# THE AESTHETIC FUNCTION OF LITERARY TRANSLATED TEXT BASED ON AS-SAFI AND REISS THEORIES OF TRANSLATION

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***ABSTRACT_*** *This paper seeks to explore the "Aesthetic Communication Theory" propounded by As-Safi and "Text –Type Theory" propounded by Reiss for the aim of revealing their significance and application in producing an aesthetic and artistic translation of a literary text.*
***KEY WORDS****: literary text, literary translation, aesthetic, dynamic, translation theory, text- typology*

## I.    INTRODUCTION

Many translation theories are profoundly concerned with conveying  an aesthetic, dynamic and communicative translation from the source language /SL to the target language/TL, mainly when translating literary texts. As-Safi [1] and Reiss [2], among others, have paid a great attention to the concerned issue. In fact, As-Safi and Reiss have propounded their and paved the way not only to overcome the problems of translating literary texts, but also to convey a literary text that is able to have a distinguished place in the target literature. According to As-Safi [3] "an aesthetic, dynamic translation must aspire to occupy a position in the target literature as any other original works of art".

As-Safi [3], in his book "Translation Theories Strategies and Basic Theoretical Issue" agrees with Adam that translation of literary work is primarily more difficult to render than they were to create because of their complicated, hybrid and aesthetic nature of literary translation as well as the multiple task of the translator as a appreciator, critic, encoder and creator interpreter. For As-Safi [3], literary texts whether they are original or translated, they have a twofold function: semantic and aesthetic. Therefore, this paper seeks to explore the "Aesthetic Communication Theory" propounded [3] by As-Safi and "Text –Type Theory" propounded [2] by Reiss for the aim of revealing their significance and application in producing an aesthetic and artistic translation of a literary text.

## II.    LITERARY TRANSLATION AND TRANSLATION THEORIES

Bassnett [4] points out that "No introduction to translation studies could be complete without consideration of the discipline in an historical perspective. Lefever states as cited in Rose [5] that "For a long time the only translation deemed worthy of study has been translation of literature". To begin with, Cicero, St, Jerome, Luther, Dolet, Dryden and Tytler in Bassnett [4] have contributed to the history of translation theory and research. All view translation literature not only as a

process, but also as a product reflecting the sense, style and the aesthetic criteria of the TT. Therefore, they argue that sense for sense rendering, not word for word one which is capable to produce an aesthetic, stylistic, meaningful and acceptable translation. Bassnett [4]argues that both Horace and Cicero stress the importance of aesthetic dimension of literary translated work and they differentiate between word for word translation and sense for sense translation," Horace and Cicero, in their remarks on translation, have made an important distinction between word for word translation and sense for sense (or figure for figure) translation. It is worth mentioning that the first early attempt to propound a systematic translation theory has been done by Dryden, Dolet, and Tyler [6]. Despite the fact that Dryden and others have produced beneficial notions to translation at that time, some see that their approach is prescriptive, rather than descriptive. Munday states that "Dryden and others writing on translation at the time are very prescriptive, setting out what has to be done in order for successful translation to take place"[6] According to Emery [7],in the twentieth century, the theory of translation witnessed a shift from old dichotomies of 'word for word' vs.' sense for sense' to the contemporary dichotomies of Static vs. Dynamic (As-Safi), Formal vs. functional (Nida);Semantic vs. communicative (Newark). The translation theorists mentioned previously have played a vital role in the development of translation theory, mainly As-Safi [3] who produced the "Aesthetic communication Theory "for translating literary text. As-Safi's theory has added an important phase to the theory of process and product- that is 'transcoding'- a phase that helps translators interested in literary translation produce an aesthetic, dynamic and communicative translation. As-Safi [3] states that "To the third type, i.e., process and product, we add an essential intermediary element between the process and the product, i.e., transfer. Accordingly, translation is a tri-phase activity.

Text Typology.

In translation studies, text typology has become the focus of attention for an increasing number of theorists who are interested in translation. It is important to recognize the meaning of "text", before talking about text typology. According to Halliday and Hassan [8], " A text is a passage of discourse which is coherent in these two regards: it is coherent with respect to the context of situation, and therefore consistent in register; and it is

coherent with respect to itself, and therefore cohesive." In discussing text typology, many linguists have stated diverse definitions of text type. Each one has his own priorities and way of thinking. For example, Hatim and Mason [9] state that text types are" A conceptual framework which enables us to classify texts in terms of communicative intentions serving an overall rhetorical purpose ". Beaugrande and Dressler [10] describe text type as "A set of heuristics for producing, predicting, and processing textual occurrences, and hence acts as a prominent determiner of efficiency, effectiveness, and appropriateness". For Werlich [11] it is:"an idealized norm of distinctive text structuring which serves as a deep structural matrix of rules and elements for the encoder when responding linguistically to specific aspects of his experience".

