Handling Semantic Repetition when Translating Arabic Short Stories: The Case of *Excerpt from The Book of The Dead*

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ABSTRACT

The translation of literary texts into another language is undoubtedly a challenging task, especially when dealing with a combination of languages that are linguistically, stylistically and culturally different. The main purpose of this paper is to examine the translation of one of the devices of creative writing used in the construction of Arabic short stories, namely semantic repetition. The analysis is based on comparing the occurrences of semantic repetition in the Arabic short story "صفحة من كتاب الموتى" *Excerpt from The Book of The Dead with their translations in the target text. This literary work, by Ahmad Faqih, has been selected for analysis mainly because it contains a significant number of repetition instances that serve various pragmatic functions. The main concepts and aspects of Toury's theory of norms and other taxonomies of translation strategies will be used to identify translation shifts and strategies adopted by the translators. The analysis reveals that the translators resorted to four main strategies when translating semantic repetition into English: retention, compression, grammatical shift and deletion. The analysis also reveals that instances of semantic repetition are often omitted or modified in the English translation, and consequently their functions are sacrificed. This will certainly affect the representation of the original literary work and offer the target readers a slightly different version of the text.*

Keywords: Semantic repetition; literary translation; translation norms; Arabic short stories; translation strategies

INTRODUCTION

The notion of norms has been frequently utilised to describe and analyse translated texts in various languages. Therefore, "norms can be expected to operate not only in translation of all kinds, but also at every stage in the translating event, and hence to be reflected on every level of its product" (Toury 1995, p. 58). In other words, translation norms could be successfully employed as a tool to scrutinize and analyse translations of different text types, and shed light on the factors that would govern the selection of the texts to be translated, the decisions made by translators and any changes introduced to the target text. The available literature on various aspects of Arabic-English literary translation is still scarce, as the common direction of translation is predominantly the opposite. Therefore, this paper attempts to address one of the most problematic topics of translation, namely the difficulty of translating semantic repetition into English and the strategies that translators opt for when tackling this issue.

LITERARY TRANSLATION

One of the distinctive features of literary translation is the style of language which is adopted to create a certain impact on the target readership. This effect is usually achieved by the employment of various linguistic and stylistic devices, including figures of speech (such as metaphor, simile, irony, etc.), repetition, suspense, etc. Needless to say, literary language is

different from other forms of language used in other genres. This variation is due to the choice of certain terms, lexis and structures that are often used in literary language and the unique style of writing that every literary writer adopts.

Literary translation involves transferring the content of various literary texts into another language, including poetry, drama, short stories, novels, etc. The translation of literary texts is viewed as one of the most challenging forms of translation as well as a thorny area that poses difficulties to translators. In this regard, Wechsler (1998) argues that literary translation requires from the translator to be the second author of the source text. This could likely result in shifts, manipulations, procedures and strategies that could be adopted by various translators in order to make the source text "acceptable" within the system of the target language. In the same vein, Landers (1999, p. 4) highlights the importance of this type of translation, arguing that "only literary translation lets one consistently share in the creative process. Here alone does the translator experience the aesthetic joys of working with great literature, of recreating in a new language a work that would otherwise remain beyond reach".

This suggests that translating literature is a creative process of rewriting the source text in another language, which requires special skills and talent in order to successfully transfer the spirit and the form of the work to the target readers (Megrab 1999). The translator is required to use his/her skills in applying a distinctive creative process that incorporates the linguistic structures and the cultural environment of the target language. Boase-Beier (2014) argues that there are a number of principles that are associated with the translation of literature, including adhering to the dominant poetics and leaning towards the literary norms of the target system. This is particularly true only when the translator decides to domesticate the translated text. Therefore, one of the main principles of literary translation is to be aware of and understand the complex linguistic, cultural, social and literary norms of both the source and the target language system.

THE TRANSLATION OF REPETITION INTO ENGLISH

In this paper, repetition will be carefully addressed in the case of translating short stories to an English-speaking target audience, since it seems to be highly motivated within the system and nature of Arabic, especially in literary texts. Unlike in Arabic, repetition is almost discouraged in the English language. The nature of the English language does not seem to rely on repetition except when used as a figure of speech such as metaphors (see Johnstone 1991, Holes 1995, Hatim & Mason 1997, Abuorabialedwan 2011).

