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## Translator's Voice in the Translation of Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily"

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### Abstract

This study deals with investigating the translator's voice or presence by conducting a comparative analysis of three translations of William Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily" by Abdulla (1986), Abu Hawash (2009), and Al Safar (2015) into Arabic. As well as investigating the effect that each strategy has on the original style of the author. It aims at accounting for the translation of stylistic elements of the source text which constitute part of the translator's voice in translation and how they are conveyed in the original and target text. These elements include, foregrounding, deixis, transitivity. The findings of the study revealed that translators often employ several strategies when translating style into the target text. These strategies reflect the translator's own style and narrative techniques which might either improve or comprise the quality and effect of the author's style in the target text. The study concluded that the translator's presence in stylistic translation can play a major role in the target audience's perception and understanding of the source text.

**Keywords:** Style, Translation, Stylistics, Literary Texts, Translator's Voice, Source Language, Target Language

### Introduction

The concept of style in literature has always been a much debatable and discussed topic. The idea of what is style has puzzled scholars as to whether it is merely the writer's linguistic and lexical choices or whether there is a deeper underlying layer behind it.

From a linguistic perspective, style is defined as the "aggregate of contextual probabilities of its linguistic items" (Enkvist, 1964, p.28). In other words, style represents the linguistic items used by the author of a given language and their contextual relationship with the text. Leech and Short (1981) defined style as "the way in which language is used in a given context, by a given person,

for a given purpose, and so on" (p. 10). They offered categories for the classification of style, including, lexical categories, grammatical categories, figures of speech, cohesion and context. A more general definition was proposed by Crystal and Davy (1999) who stated that style refers to "any situationally distinctive use of language and the choices made by individuals and social groups in their use of language" (p.323). These choices according to Baker (2000) often manifest themselves in the form of rhythm and rhyme in poetry and in the form of lexical and linguistic discordances in prose such as in the form of figures of speech, deixis, foregrounding, omission, and author's footnotes. Similarly, in her article *Stylistics and Translation*, Boase-Beier (2014) argued that style often relies on the choices made by the author whether consciously or subconsciously and to which manifest in the form of textual elements such as rhyme in a poem, or unusual syntax.

Based on the above definitions, style can be described as the collective choices made by an author/speaker of a particular language. These choices shape the style and literary merit of an author as it becomes his fingerprint.

Within the field of stylistic studies comes the notion of stylistics; a field of study cornered with applying the principles of linguistics in the study of literary texts. It is the author's exercise of linguistic choices (Leech and Short 1987). Crystal and Davy (1969) defined stylistics as a "sub-discipline that is cornered with the systematic analysis of style in language and how this can vary according to such factors as, for example, genre, context, historical period and author" (p. 9). Shen (1987) believed that "stylistics helps the literary translator achieve functional equivalence or expressive identity" (p.15).

In translation, the author's style would inevitably undergo several changes as a result of the different languages, cultures, and stylistic preferences of the two languages in question. These changes lend themselves through the translator's own strategies and techniques which in some cases might affect the target audience's perception of the source text either negatively or positively.

### **Stylistic Discrepancies in Translation**

When translating style from one language to the other, certain features of the source text might inevitably undergo through various changes as a result of the differences between the two languages. Parks (2014) mentioned that the process of translating style often leads to the total transformation of the original due to linguistic differences that both languages possess. Due to the lexical, linguistic, and cultural variants between the source and target text, some features which constitute as part of the author's style maybe effected. These features include, foregrounding, deixis, and transitivity.

### Foregrounding

The term foregrounding has been tackled by several scholars, critics, and literary men. It refers to the process of making certain parts of a text stand out against a less determined background. A strategy commonly used in many literary texts.

