone's claim, modernism would not be viewed as a radical departure from the premises of Victorianism, rather in trying to distance itself from the traditions of Victorian poetry such as the prevalence of the themes of religion, nature and the sensory images attached to it (Perkins, 1976), modern poetry becomes an extension, an offshoot of Victorian poetry.

Undoubtedly, this is not the case in relation to modern poetry, especially if we weigh newness in relation to breaks and continuities; the breaks in modern poetry are certainly much more than the continuities both in form and content and to claim that "there is no new thing under the sun" (King James Bible: "Ecclesiastes", 1:9, 1462) is to take an extreme perspective. Therefore, the best arbitrator of the incongruity between the two positions would be to take an intermediate stance hypothesizing 'relative newness' in which "MAKE IT NEW" is not to pretend that meaning does not exist but to take the words (sometimes a stretch of language) out of their usual contexts and create new relationships among them" (Perloff, 1999: 75). That is to say that as signs travel from one text to another, they create new relations which in turn lead to creating new meanings within an intertextual space.

Literary Neologisms as a Characteristic of Modern Poetry: Roots and Implications

Munday (2008) argues that translation is defined as an interlingual activity in which the verbal signs of one language are interpreted by using corresponding verbal signs of another. This correspondence presupposes the existence of propositional content of the ST word, a locutionary function -to use terminology borrowed from Austin's speech act theory-; an utterance and a traditional sense of that utterance that is (Austin, 1975).

In other words, the ST must have content for it to be transferred into another language. In some texts and literary works, however, one might

chance upon incomprehensible, nonsensical words (neologisms) and grammatical structures.

This use of meaning-void neologisms in literary works is a “relatively recent phenomenon in literature, originating in Britain in the Romantic and post-Romantic era...in connection with avant-gardist art, namely that it is by its very nature elusive to a genre theoretical approach” (Tigges, 1988: 2).

The main pillars of this literary tradition are the Victorians Edward Lear and Lewis Carroll who used this technique of nonsense in their poetry, especially in writing nursery rhymes (ibid). This technique has later found its way of encroaching and even becoming an integral characteristic of avant-garde modern and postmodern literature as “modernist artists and writers found in nonsense an experimental engine for poetic innovation and a conceptual basis for disrupting the common sense of an increasingly incomprehensible modernity” (Rettberg, 2012:1). In other words, the main purpose of these writers has been to convey the lack of meaning in the modern world; stressing that words, and language in general can no longer be trusted in conveying meanings; for language is not -as some people naively think- a vehicle which carries fixed meanings to an audience, rather it is simply a tool of expression.

Notwithstanding the fact that these elements might seemingly be unfathomable and devoid of meaning, subverting commonsensical knowledge, they often defy common sense ‘in order to whet it’ (Lecerle, 2012:1). In fact, such use of nonsense “both supports the myth of an informative and communicative language and deeply subverts it by first whetting then frustrating the reader’s deep-seated need for meaning” (ibid:5), thusly posing major threats to the possibility of translation and to the work of the translator.

Poetry: between Translatability and ‘Untranslatability’

In literary translation, the order of the cars – which is to say the style – can make the difference between a lively, highly readable translation and a stilted, rigid, and artificial rendering that strips the original of its artistic and aesthetic essence, even its very soul. (Landers, 2001: 7).

The translation of literary aesthetics is notorious for its difficulty as opposed to ordinary informative texts. The difficulty arises from the fact that literary works do not abide by and even violate the Cooperative Principle (CP) and its accompanying Gricean maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manner (though the maxims were originally meant to be applied to conversational interaction, they have been stretched by Van Dijk to cover written literary works) (Van Dijk, 1980). This violation entails a disruption of the flow of direct communication leading the speaker/writer to “opt out from the contextual principles of ordinary conversation” and for the Cooperative Principle to lose grounds (ibid, 46-54). This violation of the Cooperative Principle and the maxims is best embodied in the language of literary discourse which is “highly connotative and subjective because each literary author is lexically and stylistically idiosyncratic ...and uses certain literary techniques such as figures of speech, proverbs and homonyms ...[to] weave literary forms” (Kolawole, 2008: 129).

Of all literary genres, poetry is perhaps the most condensed form and hence the one that imposes an extra burden on the translator, especially due to the claims of the complex relationship between form and function in addition to “the literary features of the source poem such as sound effects, morphophonemic selection of words, figures of speech ...etc.” (Riffaterre, 1992: 204-205).