Such a variation in the use of repetition among the two languages would clearly influence and condition the translator's decisions and strategies, "especially in the area of Arabic-English literary translation" (Abuorabialedwan 2011, p. 23). These strategies seem to be motivated as a result of taking the target audience into consideration (English speaking audience) and adhering to the target language norms. However, it seems that these strategies are optionally employed by the translators because there are no linguistic or grammatical constraints that would force the translator to adopt such strategies or shifts (ibid.).

Various studies have shown that avoiding repetition is a universal translation norm (Ben-Ari 1998, Hassan 2015, Zlatnar-Moe 2010). Studies like these can contribute to the discipline of translation studies by testing whether avoiding repetition is a translation norm or not. Therefore, this paper attempts to find out if such translation policy (avoiding repetition as a translation norm) is applicable or not within the context of Arabic-English literary translation. This will be explained and illustrated with examples extracted from the case

study, in order to identify the strategies and shifts adopted by the translators when rendering repetition into English.

Semantic repetition is one kind of repetition that is frequently used in Arabic. Dickins et al. (2002), for instance, point out that repetition in Arabic is considered one of the main devices of constructing texts that is primarily used for emphatic, stylistic or emphasis functions. This has been reiterated by Najjar (2015, p. 24) who argues that repetition "is used to render a rhetorical function that can result in persuasion and emphasis… [it] could also have important textual and cohesive functions". In the same vein, Ben-Ari (1998, p. 2) presents a more detailed set of functions that repetitions might serve, arguing that:

> They may have a generic function — as they do in comedy, for instance, where repetitions (lingual or situational) function as part of the comic inventory of devices. They play an important role in myths, legends and folk tales, where they provide the generic frame of reference. They have a wide range of functions in poetry, where they may serve as musical, thematic or symbolic devices. They have traditionally served as "hypnotic" religious elements in sacred texts. They may function as a simulator of dialogues or spoken language in modern literature. At times they are significant to a point where they may provide the key to the reading, understanding or even decoding of the literary text.

To start with, semantic repetition is often labelled as repetition of synonymous or near-synonymous words (see Dickins & Watson 1999, pp. 541-53). Dickins et al. (2002, p. 59) argue that there are two kinds of semantic repetition: (1) the two words or phrases are used to have the same meaning within the context of the text but they originally have slightly different meanings. An example of this is the phrase ورعاً شريفاً "devout and religious". The two adjectives have slightly different meanings but within the same context they are used to communicate the same meaning. (2) The two words are fully synonymous words in the context in which they are used. A good example of this is المشرقة الساطعة in the phrase بأنوارها المشرقة الساطعة literally "bright shining lights". Semantic repetition could be in nouns as in الفروع والأغصان "branches", adjectives as in مشرقة ساطعة "bright and shining" and verbs as in the phrase وعانقه واحتضنه (literally, "and he embraced and hugged him"). In their analysis, Dickins et al. (2002) have presented few strategies, supported with relevant examples, namely merging two Arabic words into one English word, grammatical transposition, providing a sense for emphasis and semantic distancing.

There are few more studies conducted on the translation of semantic repetition from Arabic into English, analyzing various text types and recurring translation strategies. In terrain of literary translation, Najjar (2015), for instance, examines the phenomenon of repetition in the Arabic Novel *Adrif in the Nile* by Mahfouz and how it was approached and translated into English. Unlike the present paper, his analysis focuses on lexical item, phrase and root repetitions, and attempts to find out whether their functions were maintained or not in English. A wide range of strategies were identified in the translation of repetition, including "deletion, paraphrase, synonym and near-synonym, modulation, and pronominalisation" (ibid., p. 33).

In a more focused study, Hassan (2015, p. 144) investigates repetition in teaching translation at two universities in Morocco and the United Arab Emirates, stating that verb repetition in Arabic is employed "to indicate a previous general or specific situation, an assertion, or a reminder of a previous state or event indicated by the main verb". He further elaborates that the students who translated literary and media texts were mainly introduced to four common translation strategies in their courses, namely literal translation, free translation, omission and addition. He eventually concludes that "verb repetition in Arabic should be avoided when translating into English" (ibid., p. 155).