## 3.1. Literary Translation and Significance of Text - Typology

Despite the fact that many different text- types such as: legal, literary and business have features of more than one type whether they are informative, expressive, argumentation, emotive, one can say it may be important to have such typology in translation, mainly when it comes to literary translation. The researcher concur with As-Safi [3] in emphasizing that literary texts should be distinguished from no-literary texts. Based on what have been stated above by As-Safi, one can say that translation literary text is not a process that involves only the transference of lexical meaning or linguistic units, but also the transmitting of the aesthetic and artistic values of ST to TT, which in turn needs creativity in translation. The translation process is a re-writing and the translator is a re-writer. In addition, various text- types have their own function to be transmitted to the audience. The aim for which literary texts are composed or translated is entirely different from that of other text- types such as business, legal, etc. Therefore, Reiss's classification [2] of texts in accordance with their functional characteristics should be taken in consideration when translating literary texts.

In summary, the researcher sees that text –typology is important when it comes to literary translation due to the following reasons:

1) The complicated, hybrid and artistic nature of literary translation.

2) The function of literary translated text is different from that of other text-types, (expressive and emotive rather than informative).

3) Literary translation is creativity-oriented process, in which the translator should reflect his language competence and performance.

4) Literary translation is also target–oriented process, in which the translator should produce an equivalent effect among TT readers.

5) Literary translation needs to apply methods and strategies which comply with dynamic, communicative,

aesthetic translation, such as the dynamic translation approach which applied by As-Safi [1] on his translation of "The Call of the Curfew".

## 3.2 Text-Type Classifications.

According to Nord [121], text type classifications help the translator be aware of the linguistic indications of function and functional translation units. He claims that "Text type classifications sharpen the translator's awareness of linguistic markers of communicative function and functional translation units".

Many modern theorists have proposed different classifications for text types. Werlich [11] has categorized texts with respect to their dominant contextual focus. He has stated five text types: description, narration exposition argumentation and instruction. Hatim and Mason [16] have relied on Werlich's text type categorization, reducing text types to three main categories as description and narration have been merged into one type 'exposition'. Each type has its own dominant contextual focus which differentiates it from other types. They have categorized text type to: argumentation, exposition and instruction. Based on the concept of equivalence Reiss as cited in As-Safi, [3] differentiates between four types of text; namely informative, expressive, operative and audio medial text.

## 4. Aesthetic Communication Theory Propounded by As-Safi.

As-Safi worked in Both Iraqi and Jordanian Universities, and currently working in the English and Translation Department, Petra University. His main focus on literary translated texts developed out of his strong links aesthetic theory and dynamic translation. It is worth mentioning that Emery [7] is one of the translation scholars who has highlighted As-Safi's approach in producing a dynamic translation, which will be discussed later in my paper. Although some Arab scholars argue that theory does not work with the translation of literary texts, which is it to my opinion a wrong argument, As-Safi's approach in the translation of " The Call of the Curfew "represents a focal turn in translation literary texts, mainly from Arabic into English. His approaches to literary translation are mostly developed in his book "Translation Theories Strategies and Basic Theoretical Issue".

The researcher sees that As-Safi has put forward his "Aesthetic Communication Theory", depending on his experience of translation studies as well as translation of literary texts, mainly "The Call of the Curfew". In asserting that literary translation should be more like AN original rather than THE original work of art. As-Safi stresses the importance of applying methods and strategies that should take into account the nature of literature, especially aesthetic, dynamic, and communicative aspects. As-Safi [3] argues that " Likewise, literary translation which should ideally be a work of literature is dynamic rather than static: it should be more like AN original rather than THE original work of art". To this purpose; As-Safi

states [3] seven principles for producing an aesthetic, communicative and dynamic translation.The translation must:

(1) Be dynamic rather than static [14];

(2) Be creative and aesthetically informative/ communicative.

(3) Comply with the target linguistic system.

(4) Be appropriate, i.e., fit the context of the message.

(5) Be natural and free from translationese [14].

(6) Be acceptable to the target audience or literary Readership and.

(7) Aspire to occupy a position in the target literature as any other original works of art.

In order to produce aesthetic, natural and dynamic translation of literary texts, As-Safi has approached the specific nature of translated literature not only on the levels of process and product, but also on the level of "transcoding ". He views translation as a tri-phase activity wherein both process and product are integrated with "transfer", the element that is added between the process and product by him, "In fact, the intricate nature of translation makes it mandatory to relate the product to the tri-phase process, though the constituent phases are not autonomously separate from each other" [3].