On account of the aesthetic features of poetry, heated debates emerged concerning the plausibility and possibility of poetry translation, thus marking an extension to Derrida & Venuti’s claim that “at every moment, translation is as necessary as it is impossible” (2001: 183).

This paradox manages to depict and at the same time exaggerate the controversy and tension between the two-pronged divergent approaches to translation: a far-fetched impossibility and an exigency. Viewing translation as an impossible action has been central of much debates. Much of the research in this area concerned itself with the causes behind this impossibility; some, to start with, have ascribed it to the difference in peoples’ dissection and perception of the reality around them (Whorf et al.: 2012); others have made correlations between the feasibility of

translation and the text type deeming the translation of 'sacred' and aesthetic texts, especially poetic ones impossible.

In this context, Nida & Taber (1969: 126) state that "the conflict between the dictates of form and content becomes especially important where the form of the message is highly specialized"; this 'highly specialized' form can be clearly noticed in the case of poetry.

While most translation scholars acknowledge the challenges that arise in translating poetry, some claim that poetry is 'untranslatable'. Frost, for example, argues that 'poetry is what gets lost in translation' (Frost quoted in Barry 1973:159). In more obvious phrasing, Jakobson (1960: 151) claims that "everything is translatable except poetry because it is the very form, the very phonetic quality of a poem in a language which makes a poem" and that the translation of poetry is 'by definition impossible'. Nida & Taber (1969:104) also maintain that "anything that can be said in one language can be said in another, unless the form is an essential element of the message." Moreover, DiYanni (1999) thinks of poetry translation as an act of betrayal that distorts the original.

Other scholars take a less rigid stance towards the idea of poetry translation, yet they set some criteria against which the translated poem is to be compared to determine its acceptability. Mathews (1959: 68), for example, argues that "the final test of a translated poem must be: does it speak, does it sing?" while Benjamin (1923:76) claims that poetry is translatable on the condition that the TT maintains an 'equivalent effect' of the original ST poem. Neither, however, gives a fully-fledged idea of their rather subjective criteria. What does it mean for a poem to sing, to speak? Is this a reference to the musical, rhythmic aspect of poetry for example? Likewise, one is also entitled to pose questions regarding the meaning of 'equivalent effect' and how it is to be gauged or decoded.

Another polemical issue in poetry translation that has been researched vastly is: if translatable, what is the optimal translation method? Is it the literal or the communicative, more or less adaptation related translation method? Or are there other poetry-specific translation strategies?

In this context, Newmark (1988: 70) argues that “the translation of poetry is the field where most emphasis is normally put on the creation of a new independent poem, and where literal translation is usually condemned”. Lefevere (1975), on the other hand, views poetry as a unified whole with form and content closely interwoven and he suggests seven strategies for poetry translation that range from a translation dependent on purely phonetic basis to strategies reliant on content transference.

Despite the aforementioned controversy over the translation of poetry, the researcher claims that contending poetry ‘untranslatable’ is an extreme view - unless the target is to translate poetry into poetry, then claims of the impossibility of translating poetry may find some justification - , for in spite of the challenges that one might face and the inevitable losses of translation “in a sense, nothing is untranslatable” (Derrida, 1998: 56-57) as is clearly evident in the massive amount of translated poetry seen in the literature.

Having poems translated, though, does not entail that their translation is error-free or takes account of all possible readings that might be engendered by the poem; this is why this paper investigates the problems that might surface in the translation of modern poetry from English into Arabic.

Foregrounding in Modern Poetry: Theoretical Origins

At first encounter, one might be enticed to believe that modern poetry ‘untranslatable’, especially given the organized ‘violence’ against language and the many deviations at the linguistic (lexical, grammatical and semantic levels) and paralinguistic levels (most clearly noticed at the graphological level) which “deform cognitive principles in order to achieve effects unique to poetic discourse” (Semino & Culpeper, 2002) and to foreground poetic discourse as opposed to ‘ordinary’ everyday language.