The term foregrounding was first postulated by the Russian formalist Mukorovsky in the 1930s. He viewed foregrounding as a violation of the traditional scheme of literary writing by its ability to de-automize the text. He believed that poetry has the ability to violate the systematic norms of a language and thus elevate its stylistic value. Supporting this claim, Shklovsky (1965) believed that foregrounding is a deviation from the common norms of language in order to defamiliarize the readers from the topic or style. It's the ability to reproduce the stereotyped language of literature used in daily life into an updated, more intriguing version. For example, in the sentence "*Alive Miss Emily, has been a tradition, a duty, and a norm*" (Stanford, 2006 p.1172) Faulkner employed foregrounding by fronting the word "alive" to the beginning of the sentence in order to capture the reader's attention and emphasize Miss Emily's death.

Miall & Kuiken (1994) proposed classifications for tracing foregrounding in comparative stylistic analysis. These include, variations at the phonetic level (alliterations, rhyme), the grammatical level (inversion, ellipses), or at the semantic level (metaphor, irony). He provides example on the use of foregrounding in the sentence "It is a laurel walk, very old, almost gone wild, a lofty midnight tunnel of smooth, sinewy branches." Here, the author employs the metaphoric use of "midnight" and "sinewy" and the alliteration in the sounds [I] and [s] to grab the readers' attention and evoke in them a feeling of defamiliarization. Leech (2001) classifies

the elements of foregrounding into lexical, phonological, grammatical, semantic, dialectal deviation, deviation of register, and historical period deviation.

In translation, foregrounding is part of the stylistic analysis of a text as it examines the translator's choices of interpreting the author's style using different strategies. However, although the goal of translation is to transmit a similar feeling of defamiliarization to the readers of the target text and stimulate their emotions, the variations of linguistic, lexical, and orthographic elements between the source and target language makes it inevitable for some changes to occur during the process of translation. These changes may lead to total transformation of the source text and in return produce a different experience for the target audience.

### Deixis

Deixis refers to the viewing position of the narrator as it relates to time and setting. It is demonstrated in narrative settings using demonstrative and personal pronouns, adjectives, definite articles, spatial adverbs, locative expressions, verbal categories, and terms. Example of such is the use of the personal deixis in the sentence "When Miss Emily died, our whole town went to her funeral" (Stanford, 2006, p. 1171) which was translated differently by all three translators. Some leaning towards maintaining the same personal deixis as in the translation حينما ماتت مس إيملي غريرسون شيعنا جميعا جنازتها (Abu Hawash, 2009, p.173). While other translators chose to completely change the personal deixis by rendering to the word المدينة as can be seen in the translation عندما توفيت الأنسة إيملي غريرسون ذهبت المدينة برمتها الى الجنازة (Abdulla, 198, p.97).

According to Simpson (1993) the function of deixis is to locate utterances in relation to the speaker's viewpoints (p. 13), which often provide an inside scope of the author's structural narrative and textual referents. The availability of these specific deictic elements, as well as the structural, linguistics and pragmatic factors inevitably lead to changes when rendered from one language to the other. The translator, thus, produces a translation that achieves the same effect as the original using different linguistic and lexical features as appropriate to the target audience. These changes in translation are referred to by Genette (2002, p. 108) as "focalization" as they represent different manner of narrative than the original work.

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## Transitivity

Transitivity is another linguistic device used in stylistics. According to Halliday (1971) the analysis of transitivity is instrumental in exploring the characters and thematic meanings in literary texts. Choice plays a key role in transitivity as it links grammatical choices to the overall effect of the text. In his Systematic Functional Linguistics Theory (SFL), Halliday (1993) states that transitivity refers generally to how meaning is presented in the clause. It shows how speakers encode in language their mental picture of reality and how they account for their experience of the world around them (p. 88). Its function lies in representing all actions that covers the “phenomena and anything that can be expressed by a verb; event, whether physical or not, state or relations” (Halliday, 1993). He divides transitivity analysis into, material, linguistic, verbal, behavioral, relational, and linguistic processes. These classifications are used as guidelines during transitivity analysis between two languages. However, though some languages may share similar semantic constituents, the structure of these elements may differ from one language to the other. In other words, the syntactic patterning of each language varies in the use of sentence structure, tenses, as well as the uses of transitive and intransitive verbs. These changes lend to certain variabilities in the application of transitivity in translation. Thus, different transitivity choices in a text serve different stylistic functions.