In the area of translating political speeches into English, Al-Fahmawi (2014, p. 114) also examines the phenomenon of repetition and how translators dealt with these instances when translating king Abdullah bin Abdulaziz's speeches. In her analysis, she highlights the fact that a number of strategies were identified in the target text, namely paraphrase, use of synonyms, deletion and merging. She further argues that "[t]hese strategies mainly seem to avoid and minimize the instances of repetition found in the original text whenever possible… [i]t seems that there is no binding rule that could motivate the translator to avoid or minimize the occurrences of repetition".

Against this backdrop, it is clear that translation studies scholars and researchers have proposed many typologies of translation strategies that could be adopted by translators. These vary from one study to another mainly based on the nature of the source text, the identified problematic issues and the agenda of the translators. Needless to say, the decision of the literary translator to either preserve or omit repetition is very difficult, as he/she "is not only faced with the two cultures and their rules as to what makes good writing, but also has to take into account her/his own conviction in the matter, as well as the function that repetition has in the source text: it can be used in characterization, for emphasis, to add intensity to a scene, or for other reasons" (Zlatnar-Moe 2010, p. 4).

Therefore, this paper will attempt to identify the strategies and shifts that translators opt for when translating semantic repetition, which seems to be more commonly employed in Arabic literature than in English. As far as the target language is concerned, these strategies are adopted to make the target text more "acceptable" for the target audience. I will present in the following section the notion of translation norms, which would often determine the translation strategies and consequently shape the content of the final product.

TRANSLATION NORMS

The translation process normally involves two or more linguistic systems which could be different in lexical choices, syntactic structures, stylistic issues and semantic representations. This is due to the fact that "languages are differently equipped to express different real-world relations, and they certainly do not express all aspects of meaning with equal ease" (Ivir 1981, p. 56). Henceforth, various systematic studies have been conducted based on comparative analysis between the source texts and their translations in order to come up with general statements and conclusions about regularities adopted by translators during the actual process of translation, including translation decisions and strategies (Chesterman 1997).

This could be a useful tool for translators who could in turn adopt these strategies when facing the same problems, and consequently would be able to "operate first and foremost in the interest of the culture into which they are translating" (Toury 1995, p. 12). Given that both culture and language are strongly interconnected, the target text is expected to "respect the rules and norms of the TL" (Schaffner 1999, p. 2) in order to be accepted and approved by the target audience.

The notion of norms was introduced and brought to translation studies by Gideon Toury (1995, p. 55) who defines the term as:

> The translation of general values or ideas shared by a community- as to what is right and wrong, adequate and inadequate- into performance instructions appropriate for and applicable to particular situations, specifying what is prescribed and forbidden as well as what is tolerated and permitted in a certain behavioural dimension.

In this sense, translational norms are viewed as the set of values shared by translators in a given culture, at a particular time in connection to both the process and the product of

translation. Toury's concept of "norms" is considered to be a significant shift in the field of translation studies as it presents an alternative methodology to the old "prescriptive approach", where the process of translation and its decisions were purely addressed from a "prescriptive" point of view.

Toury (1995, p. 61) describes norms as the responsible factors of the translation product and that they govern the decision-making during the translation process as well as "determine the (type and extent of) equivalence manifested by actual translations". Eventually, dealing with translation norms will lead to "norm-governed instances of behaviour" (Ibid., p. 65). These behaviours could be related to linguistic systems, cultural issues or social matters such as strategies, manipulations, shifts, omission...etc. It is worth mentioning here that these behaviours are not obligatory but they are rather optional that translators often opt for in order to follow the dominant norms in place (Chesterman 1997, p. 88).

Toury (1995), via his translation norms model, has tried to come up with a systematic approach for describing translation studies (DTS). His target-oriented approach includes analysing and comparing the linguistic utterances of the source and the target text, paying special attention to the cultural aspects of the latter. Munday (2001, p. 124) argues that "the ultimate aim of DTS is to discover probabilistic laws of translation, which may be used to aid future translators and researchers". Therefore, one could reconstruct these norms and laws by observing the repeated forms of behaviours made by translators since "what is actually available for observation is not so much the norms themselves, but rather norm-governed instances of behaviours." (Toury 1995, p. 65).

