

Translatability of Stylistic Devices in Poetry Across Language-Cultures: An Intercultural Rhetoric Perspective

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Abstract : Contrastive rhetoricians working on L2 writing are often unfamiliar with the theories and research of scholars in translation studies. Publications on translation studies give little or no attention to describing the translation strategies of translators, with a focus on the influence of their L1 on the language they produce. This descriptive qualitative study anchored on Eugene Nida's Translation Theory employed stylistic, lexico-semantic, and grammatical analyses of the stylistic devices employed by poets across nine language cultures to reveal the translation strategies employed by translators and to establish the type of equivalence manifested in the translated texts. The corpus consists of 27 poems written in Bahasa Indonesia, Hiligaynon, Tagalog (Malayo-Polynesian languages), French, Italian, Spanish (Romance languages), German, Icelandic, and Norwegian (Germanic Languages), translated into English. Stylistic analysis reveals that both original texts and English translations share the same stylistic devices, suggesting that stylistic devices do not get lost in translation. Lexico-semantic and grammatical analyses showed that translators of Malayo-Polynesian languages employed idiomatic translation as a compensatory strategy, producing English translations that manifest Dynamic Equivalence or transparency; translators of Romance languages resorted to synonymous substitution or literal translation, suggesting Formal Equivalence or fidelity; and translators of Germanic languages used a combination of idiomatic and literal translation strategies, with noticeable preference for Dynamic Equivalence, evidenced by the prevalence of metaphorical translations as compensatory strategy. Implications on the intricate relationship between culture and language in the translation process were drawn based on the findings.

Keywords : translation strategy, dynamic equivalence, formal equivalence, translation theory, transparency, fidelity

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