

An Approach to Modern Discourse Translation: Polyphony as an Aesthetic Means

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Abstract:

As part of their many aesthetic experiments, modern authors blurred the barriers between literature and translation. Modern writers have absorbed translational tactics to question national identity and culture in opposition to their present English linguistic and cultural goals. Because many of them straddled two cultures, they were forced to resort to translation, which introduced not just literature to intercultural dialogue but also translation to cultural functioning processes. Starting with the nature and purpose of translation as a paradigm for modernist thought, it is preferable to explore Jacob Korg's concept of 'verbal revolution', Venuti's ideas, and the formation of many translation trends, which include intertextual translation or the introduction of foreign words through text. Many researchers in translation studies have focused on such a meeting of two different languages in literature, representing Bakhtin's 'polyphony.' Second, as a key to cross-cultural communication, the current research sheds light on translation as an artistic experiment of modern writers attempting to construct a discourse of contemporary experience based on the communication of several languages.

Keywords: translation, modernism, culture, extraterritoriality, intertextual translation, polyphony.

Introduction

Both literature and translation are widely acknowledged to be impacted by culture in a variety of ways. Language being the major tool in human communication is the common variable that has established such a

dramatic link. Writers' continual concern is how to effectively express themselves with words, and via their creativity, they not only convey their thoughts and experiences, but also chronicle the specificities of knowledge and culture prevalent at the time. The difficulty is that when modernism originated as a rebellious concept against tradition, the modernist writers were severely dissatisfied with their immediate surroundings' offers. Modernism, on the other hand, has permitted an excessive amount of individual movement, necessitating the use of translation and interpreters to assist comprehension and conversion. It is obvious that translation has always existed alongside literature; nonetheless, the boom happened when literary translation became the center of Translation Studies at a time when the indigenous' exposure to the foreign was overpowering.

In the sphere of translation, the intricacy of cultural action in modernist literature is vividly apparent. Indeed, the translator's focus is no more the interaction between two languages, or the mechanical sounding act of linguistic 'substitution,' as Catford (1965) phrased it. What's at stake is a tangled discussion between two cultures, highlighting the contentious topic of cultural identity. At this level of analysis, and given that many modernists, including E. Pound, G. Stein, T.S. Eliot, J. Joyce, V. Woolf, J. Conrad, and others, experienced exile and foreignness, one can argue that claims of cultural variety and interculturality are primarily postmodern phenomena. It would be valid to say that translation is one of the paradigmatic features of modernist thought, or rather an aesthetic device used by authors and poets who have been straddling two cultures, based on the belief that the modernists' dissatisfaction with their native linguistic and cultural agendas must be seen as an essential condition to their resort to foreignizing poetics.

1. Modernism and Translation

One of the primary purposes here is to recognize the rise of linguistic experimentation as a spirit of modernism. As the relationship between language, logic, and reality became a foundation, several modernist authors turned to translation as a technique of literary creativity, creating a space

for overlapping cultural limits and exilic experiences. When these new developments occurred, it became clear that extraterritoriality had resulted in a new perspective on translation, as well as the creation of the concept that language is culturally ingrained. A vast body of literature in the humanities and language research has demonstrated the relationship between language and culture, proving that language can only be comprehended within a culture (Sapir, 1929). Sapir's assertion that "no two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same reality" (p. 214) was the most forceful. In Kramersch's Language and Culture (1998), echoes of such a theory have found fertile ground. Moreover, Kramersch contends:

Language is a system of signs that is seen as having itself a cultural value. Speakers identify themselves and others through their use of language: they view their language as a symbol of their social identity. Thus we can say that language symbolizes cultural reality. (p. 3)

Meanwhile, Translation Studies has achieved its pinnacle with the advent of 'Cultural Translation,' in which researchers such as Venuti, Toury, and Munday have proposed that translation is culturally ingrained as well. They proved in this context that understanding and mastering the language alone does not ensure a successful translation process; instead, they deal with the cruxes of culture, namely the resistance to specific elements in the source language that draw specifically from each culture's uniqueness. The modernists' involvement with migration, exile, and displacement has relied heavily on culture's translational power.

One of the most perplexing problems about the nature and purpose of translation in modernist philosophy is the link between modernism and translation. Though I won't go into detail about modernism as a concept, I'd like to emphasize that, no matter how you look at it, it refers to the institutionalization of doubt over all previous assumptions, so that, at least in this case, translation has become a tool for an exhaustive exploration of literary language renewal.