Toury classified a number of translation norms that could affect the translation process from the very start to the final stages of generating the product of the target text. Firstly, the **initial norms** of translation, which determine the global approach of the translator with respect to the following two polar alternatives: the translator submits himself or herself to the textual relations and norms embodied in the source text (*adequacy*); or the translator follows the linguistic and rhetorical norms of the target language and culture (*acceptability*) (Toury 1995, pp. 56-57). The concept of "adequacy" is derived from the "polysystem theory" by Even-Zohar who describes "adequate" translation as "a translation which realizes in the target language the textual relationships of a source text with no breach of its own [basic] linguistic system" (Even-zohar 1975, p. 43 translated by Toury, 1995, p. 56). However, the distinction between adequacy and acceptability is not always straight forward when it comes to translation; translators may sometimes adopt mixed approaches and strategies that belong to both the source and the target language and their cultures.

Secondly, Toury identifies **Preliminary norms** which are divided into two interconnected subcategories, namely (1) **translation policy** which refers to the factors that determine the text types or individual texts to be translated into a certain language and culture such as the choice of literary or non-literary texts and the choices made by different publishing houses. Moreover, translation policy also refers to the factors that could affect the overall translation strategy within the target or source text system. (2) **Directness of translation** includes the authors, periods, genres, and schools that are preferred by the target culture. Furthermore, one could add the vision of a particular society towards the nature of translation and the difference between translation, imitation and adaptation at a certain time (See Toury 1995, p. 58).

Thirdly, another type of norms is **operational norms** which involve the actual decisions implemented by the translator while translating a given text. In other words, it is related to the actual process of translating and how these translations are produced. This would include the changes that are done during the translation process (omissions, additions, changes of structures, etc.). These changes are claimed to be motivated as a result of

conforming to linguistic norms and constraints. Operational norms are divided into two types: **matricial norms**, which shape the macro-structure of the text by affecting the decisions made by translators related to divisions of paragraphs, translating certain parts of the source text...etc. In connection with this type of behaviours which are governed by matricial norms, some instances of divisions of paragraphs could be clearly seen in the translation of the short story *Excerpt from The Book of The Dead*. The translators have manipulated the structure of the text, especially divisions of paragraphs as some paragraphs have been merged together, while others have been separated into smaller units (See Husni & Newman 2008). The second type is **textual-linguistic norms** which address issues related to micro-level and sentence structure, word choice, omissions and additions. Having explained Toury's norms, there is no doubt that norms could influence the whole translation process from the very beginning till the very end. This might include selecting the texts to be translated, decisions or "shifts" to be made and finally the last stage of producing the target text (Hermans 1996).

It is noteworthy to mention that this classification of translation norms seems to be target-oriented, as Toury (1995, p. 12) argues that the target culture "should be regarded as a strong governing factor of the very make-up of the product, in terms of underlying models, linguistic representation, or both". Moreover, he asserts that translators should take the target readers' culture into consideration in their translations and produce their own independent systems within the target language and its culture (Ibid., p. 29).

As mentioned in the introduction, this paper will attempt to identify the strategies and shifts that translators opt for when translating semantic repetition, which appears to be more commonly employed in Arabic literature than in English. As far as the target language is concerned, these strategies are adopted to make the target text more "acceptable" by the target audience.

METHODOLOGY

The case study of analysis is the modern Arabic short story "صفحة من كتاب الموتى" "Excerpt from The Book of The Dead" written by the Libyan literary figure Ahmad Faqih in 1984. This story as well as other eleven Arabic short stories written by prominent literary figures were translated into English in a book entitled *Modern Arabic short stories* (2008) by Ronak Husni and Daniel Newman. The translators provide readers with a glossary and a list of linguistic problematic issues that they have encountered in translating this collection of stories.

Short stories have been chosen here for this study because repetition seems to occur frequently and is highly motivated within such texts, as well as it has more functional implications than in other types of texts (Lotfipour 1997, p. 190). In order to highlight the dominant translation norms of translating repetition, it is important to identify the strategies and procedures that translators adopt during the translation process. This will shed light on the factors that could influence the translators' decisions, and will consequently dictate on them a specific set of strategies.

For the purpose of analysis, the source text was scrutinised for all the occurrences of different instances of semantic repetition; a repetition chain that is made of two or more words that have the same meaning, unlike lexical repetition chain, which includes two or more occurrences of the same word repeated in the text, regardless of whether the repetitions have occurred within the same sentence or in separate sentences. A comparative linguistic analysis was then carried out between these instances of repetition and their counterparts in the English translation.

