



## The Effect of Translating Allusion on Readers from English into Arabic

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Received : 22 /9 /2024      Accepted:28/10 /2024

Published: 25/3 /2025

### Abstract

This research explores the concept of readership regarding translation and its effect on literary texts and figurative language. It aims to determine the relationship between the readership and the translation process as well as the method of translation that is used by a translator for each type of reader. It is hypothesized that the translation issue is influenced by the readership. The study suggests an evaluation of the translation in terms of the nature of the reader to highlight the translator's knowledge of this variable. The study provides a theoretical overview of literary writings,

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with a particular focus on the use of figurative language as a representative of these texts, and explains the concept of readership. Practically, five types of allusion from Shakespeare's comedy "The Merchant of Venice" and four translations of Mutran (1976), Anani (1988), Amin (1994) and Akawe (2009) were selected as research samples to determine the extent to which the translators adopt certain strategies toward the intended reader.

**Keywords:** Readership, Allusion, Translation Strategy.

## تأثير ترجمة اسماء الاشارة في القراء من اللغة الانكليزية الى اللغة العربية

### ملخص البحث:

تناول هذا البحث مفاهيم الترجمة ومدى أثره على القارئ للنصوص الادبية بشكلها العام واللغة المجازية بشكلها الخاص حيث يقدم هذا البحث بصورة نظرية مدى فهم القارئ وعلاقته في الترجمة واستراتيجياتها وان تلبية متطلبات القارئ تعتبر مشكلة حقيقية وصعبة للغاية تواجه المترجم في الترجمة وخصوصا في ترجمة اللغات المجازية. يهدف البحث الى تحديد العلاقة بين القراء وعمليات الترجمة بتحديد طرق الترجمة المستخدمة لكل انواع القراء. تفترض هذه الدراسة أن قضية الترجمة تتأثر بالقراء. حيث يقترح البحث بوضع آلية تستخدم في تقييم الترجمة من حيث طبيعة القارئ ومدى معرفة المترجم لهذا المتغير. يقدم البحث من الناحية النظرية وصفاً لمفهوم القارئ وكذلك موجز لمجموعة من النصوص الأدبية وبنحو خاص الاشارة ممثلة في هذه النصوص. وفيما يختص بالناحية العملية تم اختيار خمس عينات من اسماء الاشارة لمسرحية شكسبير الكوميديا والمشهورة باسم "تاجر البندقية"، كما تم اختيار اربع ترجمات لهذه المسرحية لتكون عينات بحثية لمعرفة مدى معرفة واستخدام المترجمين لاستراتيجيات المستخدمة في تراجعهم تجاه القارئ المقصود. (لغة الهدف)

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** القارئ، اسماء الاشارة، استراتيجيات الترجمة.

## 1. Introduction

Translation tends to be very ancient human activity. It can be viewed as a singular human accomplishment that no other species could possibly share. Catford (1965: 20) defines Translation as the process of substituting equal content in one language (the Source Language) with content in another language (the Target Language). According to Larson (1998: 3), Translation "means transferring the meaning of the source language into the receptor language". Al-Hasso and Ahmed (2024: 153), also write that both Arabic and English have different linguistic standards, cultural contexts, and linguistic structures. In order to achieve this, the form of the source language is changed to that of the target language through utilizing semantic structure. Venuti (1998:127) argues that translator's task is difficult one as he should produce translation being suitable to the various tastes besides taking in consideration numerous variables or determining factors in consideration while choosing the translation method. Amongst these factors are: reading, the intentionality of the SL writer, universal and culturally specific terminology, and text typology. The aim of the study is to identify the relationship between reading and translation, as well as allocating the appropriate translation technique for every kind of reader. Based on that, the current research hypothesizes that the translation issue is affected by the readership. William Shakespeare's comic play "The Merchant of Venice" and four known translations are used as samples in this study.

## 2. Readership

Readership is one of the most fundamental and crucial characteristics of translation. It is significant since it has an impact on the translation's quality. According to Newton (1992: 224), the material in the text is done quickly and cheaply for a certain kind of reading because it is not meant for publication. In this instance, style is not a significant factor. Hervey et al. (1995:131), however, support this claim by stating that every type of text caters to the preferences of a specific readership and that all texts are intended for a specific customer. There is a substantial correlation between the type of readership and the translation type.