The inability of language to express the complexity of the contemporary world, where a diversity of cultural experiences came into reality, was the most prevalent issue for authors and poets at the turn of the twentieth century. In his book Language in Modern Literature, based on the notion of 'revolution' Jacob Korg (1979) writes, "there is no doubt that a revolution occurred, and that it was primarily a verbal revolution, manifesting itself in new uses of language" (p. 1). In this situation, the reality in question is nuanced and multifaceted rather than straightforward and definitive. Through their social and individual identities, authors' and poets' lives were driven to explore new language domains that were unknown to them, thereby enlightening them about the limitations of their native agendas — both linguistic and cultural.

T.S. Eliot (1957) expressed one of the first and most significant formulations of this principle as a challenge to critics who could not understand his aim "there is always the communication of some new experiences, or some fresh understanding of the familiar, or the expression of something we have experienced but have no words for, which enlarges or refines our sensibility" (p. 7). The language of tradition was unable to contain the newness of modern experience. The need for a 'foreignizing' poetics had become critical in the face of a growing trend to reconsider the function of conventional English and its full potential in the visibility of modern experience.

Much interest in translation, both as a source of inspiration and as a way of changing western society, broadened the scope of modernist ideas, providing new possibilities for the discipline of literature. The concept of Venuti (1995) concerning the importance of translation in this section should be taken into account. He considers translation to be an art form "an appropriation of foreign culture for domestic agendas, cultural, economic and political" (p.18). Aside from that, translation is sometimes referred to as a process of "cultural act, an act of communication across cultures" (House, 2009, p.11) which represents a significant contribution to the development of modernism. Yao (2002) shows in his book Translation and the Language of Modernism that modernist translation has demonstrated its

full power to improve national literature by providing new meanings as it embraced foreign language and cultural settings:

It embodied a comprehensive textual strategy for negotiating between the demands of transmission and transformation, between the authority of tradition and the demands of innovation, between the endowments of the past and the imperatives of the present. In their drive to develop and renew different formal and social possibilities, the Modernists writing in (and into) English turned to translation and, in turn, reinvented it as a uniquely important mode of literary composition. (p.22)

Several modernist authors and poets have absorbed the entire translation process, not just transferring from one language to another, but also adopting the language of translation as their own. Without a doubt, translation has evolved as a heroic literary discipline critical to the development of Anglo-American modernism itself. J. Joyce, W.B. Yeats, Hilda Doolittle (known by her initials H.D.), M. Moore, T.S. Eliot, V. Woolf, and D.H. Lawrence, among many others, drew heavily from foreign cultures and were affected by writers from other languages. E. Pound, who embraced, to his fullest, the way foreign literary traditions penetrate national and international borders, was the most stunning of all and the one who urged translation into literary practice. Several modernist authors and poets have absorbed the entire translation process, not just transferring from one language to another, but also adopting the language of translation as their own. Without a doubt, translation has evolved as a heroic literary discipline critical to the development of Anglo-American modernism itself. J. Joyce, W.B. Yeats, Hilda Doolittle (known by her initials H.D.), M. Moore, T.S. Eliot, V. Woolf, and D.H. Lawrence, among many others, drew heavily from foreign cultures and were affected by writers from other languages. The most striking of all, and the one who advocated for translation as a literary technique, was E. Pound, who praised the way foreign literary traditions cross national and cultural boundaries to the nth

degree. Pound is a preeminent example of translation-based literary innovation because of his grafting of the foreign upon the domestic. Modernist poetry would only be possible for him if it was translated. His technique, which is considered scandalous in the field of national literature, encapsulates his audacity as a translator, expanding the confines of English verse by developing a new form that is extremely similar to the original. In this regard, it is worthwhile to investigate various theoretical perspectives such as poststructuralist and semiotic for a better understanding of the translation warranty in modernist literature.

3. Poststructuralism and Semiotics: Translation Approaches

Translation is defined by poststructuralists as “an action in which the movement along the surface of language is made visible” (Gentzler, 1993: 162) represents Pound's philosophy to a tee. To illustrate this point of view, Venuti's (1995) concept of translation as: “A process by which the chain of signifiers in the target language text that constitutes the source language is replaced by a chain of signifiers in the target language text which the translator provides on the strength of an interpretation” (p.17) is investigated here. The current definition contains two perspectives: one from a poststructuralist and one from a traditionalist. “which entertains the belief in which culture plays a significant role in the translation of a particular text and it has much more precedence over the linguistic element due to its great influence on the translation process” (Nazzal, 2012, p.84). The semiotic perspective is based on the work of R. Jakobson and U. Eco, who established inter-linguistic, intra-linguistic, and inter-semiotic translations as vitally illuminating views of cultural systems.