## Purpose of Study

In this study an attempt is made to identify, compare, and contrast the different strategies used in translating style and their effect on the target text. It also aims at proving the existence or presence of the translator in stylistic translation. Stated more specifically, this paper addresses the following questions:

- What strategies are employed in the translation of style into Arabic?
- What effect do these strategies have on the target audience’s understanding of the source text?
- How does the translator exist in stylistic translation?

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## Literature Review

Although style has often been used loosely and discreetly within the field of translation studies, several scholars have attempted to investigate the translation of style in literary texts and the effect that it has on both the source and target text. Baker (2000), for instance, conceived the notion of the translator's voice as a description of his/her particular way of translating and the consistent use of strategies that he/she applies within the target text. She defined the translator's style as "the stylistics idiosyncrasies that remain consistent across several translations despite differences among their source text" (p.27). Such a statement implies that the translator's style is her/his fingerprint, and to which is separate and free from the interference of the author's style. She added that identifying the style of the translator often depends on the "preferred reoccurring patterns of linguistic behavior" (p. 245). According to Baker (2000) the translator's style is manifested into three categories, including, diversity, vocabulary, and grammatical structures, and narrative pattern. In such case, the translator's presence can be traced in translated works in the form of textual discordances, such as in the addition of metalinguistic, paratextual notes or comments that are non-existent in the source text.

In her study *How does it feel?: Point of view in translation: The case of Virginia Woolf into French*, Bosseaux (2007) discussed the relevance of the source text in the translation of certain features of the source text, such as deixis, modality, transitivity, and free indirect discourse which may differ significantly between the source and target language. She proposed two methods of stylistic analysis. The first is "forensic stylistics;" concerned with investigating the linguistic strategies, lexical items, cohesive devices, and style of punctuation. The other is "explicit intervention;" concerned with the translator's addition of footnotes and glossing.

Similarly, Winters (2007) conducted a parallel study investigating the differences in the translation of F.S. Fitzgerald's (1922) *The Beauty and Damned* into German. She focused on the translation of four features which indicate the translator's style, including, model particles, foreign words, code-switches, and speech-act report verbs. She found that the two translations differed significantly on the translation of those features.

Supporting this notion, In his study “Narratology and Translation,” Prince (2014) argued that different grammatical structures can attribute to the complexity of translating narrative, such as, the difference between the singular and plural, inclusive and exclusive, masculine and the feminine, as well as word order between the source and target language which can, thus, lead to changes to the original text.

## Findings

In this section samples of the short story “A Rose for Emily” will be investigated in order to provide evidence of the translator’s voice or presence in the target text and the strategies that the translators use in translating specific elements of the short story, such as foregrounding, deixis, transitivity, and the different effects that each strategy has on the source text.

## Foregrounding in Translation

(ST) *Alive Miss Emily had been a tradition, a duty, and a care; a sort of hereditary obligation upon the town [...](p.1171)*

(TT<sup>1</sup>) كانت الأُنسَة إيملي وهي حية بمثابة تقليد وعرف وواجب وموضع عناية، أشبه بالالتزام موروث على المدينة (p.97) [...]

(TT2) [...] (p.174) في حياتها مثلث لنا إيملي إرثا وواجبا وعهدة، نوعا من الواجب المتوارث المفروض على المدينة

(TT3) [...] كانت الأُنسَة أميلي في حياتها نوعا من الالتزام المتوارث المفروض على المدينة

Faulkner employs foregrounding in his fronting of the word “Alive” at the beginning of the sentence to emphasize that Miss Emily is no longer alive.

(T1), (T3) did not maintain similar foregrounding strategy and instead began the sentence with كانت الأُنسَة إيملي, thus, minimizing the effect of the original sentence and rendering into its standard structure.