This is supported by Venuti (1998: 14), who states that the translation process differs depending on the readership type. Oittinen (2000:43–44) also notes that the type of readership chosen has a significant impact on the chosen translation approach. Adamczyk-Grabowska (1988:137–138) affirms that a translator must consider the kind of audience he is translating for before beginning the translation process. The fact that translators frequently focus on a specific audience is empirically supported by Dimitrova (2005: 141), who also identifies the existence of several readership scales, however, the issue here is that SL readership differs from TL readership, which is a result of cultural differences (Ferreira 1999:360). According to Silis (2007:7), the disparity between the cultures of the source and target languages is reflected in the variations of the readership expectations. For Newmark (1988: 13), reading diversity is influenced by the audience's age, gender, socioeconomic status, and degree of education in addition

to culture. When an SL writer writes a piece of writing for a particular type of SL readership, the translator must read it carefully while keeping the readership and context in mind. In the process of translating, it is supposed for the translator to take in consideration a particular type of TL readership, The needs of TL readership are not the same as the SL readership because readerships vary across cultures.

### **3. Strategy for Translation and Readership**

according to Venuti (1998: 240), translation strategies "involve the basic tasks of choosing the foreign text to be translated and developing a method to translate it,". He used the terms "foreignizing" and "domesticating" to describe translation techniques.

Translation experts distinguish between tactics that address the entire text and those that address specific sections or passages of a text, each of which is given a separate title. In this context, Newmark (1988: 81) distinguishes between methods and procedures, noting that "translation procedures are used for sentences and the smaller units of language, whereas translation methods relate to whole texts."

The relationship between audience and translation strategy is demonstrated when translators employ a variety of techniques and approaches to satisfy the demands of several variables, including readership. To meet these requirements, the translator may occasionally have to alter the source language. In this context, Lefevere (1992: 66) notes that publishers occasionally alter texts to prevent offending readers. Various translation techniques are employed to achieve this. Venuti (1998:67) emphasizes this reality by pointing out that translation processes must make

the content more palatable to a wide audience. Venuti (1998:16), for instance, asserts that footnotes are a standard practice in academia, Additionally, Korkas (2005:3) notes that in certain situations, reading may influence the linguistic decisions made while producing a target text that satisfies the text's requirements. In conclusion, it can be said that one of the elements influencing the approach that needs to be taken for every kind of text is reading (Nasser and Safi, 2014: 45).

According to Newmark (1988), there are various kinds of readers. He actually distinguishes three categories of readers: the highly educated reader, who is an expert in a particular field; the mid-educated reader, who is a reader with a moderate level of expertise in a particular field; and the less educated reader, who is a simple reader who knows nothing about the subject. Newmark notes that every reader uses a different translating technique. For a proficient reader, transference, or borrowing, of SL words into TL is sufficient. A functionally similar method, such as generalizing, neutralizing, or using a phrase that is free of cultural connotations, is necessary for an informed reader. The cultural equivalent is necessary for a reader who is less informed or a layperson. To put it another way, every reader speaks a different language. A layperson needs simple language, but an expert needs highly figurative language that is indirect and metaphorical so that the reader must rely on his own interpretation. Conversely, an educated reader would be content with minimal simplification and indirect language. For example, a chemistry specialist reader who understands the precise meaning of these single letters can understand "Na Cl"; but

an educated reader needs to know "Sodium chloride" to understand the proper meaning; the layman cannot recognize the correct meaning until it is "salt."

#### **4. Types of Readership**

According to Hervey et al. (1995: 12), a text may lose some of its real meaning and intrinsic worth when it is translated for a contemporary reader that is different from the original. People differ greatly in various ways, according to Nasser and Safi (2014: 45). Among these factors is the degree of schooling. People actually vary in their educational attainment. These disparities are a major issue for the translator since he must deal with people of various levels, who ultimately have different perspectives on life, culture, and the writing of texts; even within the same culture, time is a significant issue. This is because of the references to some lexical terms may need to be modified when translating ancient literature for a contemporary audience because they evolve throughout time.

Scholars identify the traits of each reader and categorize them into a variety of kinds. For instance, Newmark (1988: 15) distinguishes between three categories of readers: the knowledgeable layman, the expert, and the ignorant. According to Sager (1997: 28), readers might be classified as primary or secondary. Because it has to do with the distinction between text and message, the two concepts are crucial for translation. "A primary reader is a person a writer puts in mind when producing a message," he says, using the term. Sager (1997: 28) defines secondary readers as "any readers not included in a writer's original scope of addressees." According to Nasser and Safi (2014: 50),

there are three categories of readers: specialist, educated and layman.

## **5. Figurative Language**

Words or phrases having a second meaning, or a figurative meaning, in addition to their dictionary-provided literal meaning are referred to as figurative language. For instance, the word "tree" physically refers to a plant that is larger than a shrub, but when used in a family context, it can also refer to family members. Another term for the rhetorical device of using figurative language is trope (Thornborrow and Shân, 1998:77). Any technique that allows the same linguistic word to refer to multiple types of things is considered figurative language, according to Crystal (2008:491).