Several poststructuralist scholarly publications have defended the validity of translation as a modernist conceptual paradigm. Both J. Derrida and P.de Mann have developed their perspectives on translation in opposition to established concepts, departing from W. Benjamin's work. In fact, the concept of “stability of the original”, missing its grip, as P. de Man (1986, p.82) indicated “translation shows in the original a mobility, an instability, which at first one did not notice.” Derrida, too, rejected the

conventional purpose of translation as a means of replicating; instead, he stressed the language's ability to transform the source text. So, rather than a mirror of the original text, Venuti's "refraction" is the most recent contribution to the aforementioned concepts, and the one that summarizes both. The emergence of Translation Studies as an interdisciplinary topic has been aided by the liberation of translation from its long-standing faithfulness to the source text to continuing with alienation and disruption.

W. Benjamin (1992), who suggested that translation had a turning function, reinforced this aspect. "the task of the translator is to release in his own language that pure language which is under the spell of another, to liberate the language imprisoned in a work in his re-creation of that work" (pp. 80-81). He talks about the original's mobility, which indicates a style of displacement, which reveals a lot about the link between translation and modernism. That is why Pound's description of the "labour of translation" in his article on Henry James as an exiled cosmopolitan who informed about civilizations through translation is so appealing. The features of mobility and displacement that characterize the modernist concept of translation lead to the reproduction of an original meaning within a wholly alien setting, which must be recognized at this level. This is precisely what Schaeffner and Adab claim with their 'hybrid text' perspective:

A hybrid text is a text that results from a translation process. It shows features that somehow seem 'out of place'/'strange'/'unusual' for the receiving culture, i.e. the target culture. These features, however, are not the result of a lack of translational competence or examples of 'translationese', but they are evidence of conscious and deliberate decisions by the translator. Although the text is not yet fully established in the target culture (because it does not conform to established norms and conventions), a hybrid text is accepted in its target culture because it fulfills its intended purpose in the communicative situation (at least for a certain time)." (quoted in Stockinger, 2003, p. 17)

The feasibility of a translation is thus determined by its self-reflexive feature of non-fidelity to the preceding text, which leaves corridors open for discussion and reconstruction. Modernist writers and poets hankered for and practiced translation as one of their miscellaneous aesthetic experiments, challenging established concepts of the self and the other on the one hand, and generating new agendas for their native language and culture on the other, through such an epistemological tendency that sets translation as a trans-disciplinary paradigm.

Many modernists resorted to what has been referred to as "foreignizing" poetics in reference to their extraterritorial experiences being a main condition of the modern self in the modern world in their search for the exotic and unfamiliar, seen as a source of inspiration to fill in the discrepancies of the original. The relevance of translation for the identity of the receiving culture had become a condition by the turn of the twentieth century, as the interpretation of the cultural worth of a to-be-translated work was at risk. Many people are concerned about what Venuti (1998) calls the identity-forming potential of translations, which allows a culture to define itself both via coherence and homogeneity as well as endurance or modernism.

Homi K. Bhabha (1994), a cultural studies critic, had already made an insightful comment on this a few years before Venuti, when he argued that "cultural translation is not simply an appropriation or adaptation; it is a process through which cultures are required to revise their own systems and values, by departing from their habitual or 'inbred' roles of transformation" (p. 27). What was once considered shocking when avant-garde modernists went to foreign languages and cultures for more revealing terms to express their feelings is now completely institutionalized.

Moving beyond the valid condition of translation in modernist literature, one could wonder which path we should take to comprehend its connection to cultural functioning processes. R. Jakobson offered the solution by demonstrating that the line between translation studies and cultural semiotics has blurred. Dealing with translation in the light of semiotics will not elicit much discussion of its impact on translation theory,

but I will claim that the semiotic feature of intertextual translation presented through dialogism is demonstrated by T. S. Eliot's usage of foreign terms in his works.

The incorporation of various parts plundered from literature in foreign languages is one of the notable tactics that distinguish the works of the modernists, giving modernism a multilingual dimension. Other languages served as inspiration for defamiliarizing their national tongues, with Pound's translations of Chinese poetry serving as the primary impetus for the formation of Anglo-American imagism. Besides that, T.S. Eliot's piece published in French, 'Mélange adultère de tout' (1916), creates a feeling of dialogic thinking for the traveler from one area to another confirming hence Pound's core premise of the juxtaposition of two or even three separate sections. Such flexibility of contact across languages might be viewed semiotically in terms of Leon Robel's (1995) "emphasis that Bakhtin attributes to the language of literature (and, at the same time, also the text) the capacity to operate as a metalanguage in translating from one sign system into another" (quoted in Torop, 2002: 598).