(ST)

<sup>1</sup> T1 refers to Abdulla (1986), T2 refers to Abu Hawash (2008), T3 refers to Al-Safar (2015)

## Deixis in Translation

(ST) *Set on what once been our most select street* (p.1170).

(TT1) شيدت الدار فيما كان سابقا أفضل شارع في المدينة (p.97) .

(TT2) ويقع في ما كان ذات يوم واحداً من أرقى شوارعنا (p.173) .

(TT3) يقع على ما كان يعرف في يوم ما بشارعنا المفضل (p.1) .

In the original, Faulkner uses the person deixis “our” to represent the viewing position of the first-person multiple narrator. (T1) omitted the personal pronoun “our” and replaced it with the word المدينة, thus, changing the narrative structure from first to third person narrator. In addition (T1) changed the tense of the verb “set” from present to past tense شيدت. Such technique changes the experience of the target readers, as it implies that the action has already happened.

## Transitivity in Translation

(ST) *A few of the ladies had the temerity to call* [...] (p.1172)

(TT1) ولكن بعض السيدات امتلكن الشجاعة على زيارته (p.100) [...]

(TT2) قلة من السيدات كن متهورات فزرنها (p.178) [...]

(TT3) بعض النسوة تجرأن وذهبن لزيارتها (p.2) [...]

In the original text, the verb “call” is an intransitive verb, as it is not followed by an immediate object. However, in the translated texts, the intransitive verb “call” was changed into a transitive verb through the addition of the prefix الهاء which refers to Miss Emily. In Arabic, the personal adverb هاء serves the same function as the object or subject in English. Thus, in Arabic the intransitive verb can change into a transitive verb, whereas in English the case is different.

(SL) *So she vanquished them, horse and foot, just as she had vanquished their fathers thirty years before about the smell.* (p.1172).

(p.177). في مسألة الرائحة<sup>(1)</sup> هكذا سحقتهم جميعاً وردتهم على أعقابهم خائبين، مثلما سحقت قبل ثلاثين سنة آبائهم (TT)

عبارة فوكنر الحرفية هي: "سحقتهم، فرساناً، وراجلين..." ويجد بعض النقاد في هذه العبارة صدى للحرب الأهلية (1) الأمريكية، حيث كانت تجري حملات الغزو بين طرفي القتال. وقد أثرت عدم استعمال "فرسانا وراجلين" واستبدالها أي الغزو والهزم أو السحق Vanquish ب"وردتهم على أعقابهم" بما ينسجم أكثر مع المعنى المزدوج لكلمة

In the translated text, the translator employs footnotes as a strategy for compensation. He provides an alternative for his translation by providing the meaning of the literal rendition of the original . In addition, the translator adopts a Quranic verse from Surat al Omran, verse (127) لِيُطَمَّعَ وَيُذَكَّرَ "طَرَفًا مِّنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْ يَكْتَسِبُ غَيْرًا خَائِبِينَ" in his translation of the phrase "vanquished them" as وردتهم , thus, adding a religious context to the narrative structure of the original by approximating the text to the target audience. This strategy misrepresents Faulkner, since the addition of religious connotations do not exist in the original. Another example,

(ST) *They were admitted by the old Negro into a dim hall from which a stairway mounted into a still more shadow. It smelled of dust and disuse – a close, dank smell. The Negro led them into the parlor. It was furnished in heavy, leather-covered furniture (p.1171).*

أدخلهم العجوز الزنجي في رواق معتم يرتفع منه درج الى منطقة اكثر عتمة. كانت تفوح من المكان رائحة التراب (TL1) . (p.99) والإهمال ورائحة رطوبة شديدة نفاذة. قادم الزنجي الى ردهة الدار التي كانت مؤنثة بأثاث ثقيل ومغطى بالجلد

أدخلهم الخادم الزنجي العجوز إلى صالة معتم يصعد منها درج نحو مزيد من العتمة، وتفوح بالغبار والهجران في (TL2) . رائحة كثيفة رطبة. قادم الخادم إلى ردهة الاستقبال المؤنثة بكنبات جلدية ثقيلة (p.175) .

