

Arab Soecity of English Language Studies

From the SelectedWorks of AWEJ for Translation & Literary Studies

Fall October 15, 2017

Tradaptation of Dramatic Texts

Bechir Saoudi, *Arab Soecity of English Language Studies*

Tradaptation of Dramatic Texts

Bechir Saoudi

English Department, College of Sciences and Humanities
Hotat Bani Tamim, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University
Riyad, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Abstract

This article deals with the feasibility of applying cultural translation studies approaches to intra-lingual adaptation of dramatic texts through the discussion of adaptation terminology, the interchangeability of adaptation and translation, and the relevance of combining both into “tradaptation”. The purpose is to study loose adaptations of dramatic texts, especially those of Shakespeare, following cultural translation studies principles. The study has shown that it is satisfactorily feasible to use inter-lingual translation principles, across the spectrum from strictly literal to loose free, and apply them to the intra-lingual adaptation of dramatic texts, with the example of *The Al-Hamlet Summit* as a main reference. Further studies can help attain substantial progress in the analysis of the concept of adaptation.

Keywords: adaptation, drama, intra-lingual translation, Shakespeare, tradaptation

Cite as: Saoudi, B. (2017). Tradaptation of Dramatic Texts. *Arab World English Journal for Translation & Literary Studies*, 1(4). DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awejtls/vol1no4.14>

Introduction

The remaking of existing material has been described and labeled in various ways over the centuries. Prior knowledge of previous investigation in this field could help achieve significant advances in the analysis of the concept of adaptation. As a result of working in isolation, drama translation scholars and researchers in general have made possible a huge proliferation of terminology surrounding adaptation. Some of the researchers do not even bother to define the terms they coin. The absence of clear and precise definitions for this abundant terminology sometimes leads to confusion.

Adaptation Terminology

Some of the terms used to describe the process of literary re-creation are vague and unfocused on particular aspects of the practice. In the eighteenth century, plays that reworked pieces by Shakespeare were broadly called “alterations” or “imitations” (Rosenthal, 1996, p. 323). Also in a current electronic Shakespeare academic discussion group adaptations are loosely labeled “spin-offs”. (*Hamlet Online*). Cohn (2015) provides an alphabetical list of labels, from “abridgement” to “version”, but settles on the umbrella term “offshoot”, with the subcategories of “reduction/emendation”, “adaptation”, and “transformation” (pp. 3-4). “Offshoot”, she also maintains, is “a looser and more neutral word”. “Reduction/emendation” can also be very loose terms that include any production in which words are altered and lines cut, virtually applying to any production of any work (p. 4).

“Transposition” is another general category that encompasses both interlingual and inter-semiotic processes of repetition, as Jakobson (2000, p. 114) distinguished them. In Cohn’s (2015) view, adaptation is limited to plays that include “substantial cuts of scenes, speeches, and speech assignments; much alteration of language; and at least one and usually several important (or scene-length) additions.” (p. 4). “Additions are crucial”, she asserts, “in distinguishing reduction/emendation from adaptation”. “Transformation” is another term characterized by “invention” where “characters are often simplified or trundled through new events, with the [original] ending scrapped” (pp. 3-4). Yet, not all of the terms relating to adaptation are so vague.

Some scholars endeavor to limit the scope of reference for their terminology, especially in relation to drama translation where, as Pavis (1987, p. 420) says, the audience and the target culture have a say on the success of texts. Proponents of the target text/culture oriented approaches in drama translation include Brissett (1990), Déprats (1990), Bassnett (1991), Lefevere (1992) and Laliberté (1995). They have referred to the translations emanating from this trend and described them variously in English as “rewriting”, “transplanting”, “naturalizing”, and “neutralizing” (Aaltonen, 1993, pp. 26-27). They also labeled them “integrating foreign works”, “transpos[ing]”, “reappropriat[ing]” and “adaptation” (Koustas, 1988, p. 129), and also “large-scale amendments”, “rewriting” and again “adaptation” (Bassnett, 1991, pp. 101-102). In French, different expressions are used such as “transposer complètement”, “adaptation” and “recreation” (Laliberté, 1995, p. 519) and “traduction-assimilation”, “déplacement” and “déraciner de son contexte” (Koustas, 1995, p. 529), and “adaptation” and “traduction ethnocentrique” (Ladouceur, 1995, p. 31). Over the years, “Shakespeare”, says Al-Bahar, “was *transplanted* into Arab soil” (Al-Bahar, 1976, p. 13). *Hamlet*, says Al-Shetawi, has been “assimilated” into the “fabric of Arab creative processes” (2006, p. 60).