This distinction of poetic language as opposed to standard language is achieved through “the [consistent and systematic] intentional violation of the norm of the standard” (Mukařovský, 1970: 43). Therefore, “the

more the norm of the standard is stabilized in a given language, the more varied can be its violation, and therefore the more possibilities for poetry in that language” (ibid). In fact, in his “Standard Language and Poetic Language” (1970), Mukařovský explains the importance of awareness of the norm and its effect on poetic productions by giving an example of modern Czech poetry which was characterized by utilizing poetic neologisms (ibid).

Similar to modern Czech poets, “true modernist Western poets sought to break out of the traditional confines of syntax and definition” (Steiner, 1961: 214); therefore, their poetic productions came to be characterized by conscious and deliberate violations of the norms and foregrounding became the main mobilizing force of their writing.

The roots of the term ‘foregrounding’ can be traced back to ancient antiquity and related to the work of the great Greek philosopher Aristotle (Halliwell, 1987) who argues that a literary work must be ‘distinguished’ through the use of the unfamiliar. Later, the Russian formalist Shklovsky -in his “Art as Device” (1917)- came to recognize this systematic quality and to give it the term “defamiliarization” which was further refined and developed by the work of the structuralist Czech scholar Jan Mukařovský who came to call the literary devices which lead to defamiliarization ‘aktualizace’ which translates into ‘foregrounding’ and is defined as “the use of the means of language in a way that is novel, creative or unusual, whereby the text draws attention to its own formal features in addition to the communicated content” (1970:20).

Mukařovský further explicates the notion of foregrounding by claiming that foregrounding deautomatizes an act (ibid) which in turn leads to ‘increasing its uncertainty’ (Kent, 1986: 65) and pushes it against conformity and familiarity. This cycle has been summarized by Miall & Kuiken (1994:392) who maintain that “the novelty of an unusual linguistic variation is defamiliarizing, defamiliarization evokes feelings, and feelings guide ‘refamiliarizing’ interpretative efforts.”

This deautomatization of the language of modern poetry and its resulting foregrounding has continued to be central in the world of

literary research, particularly in relation to modern poetic discourse which teems with linguistic and paralinguistic deviations that pose a challenge for their decoders and translators alike, for the former have to formulate a reading (an interpretation) of the poem and the latter have to preserve this meaning potential evoked by the deviations.

Translation: Semantics and Meaning

Translation is an effort of finding equivalent meaning of a text into the second language. We emphasize meaning equivalence since in translation meaning is the object to be rendered from the source language text into the target language text. (Nugroho, 2016:1).

In almost every discourse on translation, a correlation between meaning and translation is presupposed. Meaning as presented here is related to semantics which is one of the main branches of linguistics concerned with the study of the meaning of linguistic expressions. What meaning is, however, has been a bone of contention amongst philosophers and semanticists. One of the reasons behind this controversy pertains to the abstractness of the notion which is by analogy to the speed of an automobile perceptible, yet has no particular component that represents it (Whitehurst & Zimmerman, 1979). Due to this, there have been many theories that attempted to account for what meaning is; of these are corporeal theories which postulate reference to a 'physical material body'; these are of two types: referential and componential. While reference theories claim that 'the meaning of the word is the object for which it stands' relating this to the 'description and labelling' functions of language, componential analysis theories, on the other hand, are an offshoot of structural semantics in which meaning is 'broken down into a set of atomic components'. Both theories have been criticized and deemed insufficient for their failure to account for sense and referential relations, respectively (ibid).

Moreover, modern approaches to literary criticism the likes of deconstruction have broken drastically with old biographical orientations posing many questions on semantic determinacy and meaning consistency proposing that words do not have meanings, rather it is

people who have meanings for words. The traditional ‘safe’ Saussurean (1959) era of one to one correspondence between the sign and its signification came to a halt by the birth of the post-structuralist notion of ‘*différance*’ which was introduced by the French philosopher Derrida.

‘*Différance*’ according to Derrida (1982:8) means both to differ “to be not identical, to be other, discernible, etc.” and to defer which is “the action of putting off until later, of taking into account, of taking account of time and of the forces of an operation that implies an economical calculation, a detour, a delay, a relay, a reserve, a representation” (ibid), hence meaning is unstable; it is ‘an effect of language’ (Davis, 2001:14) and a result of the ‘spatiotemporal’ dimensions of context rather than a priori, a ‘transcendental signified’ existing before and a part from the utterance.