Evans and Green (2006:290), show that figurative language refers to the non-literal use of language and indicates the usage of phrases or statements in a way that differs from their true use or meaning. Speakers use nonliteral meaning when they say one thing but mean something else. The meaning of the words themselves is entirely different from what they express. To give their words unique effects, they employ figurative language. In other words, figurative language refers to the item it signifies indirectly to demonstrate certain consequences, but literal language refers directly and precisely to what it denotes. Examine the following example:

**Ali is brave.**

**Ali is a lion.**

While the word "brave" indicates what it refers to directly in the first case, the word "lion" indicates courage



indirectly in the second. This interpretation stems from our understanding of lions, which are known for their bravery and fearlessness.

## **6. Allusion**

English language borrowed the term "allusion" in the sixteenth century. It comes from the Latin verb *alludere*, which means "to refer to" or "to play with." It is composed of two parts: *ludere* (to play) and *ad* (to or toward), which is a prefix. Merriam-Webster.

A literary or historical person, place, or event, or another literary work, can be mentioned explicitly or indirectly through an allusion. Allusions are reviewed by writers as cost-effective strategies that evoke imagery and distill a great quantity of literary information and context into a small number of words. Abrams (2012:12). Examine the following instance: Thomas Nashe's "Litany in Time of Plague" from the Elizabethan period

“Brightness falls from the air”

“Queens have died young and fair”

“Dust hath closed Helen’s eye”

The final line's unnamed "Helen" alludes to Helen of Troy. According to Hinkel (1999: 90), allusion can be found in a wide range of Textual forms, including scholarly articles and popular works. Some societies seem to employ this gadget more frequently than others.

## 7. Data Analysis:

### SL Text (1):

SL Text (1)	Bring me the fairest creature northward born, / Where <u>Phoebus</u> ' fire scarce thaws the icicles. (Act: 2. Sc. : 1. L. : 4-5).	Type of figure	Readership		
		Allusion	Lay man	Educated	Specialist
No.	translator	TL texts			
T1	حسين احمد امين	ولتاتني بافضل مخلوق من ابناء الشمال حيث لا يكاد يكون بوسع ان الشمس تذيب كتل الجليد.	*		
T2	خليل مطران	على انك لو جننتي بأبهي رجل من اهل هذه الاقاليم الشمالية التي لا	*		

		تكاد النهار تذيب اشعة صقيعها.			
T3	رحاب عكاوي	على انك لو جننتي بأبهي رجل من اهل هذه الاقاليم الشمالية التي لا تكاد اشعة النهار تذيب صقيعها.	*		
T4	محمد عناني	وليات اجمل الرجال من مرايع الشمال من حيث لا تذيب الشمس حبات الجليد	*		

### Discussion:

The author of this text employs allusion, as a type of figurative language. This reference is used by the author to convey “**Bring me the fairest creature northward born, / Where Phoebus’ fire scarce thaws the icicles**” to give an image of how the sunlight makes the skin black. All the translators translate this expression communicatively into “اشعة الشمس”. What makes their translation direct to a layman who is not familiar with such a figure?

SL Text (2):

SL Text (2)	What says that fool of Hagar's offspring, ha? (Act: 2. Sc. : 5. L. : 40).	Type of figure	Readership		
		Allusion	Layman	Educated	Specialist
No.	translator	TL texts			
T1	حسين احمد امين	مالذي كان يقوله ذلك الابله من نسل هاجر؟			*
T2	خليل مطران	ماذا يقول هذا العر من نسل هاجر.			*
T3	رحاب عكاوي	ماذا يقول هذا العر من نسل هاجر.			*
T4	محمد عناني	ماذا يقول هذا الابله طيب النوايا؟	*		

### Discussion:

In this text, the writer uses the allusion in the expression “**What says that fool of Hagar’s offspring, ha?**” to give an image of (Hagar) the wife of (Ibrahim) the prophet. T1, T2, and T3 use a semantic method of translation to keep the same emotional value. T4, However, he employs a communicative translation technique, converting it into “اما معانيه فهي كحبتين من حبات القمح ضائعتين في هذا الابله طيب النواي”, In order to make the intended meaning clear to the reader, he attempts to explain it though using straightforward language. Thus, a lay reader is the target audience for this translation (layman).