A current label for some types of plays might also be *appropriation*. This word suggests a hostile takeover, a seizure of authority over the original in a way that appeals to contemporary sensibilities steeped in a politicized understanding of culture. This kind of adaptation is considered by Mailhot (1987, p. 48) as “a new form of alienation and subjection” when he describes Garneau’s adaptation of *Macbeth*. (Translation from French sources is mine throughout unless otherwise specified).

Some of the terms listed above, like transplanting, naturalizing, (re)appropriating, are suggestive but capture only one aspect of the field; others, like alteration, imitation, offshoot and emendation, are wide but do not amount to a general label, and any attempt to classify the possibilities of rewriting too narrowly will run the risk of more proliferation of terminology surrounding adaptation. It is, thus, evident from the examination of some of the coined terms and expressions above that there is need to clearly define and clarify the notions they carry. This situation equally reveals the need for researchers and translation practitioners to stem further proliferation of terms which would only contribute to compounding the situation even further. In addition, while it could be supposed that all the above terms broadly refer more or less to the same translation reality or phenomenon, it could equally be argued that they have different semantic shades thereby suggesting various degrees of manipulation of the source text to meet the expectations of the target language audience as well as the requirements of the receiving culture.

For lack of a better term then, we are compelled, as a first step, to fall back on adaptation, the most frequent term used to label dramatic texts. The concept of adaptation has not yet been exhaustively or systematically analyzed, and theatrical adaptation has, as a consequence, remained a relatively marginalized and under-theorized activity. Some scholars have scarcely been lenient with adapters as adaptation almost always “appears as treason, a crime, a lack of respect!” It is sometimes called “imitation of a copyist”, some other times “deformation of a forger/falsifier” (Bastin, 1993, p. 473)

Adaptation is the word in most common usage and is, therefore, capable of minimizing confusion. It is used by Rosenthal (1996, p. 323) in her discussion of eighteenth century plays. Similarly, Clark’s edition of Restoration plays based on Shakespeare is entitled *Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare* (1997). Raddadi’s (1979) *Davenant’s Adaptations of Shakespeare* is another example. At this stage, it is worth examining some of the current intellectual and artistic understanding of the concept of adaptation, positioning it in the theoretical discussion of cultural recreation, exploring such ideas as intertextuality, recontextualization and the “death of the author” (Barthes, 1988).

According to the *Latin Dictionary* online, adaptation means “to fit to a new context” and to recontextualize. It includes almost any act of alteration performed upon specific cultural works of the past. *Le Petit Robert* (2013) defines adaptation as a “very free translation of a play, involving numerous modifications that update or rejuvenate it” (p. 23). It also provides another definition of the term, “The transposition to the theatre or cinema of a work of a different literary genre”.

To adapt, according to Lefebvre and Ostiguy (1978), can also mean to transpose the action to the country of the target culture and/or to another age/epoch: Adaptation can follow two axes at

the level of context change: A “spatial axis” and a “time axis” (p. 34). Bastin (1993), moreover, believes that adaptation is both a “re-creation” and a “necessity” (p. 473). For adaptation, according to Gambier (1992), is the “very basis of the communication process, understood as the sum of strategies, procedures of construction and exchange of meaning” (p. 424). An important question remains to be answered, however: Being as such, can adaptation rise to the level of being considered an “original” form of writing? But first what is an “original” form of writing?

Originality: A Lie?

The following few paragraphs shall serve to refute the criterion of originality, especially the assumed originality of Shakespeare, against which adaptation of his works has often been understood and evaluated. In fact, adaptation has been described as lacking in “fidelity” to the original work. Critical understanding, in these instances, remains bound by the concept of authorship, supported by such notions as “originality in creation and fidelity in interpretation” (Rosenthal, 1996, p. 335). “We venture into a territory”, she says, “where the very word adaptation distorts and diminishes both intention and accomplishment”, and then comments, “The reviewer recognizes that to call it an adaptation diminishes it, for in a culture of literary property, originality becomes a primary value in art” (p. 335).