This destabilization of meaning “deprives us of the comfortable fallacy of living in a simple and understandable world” (Koskinen 1994: 446), yet despite the confusion and the loss of security adds Koskinen “we gain endless possibilities, the unlimited play of meanings” (ibid). Parallel to this decentralization of meaning, the author is ‘dead’, dethroned; s/he is no longer the originator of meaning which has been heretofore ‘tyrannically centered on the author, his person, his history, his tastes, his passions’ (Barthes, 1994:1-2) and the intention of the ‘Author- God’, nor is language attached with a ‘transcendental signified’, rather meaning is constructed by the interaction between the reader and his/her cognitive environment, society, history and lingual memory with the various textures and intricacies of the text, thus there will never be a final signification, or a ‘stop clause for the writing’ (ibid).

These approaches to meaning have had a major impact not only on reading practices, but also on translation. In fact, Derrida’s deconstruction reading strategy, though not originally one of translation, considers translation to be ‘[t]he origin of philosophy’ (Derrida et al., 1988: 120), thus giving translation a primary position rather than the traditional conferred upon secondary and derivative status, resisting the binary opposition of systems of categorization that “separate “source” text from “target” text or “language” from meaning” (Gentzler,

2001:147). From here, translation becomes the center, the source of meaning providing 'chains of signification', therefore, meaning is always in motion, every reading is a new writing and eventually a new translation and a source of enrichment to both the (ST) and the (TT) as argued by Derrida (1982: 122):

[t]ranslation augments and modifies the original, which, insofar as it is living on, never ceases to be transformed and to grow. It modifies the original even as it also modifies the translating language. This process--transforming the original as well as the translation--is the translation contract between the original and the translating text.

Modern Poetry and 'Meaning Potential'

Hatim and Mason (2014: 11) argue that opposite to scientific and technical texts, literary texts, especially poetic ones are prone to 'constant reinterpretation' and that "the translator's reading of the source text is but one among infinitely many possible readings, yet it is the one which tends to be imposed upon the readership of the TL version." As difficult as it may be, the translators ought to avoid this imposition of meaning and they must try "to preserve, as far as possible, the range of possible responses... [in order] not to reduce the dynamic role of the reader" (ibid).

If the translator, however, imposes a certain reading on the TT, s/he might compromise an important feature of poetic discourse which is its openness for 'multiplicity of responses' (ibid) which in turn might well affect "the calculability of implicatures in the target text" (Fowler & Aaron, 2007: 159). In other words, the meaning potential of the original ST or what Halliday (1978:109) defines as "the paradigmatic range of semantic choice that is present in the system, and to which the members of a culture have access in their language" might be compromised as a result of mistranslation or the imposition of a reading on the ST.

Data Analysis

The word 'poetry' "derives from the ancient Greek word 'poiētēs' which means to create, beget, produce, compose, or shape (Merriam

Webster dictionary). This innovative aspect of the language of poetry is brought into consciousness at a first glimpse as the reader of poetry feels the distance between his/her ordinary language and that of poetry.

This uniqueness of poetic language has been correlated by the ancient Greeks with divine inspiration by the Muses who gave men the power to create (Hall & Clark, 1979); for them poetry is heavenly rather than a mundane human activity.

From a more scholarly perspective, poetic language is said to be an artistic incantatory of language. In this sense, the difficulty of poetry does not arise from using unusual words, rather in most cases it is the result of using commonplace, familiar language in a peculiar manner, thus intentionally violating the norms of the standard (Mukařovský, 1970); it is the 'how' rather than 'what' that is to say. In this context, the famous Arabic scholar and writer, Al-Jāhiz (1998: 254) in his greatest production *البيان والتبيين* (*Eloquence and Exposition*) maintains that:

"الأدب قائم على تحلية النص وهو قائم على الزينة التي يضيفها إلى المعنى لا على المعنى"

"Literature is based upon beautifying texts; it is based on the beauty that literature adds to the meaning of discourse and not on the meaning itself." (my translation, 2017).

The ornamentations that Al-Jāhiz refers to are the figures of speech such as metaphors, similes, allusions, etc. which are abundant in literary works in general and in poetry in specific.

Modern poetry in English, however, does not abide by the 'what'; rather it abides by the 'how' rule. It does not merely utilize the poet's license to 'decorate' meaning; it tampers with the 'how', creating new words with new meanings alongside with eschewing the conventional linguistic structures. Language becomes an experimental hub; "the laboratory within language is opened up and broken down for experiment and analysis" (McGowan, 2004: 1) with the goal of producing a defamiliarizing effect that estranges average readers and forces them to recognize the artistic quality of the language.