Nevertheless, what appears essential to Bakhtin's position is that the modernists' writings, through such a new medium of expression, work as "a dialogic place, for at least two different logics meet in it: those of two different languages" (De Michiel 1999: 695). Actually, the meeting of two languages in a same area is more than just a basic confluence of two cultures; it is also a method to break free from monolingual restrictions. Bakhtin's writings are regarded as the most notable in admitting freedom as an essential component in literary works that reflect several centers of awareness. Polyphony is a term that literally means "multi-voicedness". Regarding the poetic structure of Eliot's, The speaker's free itinerant triggers a series of interactions between various ideological perspectives shaped by the specificities of the location, influencing identity in the process of translation and/or transformation. According to Bakhtin, meaning is entirely produced from the interaction of different consciousnesses, which has lately been characterized in identity studies through the concepts of place and mapping.

J. Joyce is another exceptional exponent of polyphony in English literature, according to Sheldon Brivic, whose position is quite distinctive that no one else can match. “before Joyce had expressed such a plural consciousness or taken such a multiphonic point of view.” (p.58 quoted in Bakhtin 1984). His linguistic alienation is first portrayed in his autobiographical book The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, in which he describes himself as a witness to his foreignness throughout the majority of his life, having to continually interpret himself and speak the other's language. He said once “I’d like a language which is above all languages” (Ellmann 1959: 410) criticizing a single language's limitations. In The Portrait (1968), Stephen Dedalus discusses the linguistic problem as:

The language in which we are speaking now is his before it is mine...His language, so familiar and so foreign, will always be for me an acquired speech. I have not made or accepted its words. My voice holds them at bay. My souls frets in the shadow of his language. (p. 189)

Since his life-long experience of self-exile brought him to the fabric of English, which was made up of interwoven characteristics from sixty various languages, his linguistic journey did not achieve the desired conclusion.

As previously said, the interdependence of translation and modernism has paved the door for many disciplines of study to broaden their scopes, including linguistic, sociological, and anthropological studies. When it comes to identification, the cultural shift in translation has exploded in tandem with the emergence of diasporic literatures. Last but not least, the next section will be a short examination of certain modernists' journey across worlds and languages, which undermines traditions and national literary streams.

4. Translating the hybrid self

In his book The Dialect of Modernism, Michael North (1994) discusses the impact of linguistic differences on identity development in works by

modernists dealing with the concept of 'betweenness.' He mentions T.S. Eliot's The Waste Land as a venue for numerous cross-cultural artefacts featuring examples of otherness, tacitly asking the West to look to other parts of the world to secure its advancement. Because it does not conform to the standards of national literature, this element of the translated self, as evidenced by the inclusion of lines in other languages, allows for the study of the work as a diasporic one. In a way to evoke S. Rushdi's idea (1991) "we are translated men" (p. 16), The original had been entirely criticized by Eliot, who had replaced it with "the creative borrowing of another style and syntax which releases a plethora of voices" (Ackroyd Peter, 1984, p. 117). Eliot's thought that his voice might sound only through repeating the sounds of others, as he matures, revealing his feeling of being on the fringes, in constant interaction with languages and cultures.

Quando fiam uti chelidon---O swallow swallow
Le Prince d'Aquitanie à la tour abolie
These fragments I have shored against my ruins
Why then Ile fit you. Hieronymo's mad againe.
Datta. Dayadhvam. Damyata.
Shantih shantih shantih (Eliot, 1963: 69)

Contesting cultural and social uniformity, in this case, tends to produce an entirely new language that represents cross-cultural interactions. Because many writers were also translators, the drive to explore and utilize foreign options began with the translation process. As a result, another crucial characteristic that accounts for translation as a discourse of modern experience is geographical and cultural location. The literary expatriate authors and poets were the forerunners of break, whose shared belief that only the foreign can expand their local language and culture highlighted the power and relevance of another language, even if it was incongruent with the original.

In modernist world conditions, authors' new worry is whether words are capable of carrying and transmitting the actuality of such a new experience's complexity and strangeness. Eugene O'Neill's contributions to American and international theatre are recognized in a similar way, via his

serious concerns about how best to explain and depict the complex psychologies that distinguish his tormented characters. Remarkably, the characters' and O'Neill's language may reveal how effective the playwright was at establishing a coherent world in which all characters live as gears in the heartless, mechanical expanse in which they must all finally perish. The characters rely extensively on a discourse that identifies them as much as it delivers story information to the viewer in their struggles to transcend the limiting authority in their life. "How we poor monkeys hide from ourselves behind the sounds called words," Nina Leeds states in Strange Interlude, mindful of her own impending doom lurking beneath those sounds.