The understanding of translation, however, moves from that of a faithful transformation of an original work to the processing of “a source text that is itself already a rewriting of prior cultural material”, to use Steiner’s words (1992, p. xii). Examination of the concept of originality reveals that it posits an independence that does not exist. Even Shakespeare was not original in his own work. Theatrical adaptation can, thus, be re-theorized as a specific form of the process of cultural reworking that is basic to cultural production in spite of originality allegations.

The concept of “intertextuality” supports the case against originality. Barthes and Kristeva strongly believe that all writing, like all cultural production, is an interweaving of already-existing cultural material. Barthes (1981, p. 42) writes, “any text is an intertext; other texts are present in it [...] the texts of the previous and surrounding culture [...] Intertextuality [is] the condition of any text whatsoever”. Other cultural texts are present not only as acknowledged sources or influences but also as “a general field of anonymous formulae whose origin can scarcely ever be located; of unconscious or automatic quotations” (p. 39). Thus, intertextuality implies that every production is always a reproduction and that everything we think, say, or do relies upon prior ideas, words, and cultural norms.

Derrida (1988) also sees “recontextualization” as the inevitable condition of texts in history. Every act of writing, of meaning, all motivated human endeavor, loses its original context and plays itself out in a potential infinity of new contexts, in which significance of the writing will inevitably be different from what it was. When we recontextualize, we inevitably rework and alter, even if we are trying to be faithful to our sense of the “original”. Reception and reader-response theories also stress how the meaning of texts from the past is changed by their appearance in new conditions. In this light, Holderness (as cited in Fortier, 2002, p. 341) writes, “Shakespeare is, here, now, always, what is currently being made of him.”

In the same line, Foucault (1979) sees the author not as a person but as “a certain functional principle by which, in our culture, one limits, excludes, and chooses” (p. 159). Barthes (1988), on the other hand, argues that the “death of the author” liberates practices and options of remaking available to the reader. In this light, we need to examine how adaptation takes place within a certain structured relationship to such institutional (and politically significant) notions as the author and the canon, and show that adaptation is not a simple rejection of these notions, but rather an ongoing engagement with them. According to Lefevere (1985), in all forms of rewriting, the author is decentered and enters into play with rewriters (p. 220).

It becomes clear, then, that the activity of reworking already-existing cultural material is, to some extent, a frequent cultural activity; originality and fidelity become largely fake ideas as a result. Adaptation, like translation, becomes part of a generalized cultural activity that perceives reworking in new contexts as more characteristic of cultural development than “originality in creation and fidelity in interpretation” (Rosenthal, 1996, p. 335).

As in original writing, adaptation, according to Johnson (1984, p.422), often passes through four creative processes: First, ingestion or data collection through reading, research and experience; second, digestion or data processing and assimilation; third, projection or tackling the various aspects of the work in view, searching for relevance, condensing, expanding, narrowing the focus, etc.; and fourth, rejection or editing, restyling, discarding redundancies, spotting weaknesses, eliminating, substituting with a view to making the work a masterpiece. Having established the “originality” of the process of adaptation, its relationship with translation and the fine line that exists between both need to be investigated. The investigation shall determine the feasibility of applying translation studies approaches to free adaptations.

Adaptation or Translation?

According to Bastin (1993, p. 474), four factors lead a translator to adapt rather than translate: First, “transcoding insufficiency”, which is exclusively linguistic: Many parts of the discourse are “untranslatable”: Word puns, certain idioms, vernaculars, intentional ambiguities, metalanguage, humor, etc. (p. 475). This phenomenon is frequent and cannot be solved without taking adaptive, and not simply translational, steps. Second, the inadequacy of situations associates linguistic and extra-linguistic factors when dealing with the linguistic expression of an extra-linguistic reality. Third, the change of genre takes adaptation to another level which is not of a linguistic origin. Fourth, any breach in the communication balance also leads a translator to adapt rather than translate: Communication takes place through the text, but the latter is only the concrete manifestation of a larger historical, geographical, sociolinguistic and cognitive environment.