This experiential flare and defiant rejection of the norms of writing set 'poems to misbehave' (Pearce, 1964: 360) making any translation attempt of modern poetic texts similar to a trip on a rollercoaster. The trip is filled with predicaments; the translator must recognize the set of deviations in the ST, attach a signified with the signifier and restabilize 'a sign' rather than 'the sign' in accordance with the spatiotemporal context in which s/he exists.

In the following analysis, linguistic deviations of modern poetry will be discussed in relation to two levels –the levels following Leech's (1969) classification–, the level of form (grammar and lexicon), the semantic level (denotative or cognitive meaning). Simultaneously, the effect of these levels on the production of multifarious readings will be meticulously analyzed by discussing vivid examples of modern poetry. Besides, the chapter will tackle the bumps that the translators might encounter when approaching the ST as a result of the multiple meanings that might be induced by these idiosyncrasies.

Syntax in Modern Poetry- Deconstructing Constructions

Syntax concerns itself with the "regularities in the structure of the sentence, in terms of where words may occur (their distribution, in linguistic terminology) and how words and phrases may combine with each other" (Mellish & Ritchie, 2016:1). In other words, syntactic structures regulate the composition of sentences and constituents, thusly automatizing language and adding a sense of normality to it. "A work of art [on the other hand] in some way deviates from norms which we, as members of society, have learnt to expect in the medium used" (Leech, 1969: 56). This deviation is achieved by the deregulation of syntactic structures which results in foregrounding the language of poetry and making it stand out from the routine everyday language.

In modern poetic discourse, language deautomatization appears to be at its topmost, particularly when it comes to syntactic constructions which are severely disrupted (deconstructed) in emulation of the breakdown of communication and "the impotency of language as a means of communication" (Morrissey, 1978:17). In fact, Pretorius (1982:

70) describes the syntax of modern poetry - in reference to what is considered the major statement of modern poetry *The Waste Land* - as 'chaotic and unsystematic'.

This fractured nature of the syntax of modern poetry is evident in the use of syntactic parataxis in which sentences are relayed "side-by-side, without commenting definitively on their relation to one another," (Rae, 2002:145), i.e., with no grammatical connection (coordinator).

Pretorius (1982:72) argues that "the exploitation of this syntactic feature [in *The Waste Land*]... functionally fuses the real and the unreal." In translation, though, as will be shown in the examples below this grammatical feature is treated differently by different translators.

Example (1a):

April is the cruellest month, ---breeding

Lilacs out of the dead land, --- mixing

Memory and desire, ---stirring

Dull roots with spring rain. (T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*, Section I: "The Burial of the Dead", 1922:9, 1-4).

Example (1b):

أبريل
أكثر الشهور وحشيقي
فهو يستولد زهر الليلاك من الأرض الميتة
ويخلط الذكرى بالرغبة
ويهبج الجذور البليدة بأمطار الربيع (ترجمة محمد السيد يوسف، الأرض الخراب، 1. دفن الموتى،
2008: ص 1)

Example (1c):

أبريل أشد شهور العام قسوة
يخرج زهور الليلاك من بطن الأرض الميتة
يمزج الذكرى بالرغبة الحية

يسري بأمطار الربيع في الجذور الخامة فتنبض. (ترجمة نبيل راغب، الأرض البيضاء، 1. دفن الموتى، 1995: ص51)

Eliot opens the poem with a series of sentences displaying paratactic constructions. Such constructions as aforementioned do not comment with definiteness on the kind of linkage that connects the sentences with each other, thus upsetting and baffling the readers who are “accustomed at scanning every piece of language that [they] hear or read for clues of its grammatical structure” (Gunter, 1971: 28). This ambiguity, however, leaves open a margin for an active readership that tries to fill in gaps and to form a reading out of the text presented.

In translation –as can be noted-, different attitudes have been assumed by the translators with regards to the paratactic constructions which suggest difference in reading. As-Sayyed Yousef , on the one hand, does away with the parataxis and translates the stanza in harmony with Arabic discourse which is ‘complexly repetitive and almost entirely paratactic’ (Johnstone, 1987:86), hence forcing a causal relation between the first and the second lines and an additive reading of the second and the third, and the third and the fourth lines. Rageb, on the other hand, seems more aware of this deviant feature of the ST and its ramifications at the level of readership. Therefore, he preserves the paratactic construction which implies that the sentences do not belong together, thus giving the readers the opportunity to interpret the text each from his/her angle and perspective.