One of the main objectives is to establish translation relationships between the target language and the source language texts, in order to reveal how translators often render various occurrences of repetition. In other words, the focus will be on the strategies adopted by literary translators, which would allow the translation to depart from "adequacy" norms (the norms of the source language text) and adhere to "acceptability" norms (the norms of the target language and its culture).

STRATEGIES OF TRANSLATING SEMANTIC REPETITION

Having examined and analysed the Arabic instances of semantic repetition and compared them with their English translation, it has been revealed that translators adopted four main strategies: retention, combining words (compression) that have the same meaning into a single word, grammatical shifts and deletion. These results and strategies will be explained below in line with their frequency as detected in the analysed data (see table. 1). Moreover, a few representative examples extracted from the case study are presented under each strategy with a brief description.

TABLE 1. Translation strategies of semantic repetition and their frequency

Strategy Type	Number of Instances
Retention	17
Combining Words	13
Grammatical Shifts	11
Deletion	9

RETENTION

Many occurrences of using synonym or near-synonym words in rendering occurrences of semantic repetition were detected in English. The translators have chosen to adopt "word-for-word translation", where every single word in the semantic repetition is transferred into English, even if they might communicate the same meaning (Newmark 1988: 69). These instances of retaining the semantic repetition in the target text are almost unavoidable since the two or more words are used to emphasize a particular aspect. Consequently, the translators have opted to render this emphasis in order to create and maintain a similar impact on the target audience. This can be clearly seen in the following example:

EXAMPLE 1. Retention

• وأحياناً لها مخلب كوحش خرافي، تجسدت له شيطاناً يطارده أينما ذهب، وضبط نفسه أكثر من مرة يردد اسمها بصوت عالٍ في خوف و رعب.

(Ahmad Faqih quoted in Husni & Newman 2008, p. 89)

• Other times, he imagined her with claws like those of a mythical animal, or she would appear to him as Satan, chasing him wherever he went. He had to force himself more than once not to repeat her name in a loud voice, out of sheer <u>fear and terror</u>.

(Husni & Newman 2008, p. 88)

In this example, the translators have rendered the instance of semantic repetition خوف و رعب as "fear and terror", despite the fact that these two words have almost the same meaning. However, it seems that the writer used these two words purposely in this specific context to emphasize that the character experiences a very frightening situation. The translators seem to have taken the context of this example into consideration, and consequently have chosen to reconstruct the character's mental and psychological state in

their translation. By maintaining the sematic repetition, the translators have successfully managed to offer the target readers a similar depiction of the character and the intensity of his feelings.

<div align="center">COMBINING WORDS (COMPRESSION)</div>

The second most commonly detected strategy is to combine two or more Arabic words identified in the source text in one English word in the target text. This strategy seems to be adopted whenever the semantic repetition is made of two or more semantically synonymous or near-synonymous Arabic words. This could be explained and further illustrated by discussing the following examples:

<div align="center">EXAMPLE 2. Combining words (compression)</div>

• كان كل شيء في داخل الفصل <u>عاديا وطبيعيا</u>، ما عدا هذا الهدوء الذي لم يره طيلة عمر أمضاه في التدريس يحدث في فصل من الفصول الدراسية.

(Ahmad Faqih quoted in Husni & Newman 2008, p. 75)

• everything inside the classroom was <u>as it should be</u>, except, that is, for this eerie calm, which he had never witnessed in any classroom for as long as he had been a teacher.
(Husni & Newman 2008, p. 74)

This example presents two synonyms that have almost the same meaning. The underlined words عاديا (literally, "normal") and طبيعيا (literally, "natural") have been used to indicate that everything in the classroom was fine as usual. One can notice that due to the system of Arabic, the use of two or more synonyms to express and emphasise the same meaning is highly acceptable and encouraged, particularly in literary texts as previously discussed in section (3).

From a translational point of view, the translators have opted for the compression strategy where the two synonyms طبيعي and عادي have been compressed and rendered as "as it should be". It seems crucial to point out that these synonyms have optionally been compressed and translated in that particular way in the target text. To make it clear, the translators could have chosen to render the repetition instance with two lexical words in the target text i.e. "normal" and "natural". Needless to say, minimising the components of the repetition instance failed to transfer the emphatic function of the repetition in the English translation.