Having discussed the factors that lead a translator to opt for adaptation rather than translation, another question needs to be asked: What does the process of adaptation entail? Adaptation, for Lefebvre and Ostiguy (1978), calls on a network of connotations known to the audience so that the latter can easily understand the occurrence of events and communicate with the author’s intention (p. 45). In the case of Al-Bassam’s *The Al-Hamlet Summit (AHS)*, the adapter’s intention is to expose certain realities concerning the Arab and Muslim world. If the action is left to take place in Denmark, the audience feels unconcerned. If, on the contrary, the

action is transposed to the Arab world and the characters turned into Arab politicians, “the audience reacts and decodes differently”, to use Laliberté’s (1995) words. In fact, “they feel interested and they identify with a familiar reality” (p. 525).

Poupart (1976) shares the same opinion when he talks about “a version that respects the local color” and “a ‘nationalized’ version whose connotative values correspond to the cultural background of the target language” (p. 86). Adaptation may also call for detailed operations including recreation of characters, dramatic transcription of action, reorganization of discourse from prose to dialogue and elimination of digressions, reorganization of intrigue, adoption of new terminologies, introduction of audio-visual effects such as music, dance, masks, pantomime, etc., indication of entries, exits, stage directions, position of the camera, decor, light effects, etc. In some literary adaptations, two distinct operations are performed either simultaneously or consecutively, the choice depending on the linguistic competence of the adapter. The adapter may have to modify the language of the original text and present the content in a different literary form or translate the original text into a different language and present the content in a different literary format. Among the procedures adapters most often resort to, according to Bastin (1993), are “omission, expansion, exotization, updating, equivalence of situations and creation” (p. 474). Being linked to certain types of texts like plays, adaptation implies a certain freedom of the translator to modify, adjust, add and/or omit certain parts of the source language (SL) text in order to better adjust it to the intended audience and to their habits and reception norms.

Apart from the social and cultural process which aims at conforming to the dominant norms, three practices related to adaptation can be identified according to Gambier (1992, p. 423). First, addition and/or omission so that the target language (TL) text can have the “same effect” of the SL text, the emphasis being laid on the reader: This evokes Nida’s dynamic translation, Newmark’s communicative translation and J. House’s covert translation. This is translation that gets nearer to the difference, to the Other, tries to omit the difference, and renders the Other to the Self: It looks like an original disconnected from its source context but pretending to preserve the SL function. It modifies the text’s presuppositions to adapt them to the new receiving conditions (Gambier, 1992, p. 422). Second, the production of an original work (“Faire œuvre originale”) from another in the same or a different sign system, which is Jakobson’s semiotic (also called intersemiotic) translation (1967), such as adapting a novel or a play into a film. These “adaptations” can also take place in the case of interlingual translation (such as adapting an English play into an Arabic film). Third, the transformation of a text to suit a certain readership according to explicit or implicit socio-economic criteria.

Not all parts of a SL text, however, reach the same degree of adaptation and not all text types require the same degree of adaptation or authorize the same freedom of action for the “mediating translator” (Gambier, 1992, p. 425). Adaptation, thus, implies a process rather than a beginning or an end, and as ongoing objects of adaptation, literary works remain in a continuous process that alters the shape and significance of the “originals” so as to invoke and yet be different from them.

Different audiences, moreover, often require different kinds of adaptations. Adaptations could be made in the name of authenticity, respect of the soul of the original and the preservation

of original flavor, but also and most importantly “in the name of the audience to which it is addressed”, as Delisle affirms (1986, p. 6). In order to appeal to their specific audiences, adapters resort to either selective adaptation (“adaptation ponctuelle”) or total adaptation (“adaptation globale”), to use Bastin’s terminology (1993, p. 476). Selective adaptation, that covers only certain parts of the discourse of a text, is directly linked to the language of the ST. It is a tactical move by the translator in certain particular cases, and is optional if it has no big effect on the overall meaning.

Total adaptation, on the other hand, that affects all the parts of the target text and alienates the original text, is strategic because it prioritizes the overall objective of the author, and is necessary because its absence means the uselessness of the work or a breach in the “communication balance” (équilibre communicationnel) (Bastin, 1993, p. 476). While partial adaptation is “a re-expression called for by the original text”, total adaptation is an “expression that emanates from the author’s aim” (p. 476). Because partial adaptation seems to only have a limited effect on the general meaning of the text, certain readers prefer total adaptation so that, as Darbelnet (1970, p. 93) says, “nothing reminds them of the cultural identity of the original”.