The tri- phase activity proposed by As-Safi has put the importance of "equivalence "to the literary translation under the microscope. As I have mentioned above, translating literary texts is not only involves the transmitting of lexical meaning, but also the aesthetic and artistic form of the SL. Therefore, a creative and intelligent translator is the one who pays more attention to the issue of "equivalence". As known, languages are not identical in terms of "equivalence", or as [15] puts it, " No two languages are identical, either in the meanings given to corresponding symbols or in the ways in which symbols are arranged in phrases and sentences". Consequently, translation of idioms and figure of speech such as metaphor, simile or parable which characterize literary texts may cause a big challenge for the translator. Based on his aesthetic theory, As-Safi has produced an approach to equivalence that caters to convey an aesthetic impact on the readers. Emery [7] states that "As-Safi distinguished between a static (or literal) and a dynamic rendering, the latter aiming to meet the TL collocation, idiomatic and literary requirements while transmitting the meaning faithfully". Emery explains that the dynamic translation includes "TRANSPOSITION" which allows the translator change in the structure and ordering of words in phrase /sentences, and quotes the following examples:

"He slept for a long time". نام لوقت طويل (static) instead of كان (الوقت) منتصف أطال النوم (dynamic) or It was midnight انتصف الليل instead of الليل

The following examples show how As-Safi has utilized his dynamic approach to make Arabic literary translated text more aesthetic, dynamic and acceptable in the TL:

Example (1) "We asked him for help, and he helped us". طلبنا منه العون وأعاننا (static) استعناه فاعاننا (dynamic)

As can be seen in the above example, to avoid literal translation (static), Arabic prefix is added to the verbal stem (استعناه).

Example (2) "They quarreled with each other". تشاجر احدهم مع الاخر (static) تشاجرا (dynamic)

As can be seen in the above example, the addition of the infix (أ) after the verb to indicate interaction makes the sentence more aesthetic and dynamic.

The above examples show how As-Safi's aesthetic theory is associated with the dynamic approach proposed by him to reflect the aesthetic dimension of the TL.

Moreover, As-Safi states that one of the requirements of dynamic and aesthetic translation is that the translation must "be natural and free from translationese", [3]. the following two examples illustrate that:

Example (1) "Here they sat, folded together, folded round with the same rug." (Lawrence 1982:436, in As-[13]).

[13] هنا جلس الواحد منطو على الآخر منطويين لفا ببطانية واحدة

[13]. ينطوي احدهما على الاخر، وفي دثار واحد ينطويان استقر ههنا،

Comparing the translation produced by AS-Safi with that produced by Hussayn, one can say that Hussayn's rendering is literal lacking naturalness as well as stagnation. Hence, As-Safi's translation is more dynamic as it more natural; reflecting the aesthetic values of TL. As –Safi and Ash-Sharifi [13] state that "To be natural, the translation should use established formulas from the literary heritage of the TL, that is to say, it should be idiomatic".

It is obvious that As-Safi supports the utilizing of dynamic translation rather than the static as a key constituent in the process of literary translation, mainly translation from English into Arabic. An eagle eye on the above examples, one can say that dynamism can be achieved in Arabic literary text by utilizing verbal structures instead of nominal ones; therefore, the researcher can say that, at least from his own perspective, any translation of literary text which replaces verbal structure by nominal structure, would fail to capture the rhetorical and aesthetic effect. As-Safi and Ash-Sharifi [13] argue that" the translator should possess a literary competence which manifests itself firstly by his acquaintance with the rhetoric and the dominant aesthetic canons of the TL culture".

As-Safi's aesthetic theory also emphasizes the aesthetic communication function of literary translated text that may occur between the translator and the TT recipient". As-Safi [3] claims that "The above theory, we propound, is creativity-oriented specifically for literary translation, which is essentially an aesthetic communication between the translator and the target reader". It views translation as a creativity process in which the translator performs many tasks as a decoder, appreciator, critic, encoder, and creator. Consequently, the translator should avoid literal rendering

when translating idioms and figures of speech as such rendering may produce dullness and stagnation of literary texts; lacking aesthetic values that distinguish literary texts from non- literary texts. Chapman declares that "The work of a skillful and worthy translator is to observe the sentences, figures and forms (sic) of speech proposed in his author, his true sence(sic) and height(sic), and to adorne them with figures and forms (sic) of oration fitted to the originall (sic) in the same tongue to which they are translated: and these things I would gladlie have made the questions of whatsoever my labours have deserved, In [4]. In fact, As-Safi's proposed tri-phase along with his dynamic approach, that characterized his aesthetic theory, are a plan road directing translators towards the best solution to deal with problems of rendering literary texts, particularly the ones that may emerge due to equivalence. As-Safi points out that " the translator cannot easily or immediately furnish solutions to all problems regarding equivalence albeit resorting to an exhaustive search through all available reference materials", [3]. Accordingly, the translator must locate equivalent expressions that create alike effect produced by the idioms and figures of speech of the SL. For instance, the English simile "it is raining cats and dogs" might produce a ridiculous effect in Arabic if rendered literally instead of تمطر بغزارة meaning: It is raining heavily.