<div align="center">EXAMPLE 3. Combining words (compression)</div>

• ... لا أن تخرج عن كل أصول الأدب والحشمة وتجلس في <u>تهتك وفجور</u> ودونما <u>خجل أو حياء</u> مع الأولاد في الفصل...
(Ahmad Faqih quoted in Husni & Newman 2008, p. 77)

• … he could never have imagined that any girl would depart from the principles of decency and modesty and sit down in class together with boys, with a total <u>lack of shame and morals</u>…
(Husni & Newman 2008, p. 76)

Within this example of compression, one can see that four near-synonyms have been used in the source text, namely "حياء دونما" "خجل دونما" "فجور" "تهتك". These four near-synonyms represent a clear exemplification of semantic repetition as they convey almost the same meaning in the source text. they have been used with negative connotations to indicate that the girl should not be sitting in class with boys. This mainly stems from the culture of the source text, ln which mixing male and female students tends to be culturally unacceptable, especially after the elementary school.

In translating this extract, the translators have adopted the compression strategy to handle the occurrences of semantic repetition. The underlined words, تهتك (literally, disruptive), فجور (literally, immorality), دونما خجل (literally, shamelessness) دونما حياء (literally, lack of modesty), have all been compressed in the target text and rendered as "lack of shame and morals". In doing so, the translators have offered the English readers a diluted account of this instance, which was emphasized through the use of semantic repetition in the original text. It is worth noting that adopting the compression strategy and minimising the occurrences of semantic repetition is not an obligatory procedure. That is to say, there are no grammatical or linguistic rules, which dictate that semantic repetition occurrences should be minimised. It is rather the translator's choice, which mainly stems from the nature of repetition in English and how it is dealt with, as well as the genre of the text.

GRAMMATICAL SHIFT

The third commonly employed strategy is the use of grammatical shift. This strategy appears to be used when the two or more Arabic words that represent the semantic repetition have slightly different meaning, but they are used to have almost the same meaning within the context of the source text. Adopting this procedure could involve compressing and changing the category of the word class from adjectives in the source text to nouns in the target text, as can be seen in the following examples:

EXAMPLE 4. Grammatical shift

• فكر في هذه البدعة، هذه الضلالة، هذه النار، لقد عاش طوال عمره <u>ورعاً شريفاً مستقيماً</u> يراعي حدود الله ويعرف أن للمرأة حرمة يجب أن تصان،...

(Ahmad Faqih quoted in Husni & Newman 2008, p. 81)

• He thought about this heresy … this deviation … his abomination. He had lived his entire life <u>in piety</u>, complying with the boundaries laid down by God, believing that women are inviolable and must be protected,…

(Husni & Newman 2008, p. 80)

As shown in this example, it is detected that the translators have opted for the grammatical shift strategy to deal with semantic repetition. The words ورع, شريف and مستقيم are adjectives which have slightly different meanings; however, they are all used to indicate the same meaning within this religious context. Thus, the translators have chosen to render the three adjectives "pious", "honest" and "devout" as one noun "piety" in the target language. It is evident that the translators have decided to sacrifice this semantic repetition in their translation, which does not communicate the intended emphasis on the character's religious qualities, and consequently would offer the English readers a slightly different representation of the character. Again, it seems that this strategy has been optionally adopted by the translators, as there are no obligatory rules in the target language that would dictate this.

EXAMPLE 5. Grammatical shift

• ... إن أكثرهم خمولاً وغباء وسرحاناً أثناء الدرس صار فجأة يشتعل حماساً للإجابة، فالعبقرية هبطت عليه الان وفي هذه الساعة، والغريب أنها حقاً كذلك، فها هي الإجابة تأتي على ألسنتهم <u>سهلة مرنة</u>...

(Ahmad Faqih quoted in Husni & Newman 2008, p. 85)

• Whereas once most of them had been apathetic, dim and distracted during lessons, they had now suddenly become hardworking, eager to reply. It was then that he had an epiphany, for that was really what it was; the fact that answers appeared on their lips with the kind of <u>fluency</u>…

(Husni & Newman 2008, p. 84)

In this example, the words سهلة and مرنة, which literally mean "easy" and "flexible", are adjectives of "ألسنتهم", "their tongues". The two adjectives have been rendered into English as a single noun, i.e., "fluency", although the translators could have rendered these two adjectives as they stand in the target text. It could be argued that the translators, who adopted the grammatical shift strategy, have managed to transfer the intended meaning of the original utterances, however the emphatic function of this semantic repetition has been diluted in English.