In (T1) the phrase "they would see the leather cracked" was omitted. Besides, the two translations rendered the sentence "they were admitted by the old Negro" from passive into active أدخلهم/قادم العجوز الزنجي (T2). (T2) has changed the place of the adjective when rendering it into Arabic from "old Negro" to الزنجي العجوز (T2). (T2) has also added the word خادم to the original to emphasize the low rank of the old Negro in the South.

(ST) *But garages and cotton gins had encroached and obliterated even the august names of that neighborhood (Faulkner, p. 1170)*

[...] (p.97) ولكن زحف الكراجات ومحالغ القطن طمس معالم الأسماء الجلييلة التي علت دور جيرانها (TT1)

[...] (p.175) لكن ورش العمل ومحالغ القطن انتهكت حتى الأسماء الجلييلة في ذلك الحي وطمستها (TT2)

[...] (p.1) لكن الكراجات ومحالغ القطن التي زحفت عليه طمست فيه كل ملامح الوقار (TT3)

In the source text, Faulkner employs semantic deviation by his use of the verbs “encroached” and “obliterated” to reflect the devastating effect of the industrial progress on the old South. Although the three translations have maintained similar semantic deviation as the original using verbs as طمست، انتهكت، the structure of these semantic constituents has been changed. For example, in (T1) the verb “encroached” has been fronted to the beginning of the sentence. In addition, (T1) has changed the verb “encroached” from past tense to present tense زحف to intensify the effect of the original. In addition, the spatial deixis “that” was rendering into a verbal clause علت دور جيرانها in (T1). Besides, (T1) has changed the word “neighborhood” into جيرانها meaning “neighbors”, thus, changing the viewing position from the neighborhood in which Miss Emily’s house is situated in to the neighboring houses. (T3) similarly, omits the spatial deixis “that” and instead uses the adverb of place عليه to refer to the neighborhood. (T3) also renders the two verbs “encroached” and “obliterated” into a cause and effect in Arabic as زحفت being the cause and طمست being the effect.

## Conclusion

The findings of the study have shown that the translation of style involves the participation of both the author and the translator. To claim that the translator must not have an influence in the process of stylistic translation is setting the bar too low for the translator. A translator’s job is not to produce a mere replica of the original but rather to produce a translation that is acceptable to the target audience. In addition, the findings have also revealed some important points, including the following:

- Translators often produce different lexical choices from the author in an attempt to disambiguate the source language text to the target audience. For example, in Abu Hawash’s rendition of the personal deixis “our” into المدينة in the phrase “Our whole

town went to her funeral.” Such strategy can often undermine the effect and strength of the original text for the sake of meaning.

- Translators’ discursive presence can often be traced in the form of textual discordances as the use of foregrounding, and in some cases, standardization of the original text, such as in the following example, Alive, Miss Emily had been a tradition, a duty, and a care; a sort of hereditary obligation upon the town في حياتها مثلت المدينة لنا إميلي إرثا وواجبا وعهدة، نوعا من الواجب المتوارث المفروض على المدينة standairised the original text and minmizing its foegrounding effect.
- Translators often employ the strategy of grammatical deviations manifested in the form of transitivity through which they are able to produce an effect that is different from the original. For example, in the sentence “A few of the ladies had the temeirty to call” ولكن بعض السيدات امتلكن الشجاعة على زيارتها” in which the Arabic personal adverb الهاء presneted a new linguistic entity that was not existent in the origianl text.
- Translators’ strategies can often comprimise the author’s style and mode of vision, e.g. in the addition of footnotes and literal transalton which undermines the quality and effect of the source text and fails to trasmit the style and narrative techniques of the author.

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