In sum, translation literary texts may cause some problems, especially idioms and figures of speech such as metaphor, simile, etc. Therefore, the translator should adopt strategies and approaches such as proposed by As-Safi to overcome such problems. From my own point of view, applying As-Safi's aesthetic communication theory to translate literary texts is very beneficial as it is mainly concerned with producing dynamic aesthetic translation in the target literature as any other original works of art.

5. Text- Type Theory propounded by Reiss

As I mentioned earlier, Reiss differentiates between four types of text- type: informative, expressive, operative and audio medial text.(Reiss[2]; in As-Safi,[3].She describes the informative text as one which focuses on "plain communication" of facts in which the writer uses the referential dimension of language: the main focus of the communication is the "topic". Whereas, she characterizes the expressive text as one which caters to "creative composition ", wherein the writer uses the aesthetic dimension of language. To Reiss, the operative text is a target - oriented which aims to convince the reader to behave in a specific way. The audio medial text according to Reiss represents films and spoken advertisements which their main aim is to supplement the other three functions with visual images, music, etc.

5.1. Discussion of the text- type approach

Munday " [6] emphasizes the significance of Reiss's approach as it shifts translation theory from focusing on the lower linguistic levels, the impact they produce to the

focus on communicative function. He states that the text type approach, " moves translation theory beyond a consideration of lower linguistic levels, the mere words beyond even the effect they create, towards a consideration of the communicative purpose of translation Since this paper deals with translation of literary text, it is important to focus on Reiss's approach of translating expressive and emotive texts. Reiss stresses that expressive text should convey the aesthetic and artistic form of the ST to the TT, Ibid, in As-Safi [3]. Taking this notation into account by the translator, the literary translated text will be more dynamic, reflecting the aesthetic values of the TT among recipients. One can say that Reiss may concur with As-Safi [3]in asserting that the literary translation should not only convey the lexical meaning of the SL, but also the expressive and emotive values. It is perhaps conspicuously indisputable that literary translation, just like literary original composition, is not only informative, i.e., conveys lexical meanings, but also expressive or emotive". Reiss in her text- type approach also highlights the behavioral response of the TT readers. She argues that" the TT of operative text should produce on its readers the desired response". The translation should create an equivalent effect among TT readers [3]. Similar to Reiss, As-Safi's aesthetic theory stresses the importance of producing the aesthetic effect of literary translated text among TT readers. Literary translated text should provoke the reader's anticipation, attract their attention and please them," It caters to arouse the receptors' suspense, please them and/or invite their interest" [3]

Having discussed Reiss's approach, one can say that Reiss has provided Text- type approach, which is very beneficial to the translators who are more concerned with translating literary text from English into Arabic since such a approach may enable translators to overcome problems and communicatively and aesthetically transmits the meaning of idioms and figures of speech, such as metaphor, simile, irony and parable. For example, the words "white and snow "in the English simile " She is white as a snow" ,may be produced a dullness and ridicules meaning in Arabic if they are rendered word by word.

### III. CONCLUSION

In this paper I have tried to reveal the relationship between translation and text- typology, particularly literary translated texts. The researcher has explored both As-Safi and Reiss theories of translation to recognize the extended to which these theories are capable to convey aesthetic and dynamic literary translation from the original work to the target literature, and to know if they can be applied on literary text or not. In my point of view, I can say that both theories can be applied on literary texts. I am fully support As-Safi's theory as it is associated with the dynamic approach and tri-phase activity proposed by As-Safi.From

my point of view, adopting As-Safi's theory to translate literary text provides translators with appropriate strategies to solve many thorny problems they may encounter while translating literary texts. In addition, the researcher fully concur with As-Safi in asserting that literary texts should be distinguished from no-literary texts; therefore, having such text- typology in translation, mainly when it comes to literary translation, is a necessity. As-Safi states that any translated text should be ideally "as semantically accurate, grammatically correct, stylistically effective and textually coherent as the SL text" [3]

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