For Bastin (1993), it is equally convenient for the translator to distinguish between “tactical” adaptation involving both linguistic and extra-linguistic levels (reference to local traditions, to cultural institutions and terms) and “strategic” adaptation (adapting to a new situation and striking a new balance between author and audience) according to whether the difficulty emanates from the language of the text or the “act of uttering” (l’acte de parole) (p. 476).

Adaptation could also be subdivided into two different categories according to whether the text is adapted to the reader, or the reader to the text. We usually have a “prototext [original or source text] and a potential reader,” says Osimo (2004), “and an adaptation of one to the other is needed as two poles exist that catalyze views of the possible attitudes.” This could be explained in terms of Lotman’s notion of the “semiosphere” which is particularly helpful for outlining the strategies of adaptation placing them along the “appropriation of the alien” versus “insertion of the alien in one’s own” continuum (2005, p. 208). But what is meant by adaptation of the reader to the text? All that is comprised in this category can generally be summarized in the notion of “metatext” [translated text or target text], the overall image a text creates of itself in a given culture. A reader may be unable to understand some aspects of the text due to ignorance of some cultural features of the setting that instigated the text. In this case, if the translator works on the reader rather than the text, s/he can prepare a second text/metatext in which information and interpretation keys of unintelligible elements are given. Delabastita (1993, p. 19) gives the example of the creaking shoes in *King Lear*. In the Elizabethan culture, it was very trendy to wear creaking shoes. In the case where the translation opts for an adaptation of the reader to the text, one can imagine a metatext (a footnote, a preface or similar) that informs the reader of this fact. Adaptation of the reader to the text can mean many different strategies to provide the potential reader with information necessary to decode the text. When the translator chooses to adapt the text to the reader, this concerns mainly the text’s unsaid portion, i.e. the implicit features of the text as part of a culture, so the text would be modified. In *AHS*, Al-Bassam adapts the text to the audience although some scholars, like Mailhot (1987), have a firm stand against the adapter who creates “a mirror of himself rather than open a window on the Other” (p. 49). Some adapters even try to “erase the other”, as Brisset (qtd

in Laliberté 1995) asserts, or at least “transform otherness to serve the national cause” when theatrical translation is invested in “identity issues”, as Laliberté notes (1995, p. 521).

Adapters can try to keep the national and cultural originality of a play, as Mounin (1968) asserts, asking the audience to make an effort to adapt, but this type of translation remains “an avant-garde attempt aimed at a limited audience” (p. 10). For postcolonial adapters, moreover, “colonizing” the ST is considered a step towards the re-working and re-imagining of the West, and of their place within it; it is also a re-fashioning of the Euro-American cultures’ self-image.

So far we have dealt with the concept and practice of adaptation; it remains to discuss the relationship adaptation-translation. For to demonstrate the compatibility of the two notions helps remove the shallow line of demarcation between them and legitimizes the study of literary and cultural adaptations following translation-studies approaches.

Tradaptation

Traditionally, the notion of “adaptation” has been played against that of “translation”. When commenting on the origin of a text, we often ask, “Is it a translation or an adaptation?” One of the objectives of this article is to examine the operational similarities between these two related disciplines, translation and adaptation, identify some points of divergence and assess the extent to which the two disciplines overlap or can be considered interchangeable.

The possible differences between translation and adaptation need to be examined, but drawing a line of demarcation between the two concepts passes through the analysis of each before considering their relationship. Some researchers tend to oversimplify the difference between translation and adaptation. Déprats (1990, p. 38), for instance, maintains that what distinguishes adaptation from translation, for the translator, is that adaptation involves omissions, additions or “reorganization”. But while emphasis is on fidelity to both content and form in translation, it is more on the content in adaptation. In other words, the concession for loss of information is greater in adaptation than in translation. This concession makes adaptation more flexible, with room for modifications, additions and omissions as dictated by the target format, although the assumption may not hold in every case. Also literary adaptation is more creative than translation which most often adheres strictly to the original texts.

Translation and adaptation do operate on similar levels, yet adaptation is a more extensive exercise that often embraces translation. It is also far more creative and flexible than translation because it gives room for modifications and allows a greater concession for loss of information. However, translation appears to be more taxing and intensive, for it requires greater rigor and fidelity to the original text. Whereas the adapter may choose to narrow the scope of the original work and concentrate on some areas of specific interest, the translator is constrained to reproduce all the information. Another paradox marks the use of the label “adaptation” in relation to that of translation: We talk of adaptation when the number and the type of transformations of SL are so numerous that they necessitate rewriting, assimilation to the norms, conventions, and the values of the target language and culture. Implicitly, translation, according to Gambier (1992), could thus be defined as a “literal effort, a mimesis of the original” (p. 421). So, on the one hand, translation sticks to literality, and on the other, “it changes into adaptation as soon as its target aspect prevails”.