Example (2a):

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;

Petals on a wet, black bough. (Ezra Pound, “In a Station of the Metro”, 1913)

Example (2 b):

شبح هذه الوجوه في الحشد،

ولكن البتلات تنمو على غصن أسود ورطب. (translated by Elien Amjad, 2017)

Example (2c):

الطيب لهذه الوجوه في الزحام؛

والبتلات على غصن أسود رطب. (translated by Tasneem El-Shiek, 2017)

In this very short imagist poem, Pound juxtaposes two starkly dissimilar images – or even fragments of images - moving from a description of apparitions which are suggestive of a ghostly, non-mundane nature (Oxford dictionary, 2017) to a description of flowers and nature. This transition between the images is syntactically paratactical as no connector links the two sentences. This raises a question with regards to the relationship between the two lines: Is the first line independent of the second? Or is it subordinate to it? Whether one endorses the first or the second opinion would have a major impact on the interpretation of the poem. Whereas – based on a view of each line as a separate image, the focus of interpreters has been on the break of time and space limits (Espey, 1971), those who view them as connected try to impose some sort of metaphorical relationship between the image of “faces in the crowd” and nature as represented by flowers and trees (Knapp, 1979).

In translation, the parataxis which has been the primary trigger of the variance in interpretation in this succinct poem has been replaced with a connector to be more in concordance with Arabic rules of coherence. The translators, though, opted for different connectors reflecting addition ("و", /wa/ = and) and contrast ("لكن", /lakIn/= but), respectively. This difference in the choice of coordinating conjunctions reflects a difference in conception equivalent to that of critics who have adopted two approaches to reading the poem.

Though the TT readers would still have a margin of freedom to formulate a reading of their own; their chances would be reduced as a result of this imposition on the ST, hence a translation that preserves the original paratactic construction would be a better one.

Syntactic Inversion

When reading a sentence, we “must assign a grammatical identity to each word, and determine the relation of each word to its neighbors”

(Gunter, 1971: 28) in order to give it a natural flow that allows the readers to come to an understanding of the relationship between sentences' lexemes.

In many poems though, these 'grammatical clues' might be very difficult to detect as a result of syntactic inversion which is defined according to Encyclopedia Britannica as "the syntactic reversal of the normal order of the words and phrases in a sentence."

This deliberate distortion of the order of constituents is not very uncommon in modern poetry. In fact, it is one of the tools that modern poets use to 'put [the reader's] interpretive faculties to the most severe test' (Gunter, 1971: 29). This is most evident in the excerpt before us from Cummings' "nonsun blob a".

Example (3a):

nonsun blob a
cold to

skylesness
sticking fire
my are your
are birds our all
and one gone
away the they (Cummings, "nonsun blob a", 1944)

Example (3b):

اللاشمس تضع
برداً
للسماء المكفهرة
تلصق النار
لي تكون لك
تكون الطيور لنا جميعاً
و واحد ذهب

بعيداً ال هُم (my translation, 2017)

At first glance, this excerpt of the poem seems an utter nonsense as it appears that Cummings has completely ‘bypass[ed] syntax’ (Garvin& Kirkland, 1977: 160), but at closer inspection, one can notice that this is an extreme case of inversion in which the poet has ‘broken up the constituents and scattered the pieces about’ (Gunter, 1971: 29), thus obviating any permanent reference or meaning.

Hill (1967:85) attempts a ‘recovery’ of the poem by rearranging the scrambled, inverted words and even forcing punctuation on the stanzas as follows:

nonsun- a blob, cold fire, sticking to skyliness

the birds are mi[ne], are your[s], are our[s]. They are one and all gone away

Hill (1967) further argues that this is only one of an infinite number of probable rearrangements. By the same token, Gunter (1971) claims that though Hill’s rearrangement gives the readers’ an opportunity to ‘assign grammatical structure’, it notwithstanding still calls for varied interpretations as to what the poem is about and how the poem’s stanzas can be related to each other.