O'Neill was never satisfied with existing beliefs, and his apprehension extended to trusting language to explain his views. His trouble with language was frequently characterized as an act of exile and alienation throughout his experimental time. In truth, the act of exile was both a critique and a search at the same time. A preoccupation with language, semantics, and articulation found fertile ground in O'Neill's play in the search of whether the most squalid, and to some degree, blind alleys of existence might be lighted. However, his never-ending explorations with the word, which he frequently found too mutable to fully convey his meaning, went beyond the text, in search of the real process of presenting through physical theatre. O'Neill criticizes language throughout his work, even as he depends on it to establish a sense of the distinction between the essential self and its manifestation (Biggsby, 1992). He expresses his personal understanding of language's ultimate insufficiency and, as a result, its corruption of objective reality.

His scepticism of language is evident throughout his collection of work, which is filled by a disproportionate number of schemers, liars, dreamers, hucksters, and performers, men and women who use words not to define reality but to disguise and transcend it. They are, without a doubt, a theatrical bunch. O'Neill, on the other hand, feels a sense of kinship with individuals from all walks of life, as seen by his body of work, since if there is a certainty revealed below the veneer of language in O'Neill's work, it is to illustrate that we are all destined. However, O'Neill's tragedy is

terribly constrained, making it impossible for any language, original or invented, to alleviate the characters' dire circumstances. We can connect his search for language to his creation of the tragic character, whose retreat from articulacy to silence is generally evident in the character's escapes from reality, whether through insanity, drink, or drugs, all of which are simply overt symptoms of what the dramatist referred to as the "Sickness of Today".

In several of her works, Virginia Woolf addressed the dilemma of language's potential for meaning and communication. Her diverse literary tactics, such as the use of broken and subversive words, fragmented ideas and pictures, represent a modernist writer's task of forging a language appropriate to the reality of modernity. However, hers is a dual exercise in terms of literary and social limits, as she battles the male-dominated culture. This concept is best expressed in her work A Room of One's Own, in which she explores the responsibility of the female author in creating a vocabulary for her position.

With the publication of Joseph Conrad's novel, Heart of Darkness (1902), one of the most famous examples of a translated self in the history of British literature, the language of translation began to evolve. J. Conrad's effective involvement with translation processes as a Polish émigré has been most rewarding for the concept of modernist identity. His method varies from Eliot's, Pound's, and Joyce's in that it is one-way from the outside to the interior, whereas theirs is a series of residences alternating between local and foreign. The multi-voiced characterisation in his work gave fertile ground for examining the link between modernism and translation, which got even more difficult as the novel progressed. The characters' interactions are linguistically portrayed by their many spoken languages, addressing the question of the function of geography and place in language formation. The writer's awareness is crucial here since he records a range of languages in English, including French, German, and Russian, as well as some native African dialects. In vain, Marlow was unable to find a term to describe his feeling of foreignness since it was so painful. The plethora of voices in Heart of Darkness can be attributed to

Bakhtin's concept of 'heteroglossia,' but the addition of international voices rather than the diversity of local social speech types greatly expands it. In many respects, Marlow's profile resembles that of a translator, whose inability to convey the meaning of the original experience is accompanied by a strong sense of dread. A successful engagement with the 'foreignness' involves the creation of a new matrix based on a thorough understanding of persons, languages, and cultures.

5. Conclusion

The literary activity of translation has emerged as critical to the development of Anglo-American modernism. The existence of literature has always been accompanied by the existence of translation, as history has shown. When foreign influences are absent, Goethe argued that native literature quickly stagnates. In a similar vein, E. Pound turned to Chinese poetry for his *Cathay* (1915) collection of fourteen poems, and this contact enabled him to write *The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry* (1919), where he made the renowned argument that the West must ultimately turn to the East or else continue its aesthetic collapse. Translation is celebrated as a model of modernist philosophy because migration, exile, dislocation, and cross-cultural dialogue are the most informative facts of modernity. Throughout the twentieth century, as globalisation has tightened its grasp on individuals, the translator's position has grown increasingly vital in the intercultural communication process. The road to cultural translation is still not completely paved, as the culturally ongoing process of increasing diasporas and the necessity to break down the walls that divide human beings throughout the world appear to be more emphasised than ever.

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