Adaptation becomes in fact “the creative and necessary process of expressing a general meaning”, says Bastin (1993), “aiming at reestablishing the communicative balance that would be broken had there been simply translation” (p. 477).

Although they certainly have points of divergence, translation and adaptation converge on far more ways. Both terms “entail a great deal of transposition and reproduction”, says Johnson (1984), both “demand total application and discipline” (pp. 421-22). They may also have similar motivations, such as “the desire to demonstrate and perfect one’s linguistic skills, manifest one’s aesthetic consciousness and project one’s ideas or ideals.” For Ladouceur (1995), the difference between adaptation and translation proper is only quantitative in that it makes more frequent use of certain strategies which in any case are not unique to adaptation. Ladouceur declares that “not a single strategy claimed by adaptation seems to exclusively belong to it” (p. 37). Translated and adapted texts, claims Ladouceur, follow “translation strategies of the same nature, but with different frequency and varied degrees.” So adaptation relies on certain translation proceedings that are not necessarily specific to it. Furthermore, Brisset does not establish a clear difference between adaptation and translation as she tackles both at a time without actually distinguishing between them ((Laliberté, 1995, p. 521).). Even more, Bassnett (1985, p. 93) asserts that we should not even distinguish between adaptation and translation and that the use of such jargon serves only to blur the vision. In her view, the translation of a play, for instance, is so complex that we must take into account the multiple codes, and that imposing “a good way” to translate the theatre is non-sense. The dominant discourse in translation studies then should prioritize adaptation, as Gambier recommends (1992, p. 425).

All types of adaptation can justifiably be comprised within translation. Laliberté (1995, p. 526) considers that “it is possible to adapt while remaining loyal to the text and the intention of the author.” Adaptation, according to Gambier (1992, p. 424), is always defined in relation to such notions as free translation, modification, distortion, and in relation to linguistic norms, stylistic conventions, communication schemes and acceptable values. In fact, various translation strategies comprehend adaptation in very different terms. An opposition between translation and adaptation conveys an implicit opposition between literal translation (focus on SL) and freedom (focus on TL), which depends, as Gambier says, more on a value judgment than on a reasonable explanation of the transfer between SL text and TL text (Gambier, 1992: 424). Adaptation, for Bastin (1993), actually shares the same process with translation: A first phase of “apprehension”, an intermediate phase of “conceptualization” or “deverbalization”, and a third one of “expression” (p. 476).

As an adaptation, *AHS* is in fact a rare stance of rewriting that incorporates all three categories of translation described by Jakobson (2000, p. 114): First, *AHS* is an intralingual translation, or rewording, ie., an interpretation of English verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language, even though the English version of *AHS* “keep[s] Shakespeare’s basic plot but none of his words” (*The Theatre Guide*, online). It is a “refashioning” of a text of a distant past for modern audiences, involving word substitution, paraphrasing, omissions, time modification, all of which denote a form of intralingual translation, as Gambier (1992, p. 422) claims. Second, *AHS* is at the same time an instance of interlingual translation, which is the traditional focus of translation studies: The interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language (transposing an original text in the original verbal language [English] into a text in a different verbal language:

Arabic). Third, *AHS* is also a form of intersemiotic translation, or transmutation: An interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of non-verbal sign systems (*Hamlet* here is translated/ adapted to be performed with music and video clips).

If such a “translation” can be viewed as adaptation, in how many ways is it possible to view the adaptation of a written text? What should be adapted to what? Who should adapt to whom and why? The history of translation is one of “permanent misunderstanding, of constant lack, of obsessive loss”, says Gambier (1992, p. 424), “that would not reveal its name except sometimes through being recognized as adaptation”. Indeed, not all translated texts are necessarily labeled as translation. Translation, like every other form of communication, is mediation, i.e., adjustment to a new context, to certain aims or intentions, to readers real or fictional. It is work, negotiation of meaning, of interaction, “it is forcibly adaptation, like all communication”, not pure formal translation (p. 421). Also every translation is necessarily an activity of “reformulation” with the intention of achieving certain objectives. For the same aim, there are parts translated literally and parts adapted (p. 424).