Once again, the study reiterates that syntactic deviations rank towards the extreme right end on the translatability cline, nonetheless, the translator should be aware of the implications of the peculiar features of modern poems including syntactic inversion and the impact of this inversion on readership, therefore the translator has opted for the retention of the original text’s word order in the translated version rather than imposing a word order that would couch impressionistic references to a stable one-dimensional meaning.

Semantic Deviation: From Coherence to Fragmentation

Van Dijk (1980:96) defines coherence as “a semantic property of discourse, based on the interpretation of each individual sentence relative to the interpretation of other sentences”, viz. it concerns itself with “the

underlying continuity of sense of any stretch of language” (Hatim& Mason, 2005: 3).

Van Dijk (ibid: 52) also distinguishes between two levels of coherence: local (linear) and global. Whereas local coherence concerns itself with the ‘relations between sentences of a textual sequence’, global coherence is defined as “discourse as whole... the ‘theme’, ‘idea’ ‘upshot’ or ‘gist’ of a discourse or a passage of the discourse”; this ‘theme’ is determined by the interaction of the various levels of macro-structures of the discourse.

In modern poetry, the achievement of this standard of textuality –at least at the local level - is thwarted as a result of the high level of fragmentation and lack of thematic unity.

“These fragments I have shored against my ruins” (1922: 431) says Eliot’s in *The Waste Land* affirming the textual discontinuity of his poem which is evident in the sporadic and ceaseless oscillation between the past and the present, shifts in the tone, voices alongside with the shift in language which is considered by Cooper (1987:3) as a ‘technical advance... significant as a critique of settled forms of coherence’. This textual incoherence evokes a sense of strangeness and is said to be a virtue of Eliot’s poetry as it reflects the general state of fragmentation and incoherence that is a dominating feature of modern society (Hay, 1965).

Eliot - right from the epigraph - disrupts the structural unity of the poem and its overall coherence by bombarding us with lines from German, French, Italian and Sanskrit. This linguistic intrusion adds a sense of chaos to the poem and compels the readers to ponder about their correlation with the poem, constantly reminding them with their inability to completely understand what is theirs; language.

In translation, these lines are treated differently by different translators as will be illustrated in the examples to follow.

Example (4a)

Summer surprised us, coming over the Starnbergersee

With a shower of rain; we stopped in the colonnade,
And went on in sunlight, into the Hofgarten,
And drank coffee, and talked for an hour.

Bin gar keine Russin, stamm' aus Litauen, echt deutsch. (T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*, Section I: "The Burial of the Dead", 1922: 9, 8-11)

Example (4b):

جاءنا الصيف على غرة، عابرا بحيرة شتار نبرجرسي
بوابل من أمطاره، فلزمننا وفتتنا أسفل رواق الأعمدة
ثم التحفنا بالشمس فعدنا الى المسير بين مروج الهوفجارتن
واحتسينا قهوة، وثرثرنا ساعة من الزمن.
لا .. لست روسية اطلاقا، فأنا ألمانية الأصل من ليتوانيا.⁽¹⁾ (ترجمة نبيل راغب، الأرض
البياب، 1. دفن الموتى، 1995: ص51)

Example (4c):

الصيف
فاجأنا زاحفا نحو "سترانبرجنزي" بزخات المطر
فاحتمينا بيمشى الأعمدة
ثم تابعنا تحت نور الشمس إلى " الهوفجارتن"
و شربنا القهوة .. و تحدثنا نحو ساعة ...

Bin gar keine Russin, stamm' aus Litauen, echt deutsch.⁽²⁾

(ترجمة محمد السيد يوسف، الأرض الخراب، 1. دفن الموتى، 2008: ص3)

After drawing a melancholic picture of April which is supposed to be the month of rejuvenation and describing it as 'the cruellest month' as it passes over the desolate 'waste' land, Eliot then introduces us to a snippet of what seems like a monologue narrated from the viewpoint of an anonymous speaker recounting the events of what seems to be a series

⁽¹⁾ هذا البيت كتبه اليوت بالالمانية وقد عجزت عن العثور على النص الالمانى الذي اقتبس منه، ولذلك لا استطيع الجزم عما اذا كان من تأليف اليوت الذي يجيد الالمانية كأبناتها أو انه اقتبس من نص الماني.