DELETION

The fourth identified strategy is deletion, which seems to be represented by almost deleting the whole occurrence of semantic repetition whenever it is deemed unnecessary. To make it clearer, "deletion" here refers to omitting the two or more words of semantic repetition all together. Although few occurrences were identified, it seems that this procedure is less common than others. This strategy could be illustrated by the following examples:

EXAMPLE 6. Deletion

• ... وسيحارب إلى اخر رمق فيه هذا السحر الأسود الذي جاءت به معها، مضى حصة وراء الأخرى يتحرش بها، يتحين الفرصة لتقريعها، يمنحها برغم اجتهادها أقل الدرجات شأناً وقيمة.

(Ahmad Faqih quoted in Husni & Newman 2008, p. 91)

• … he would fight this black magic that she had brought with her until his dying breath. Lesson after lesson went by, and he continued to provoke her, taking every opportunity to rebuke her; despite her zeal, he consistently gave her <u>the lowest mark</u>.

(Husni & Newman 2008, p. 90)

In this example, the translators have opted for completely omitting the two words شأناً (literally, "interest") and قيمة (literally, "value"). By doing so, the translators have only rendered أقل الدرجات "the lowest mark" which has already maintained the intended meaning. Therefore, the semantic repetition which is directly attached to it is viewed as redundant and henceforth was omitted. This strategy could be further explained by discussing the following extract:

EXAMPLE 7. Deletion

• ... فصار يكثر الذهاب إلى الخلاء، والميادين الرحبة الفسيحة، والحدائق العامة، وتأمل البحر وإدمان التفكير في هذه البنت التي فجأة دخلت حياته كما دخلت فجأة حجرة درسه.

(Ahmad Faqih quoted in Husni & Newman, 2008, p. 95)

• So he began to increase the frequency of his walks outside, in <u>squares</u> and public gardens. He would look at the sea, addicted to thinking about this girl who had suddenly entered his life just as she had entered his classroom, out of the blue.

(Husni & Newman 2008, p. 94)

In this example, the translators have also opted for deleting the instance of semantic repetition which is made of the two adjectives الرحبة الفسيحة (literally, "large" and "vast"). Therefore, this phrase has been rendered into English as "squares" only, since the word "square" communicates the meaning of the two adjectives being large and vast (an open area in a city or town). Once again, deleting these two adjectives, which carry almost the same meaning, has sacrificed the original picture shaped in Arabic, and therefore has resulted in a less vivid visualization of the described squares.

CONCLUSION

After scrutinising the short story *Excerpt from The Book of The Dead* and its English translation, it is evident that semantic repetition, which is one of the salient features of this literary work, communicates a range of different pragmatic functions, such as expressing emphasis, emotions, exaggeration and so forth. The Analysis also reveals that four translation strategies were adopted by the translators in rendering semantic repetition: retention, compression, grammatical shift and deletion. Each strategy was explained and illustrated by representative examples extracted from the short story. Needless to say, these strategies could explain and justify the translators' decisions during the translation process. Adopting these strategies does not seem to be promoted by obligatory rules, but rather they are optional decisions taken by the translators. It is concluded that the translators have taken the target language and audience into consideration when rendering these occurrences of repetition.

The analysis shows that retention was the most commonly used strategy in translating semantic repetition into English. On the other hand, it is also shown that the translators have chosen to minimise many other instances of repetition by cutting down the second and third occurrences of repetition chains or merging the repeated elements whenever possible. By doing so, they have successfully managed to conform to the norms of the target language and attempted to make the source text more "acceptable" within the system of the target language as much as possible.

Accordingly, and via this study, it appears that "acceptability" norms are almost behind minimising or omitting the occurrences of repetition in the English translation of this short story. However, it is argued that by eliminating repetition, the translator "produces a target text that falls short of relaying one important stylistic aspect of the original text" Jawad (2009, p. 768). It is noted that the functions of semantic repetition in Arabic, including emphasis, persuasion and characterisation were often sacrificed or diluted in English, and consequently a slightly different version of the story was presented to the target readers.

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