### SL Text (3):

SL Text (3)	Therefore thou gaudy gold, / Hard food for <u>Midas</u> , I will none of thee. (Act: 3. Sc. : 2. L. : 102).		Type of figure	Readership		
			Allusion	Layman	Educated	Specialist
No.	translator	TL texts				
T1	حسين احمد امين	ايها الذهب البراق الذي كان طعاما صلبا لميداس.				*

T2	خليل مطران	لهذا انبذك ايها الذهب البراق	*		
T3	رحاب عكاوي	لهذا انبذك ايها الذهب البراق	*		
T4	محمد عناني	يا ذهب الفتنة يا من صرت غذاء صلبا في فم ميداس			*

### Discussion:

The translators translate this allusion in the expression (**Therefore thou gaudy gold, /Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee.**) differently. It is observed that T (2) and T (3) convert it communicatively into: “الذهب البراق”. Translators assume that a reader with less education is incapable of deciphering the highly figurative language, therefore they employ straightforward language and explain the author's meaning in an understandable manner. As a result, their translations are regarded as being intended for a layman reader who could have some trouble in comprehending such metaphorical statement. However, T (1) and T (4) semantically convert the expression into "ميداس" while preserving the text's emotional impact and forcing the reader to rely on his prior knowledge in order to decipher the author's intended meaning. This translation is therefore intended for a specialized readership.

SL Text (4):

SL Text (4)	A <u>Daniel</u> come to judgement; yea a Daniel. Act: 4. Sc. : 1. L. : 221).	Type of figure	Readership		
		Allusion	Layman	Educated	Specialist
No.	translator	TL texts			
T1	حسين احمد امين	اتى هو <u>دانيال</u> !ليحكم بنفسه			*
T2	خليل مطران	ليس قاضيا الا ذلك النبي <u>دانيال</u> الكريم.		*	
T3	رحاب عكاوي	ليس قاضيا الا ذلك النبي <u>دانيال</u> الكريم		*	
T4	محمد عناني	قد اتى <u>دانيال</u> للحكم هنا, انه <u>دانيال</u> حقا			*

**Discussion:**

By using the Prophet Daniel as an example, the author employs this reference in language to convey justice. The phrase “**A Daniel come to judgement; yea a Daniel**” is semantically translated into "دانيال" by T (2) and T (3). The original SL text's picture is preserved in these translations. In Arabic, these terms have the same meaning. As a result, the target audience for these translations is educated. Conversely, T (1) and (4) employ indirect language while maintaining the author's image. Therefore, a specialized reader is the target audience for this type of translation.

SL Text (5):

SL Text (5)	Than young Alcides when he did redeem / The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy/To the sea monster, I stand for sacrifice. (Act: 3. Sc. : 2. L. : 55-57).	Type of figure	Readership		
		Allusion	Layman	Educated	Specialist
No.	translator	TL texts			
T1	حسين احمد امين	ها هو يتقدم في وقار لا يقل عن وقار <u>هرقل</u> .	*		
T2	خليل مطران	تقدم اماما <u>يا هرقل</u> .	*		



T3	رحاب عكاوي	تقدم اماما يا هرقل	*		
T4	محمد عناني	بل اين منه ذلك الهرقل	*		

### Discussion:

In this text, the allusion in the expression “Than **young Alcides when he did redeem / The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy/To the sea monster, I stand for sacrifice.**” is semantically translated by all four interpreters. They remain consistent and used a straightforward indirect language. In this instance, translators assume that the reader is capable of deciphering such highly metaphorical language. This translation is therefore intended for a specialized readership.

### Conclusion:

One of the hardest challenges facing the literary translator is translating figurative language. The translator's use of indirect language, which simplifies a particular notion to convey a likeness between two parts that are related to separate semantic areas, as in the case of allusion, that is the source of this challenge. In terms of connotation and denotation meanings, this resemblance may be formal or objective. When translating figurative language, the translator must choose whether to translate the text exactly as it is (i.e., to preserve the image used in the figure of speech), substitute a target language that conveys the same meaning as the original image, or use a simile or explanation to clarify the implied similarity. The translator may also choose to combine simile and sense to create a

collection of options or just convey the intended message (simile and sense).

This research demonstrates that, in the absence of a readership strategy, translators typically overlook the readership variable. The tendency of the translators to target various readers in their versions of the metaphorical language is displayed in Table (1) below. While translators 2, 3, and 4 have not demonstrated a specific plan, translation number one has demonstrated some form of strategy by speaking to both lay and specialized readers. According to the study, audience should be taken in consideration while translating in general and when translating figurative language in particular.

**Table (1): Consistency of Translators vs. Readership**

Text No.	Translator (1)	Translator (2)	Translator (3)	Translator (4)
1	<i>Layman</i>	<i>layman</i>	<i>layman</i>	<i>layman</i>
2	<i>specialist</i>	<i>specialist</i>	<i>specialist</i>	<i>layman</i>
3	<i>specialist</i>	<i>Layman</i>	<i>layman</i>	<i>Specialist</i>
4	<i>specialist</i>	<i>educated</i>	<i>educated</i>	<i>Specialist</i>
5	<i>Layman</i>	<i>layman</i>	<i>layman</i>	<i>layman</i>

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