⁽²⁾ العبارة بالالمانية وتقول: "أنا لست روسية وإنما لتوانية .. ألمانية أصيلة "

of recollections of the past; a better past where all is different and more peaceful as can be seen through the portrait of the beautiful shower of rain, sunlight, lake and the coffee get-togethers which all of sudden breaks up with a line from German, completely separate from the lines preceding and following it, impeding comprehension and dismantling coherence, consequently echoing the voices of "the whole generation [who] got metamorphosed into 'hollow men'" (Ahmed, 2014: 2). In order to understand the meaning of this line, a reader –not acquainted with German- must depart his/her reading quest, disrupt the text's coherence and resort to translation which renders the line into "I am not Russian at all; I come from Lithuania, a true German." Even then, the line still evokes an image of an incoherent fragmented world divided up by separatism and nationalistic identity.

When the stanza is translated into Arabic, this line is treated differently by Rageb and As-Sayyed Yousef. Whereas Rageb translates the German sentence into Arabic and footnotes the fact that the sentence is written in German in the original ST, As-Sayyed Yousef does the opposite by transferring the German line as is into the Arabic version and providing at the same time a footnote that translates the line into Arabic.

The divergence in rendering would -as will be illustrated in the analysis below- result in a difference in the scope of interpretations available for the TT audience. Rageb's rendition of the line, to start with, revokes any sign of foreign-language intrusion, thusly abolishing the play of signs. In fact, by choosing to translate the line into Arabic, Rageb is actually committing a fatal mistake as he 'resolve[s] [the text's] polyvalence' and imposes upon the readership a TT version which de facto inhibits the TT receptor from tailoring an interpretation in a manner that fits the variables surrounding him/her (time, place, environment...etc.). As-Sayyed Yousef, on the other hand, makes a wiser translation choice by putting on a pedestal the chaotic, unfathomable and foreign nature of the line by transferring it as is (preserving both its form and content without any translation) into the Arabic rendition.

Doing this, As-Sayyed Yousef allows for a difference between the readings making the text resistant for imposition and crossing the

threshold of fixation or attachment of the text's meaning to the author's intention. In fact, Eliot (1921:11) himself is self-conscious of this fact as manifested in his 'impersonal theory' of poetry in which he claims that mature poetry is depersonalized and that "honest criticism and sensitive appreciation are directed not upon the poet but upon the poetry", reducing the poet to a mere catalyst; a trace that provides a platform for the creation of meaning that is the outcome of interaction between the tradition and the current; the past with the present.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The current paper has investigated the language of modern poetry which has – under the influence of the world wars and industrial revolution – witnessed a conscious break with the conventional writing traditions. This break had been most clear in the experimental inclinations of the poets in this era as they found language an insufficient means for expressing the multi-faceted fragmentation and sense of illusion of the modern world.

To surpass this inadequacy of language, modern poets have laden their texts with a set of linguistic and paralinguistic deviations that estrange the language of modern poetry and defamiliarize it, thus dislocating and alienating the modern reader who is then obliged to reassemble pieces of the puzzle and to develop a reading that attests to his/her socio-cultural environment. The paper has related this 'reassembling' with modern literary criticism, especially deconstruction reading strategy which amongst its various claims contends the absence of transcendental signified which in turn leads to meaning indeterminacy.

The paper has also confirmed the fact that the deviations of modern poetry are not mere detours meant to make poetry convoluted and complex in comparison to ordinary language, but rather textual catalysts for the readers to 'renew perception' and invoke multiple readings. From this point, the paper has examined the linguistic peculiarities of modern poetry adopting Leech's model of analysis while paying special attention to lexical, grammatical and semantic unconventionalities.

The analysis revealed the importance of these deviations in constructing readers' perception, but due to their subtleties, some translators (as is evident in the case studies) have passed by these signs innocently without recognizing them, others were able to recognize their deviation without properly identifying their connotative aspects. At cases, even past recognition and comprehension, the translators still faced obstacles that have deterred the natural flow of translation.

Eventually, this paper contributes to building a model for the translation of modern poetry from English based on a combination of Leech's foregrounding theory - more specifically his model for linguistic deviations - and Derridan post-structuralist reading strategy. Therefore, any translation strategy that the translator of modern poetry is to adopt should be in accord with the spirit of '*différance*' and the meanings aroused by the deviations. Hereby, the more the translator is aware of the deviations in literature in general and in modern poetry in specific, the more familiar s/he will be with their semiotic value and the more responsible his/ her translations will be.

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