Dramatic texts are also specifically and frequently called adaptations “when the number and type of transformations of the ST lead to rewriting, assimilation to the norms, conventions and values of the target language/culture” (Gambier, 1992, p. 425). Any translation, claims Wellwarth (1981, p. 142), is itself “an interpretation, marked by its author’s time, place, and idiosyncrasies, just like adaptation.” It is “the re-creation of the original language’s meaning in the syntax and, in the case of a modern work, in the socially accepted style of the target language.” In the case of theatre translation, claims Laliberté (1995, p. 525), the translator is certainly “forced to adapt”. This is the reason why any translation should be considered an adaptation, as Osimo (2004) maintains.

Because the apparent act of translation could not be other than an act of adaptation and vice versa, the concept of “tradaptation” (translation-adaptation) becomes adequate not only for the theatre but possibly also for all translated texts. The term “tradaptation” was proposed by Garneau (qtd. In Laliberté, 1995, p. 524), used by LePage (1994), and later borrowed by Salter (1996, p. 123) and theatre director Jatinder Verma. Among the tradapter’s qualities mentioned by Delisle (1986, p. 4) are listening and being sensitive not only to the rhythm of phrases, but also to the progress of action and perfectly manipulating the oral language.

Conclusion

The article has explored the idea that the very notions of translation and adaptation can be treated as polymorphs, the one explaining the other. So, in a way, adaptation is a form of translation, be it inter- or intra- lingual; and what applies to one can, by extension, be applied to the other. Some researchers, such as Bastin (1993, p. 477), even go as far as declaring that the use of the term “adaptation” can be preferable to the term “translation.” That is why the dominant discourse in translation studies ought to deal with tradaptation, and not simply translation *or* adaptation.

Being works of culture, tradaptations, like “original” versions often engage with the broad political concerns of the world at large: Race, empire, gender, economics, and so forth. In this

light, tradaptation is understandable in the same terms Lefevere applies to rewriting and recontextualization in general, “Works of literature exist to be made use of in one way or another” (1985, p. 234). “Rewriting, then, in all its forms, can be seen as a weapon in the struggle for supremacy between various ideologies and various poetics. It should be analyzed and studied that way.” Furthermore, a theory of adaptation, like a theory of translation, turns to a “functional view” of cultural and political practice, “all translation implies a degree of manipulation of the source text for a certain purpose” (Hermans, 1985, p. 10). Tradaptations, therefore often attempt to recontextualize literary works culturally and politically. They can justifiably be studied following cultural translation studies approaches.

About the Author:

Dr. Bechir Saoudi got his Ph.D. in English Literature and Cultural Studies from the University of Manouba, Tunisia. He has been teaching English for 24 years. He is currently an Assistant Professor of English Literature at Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Al-Kharj, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. His research interests are in the literary and cultural studies domain.

References

- Aaltonen, S. (1993). Rewriting the Exotic: The Manipulation of Otherness in Translated Drama. In C. Picken (ed.), *Proceedings of XIII FIT World Congress*. London: Institute of Translation and Interpreting.
- Al-Bahar, N. (1976). Shakespeare in Early Arabic Adaptations. In *Shakespeare Translation 3*, 13-25.
- Al-Bassam, S. (2006). *The Al-Hamlet Summit* (Arabic and English). Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press.
- Al-Shetawi, M. (1999). Hamlet in Arabic. In *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 20. (1), 43-96.
- Barthes, R. (1981). Theory of the Text. In R. Young (ed.), *Untying the Text* (pp. 31-47). Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Barthes, R. (1988). The Death of the Author. In D. Lodge (ed.), *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader* (pp. 167-172). Trans. Steven Heath. London and New York: Longman.
- Bassnett, S. (p. 1985). Ways Through the Labyrinth: Strategies and Methods for Translating Theatre Texts. In T. Hermans (ed.), *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation*. London: Croom Helm.
- Bastin, G. L. (1993). *La notion d'adaptation en traduction*, *Meta*, 38, (3), 473- 478.
- Clark, S. (ed). (1997). *Shakespeare Made Fit: Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare*. London: Dent, 1997
- Cohn, R. (2015). *Modern Shakespearean Offshoots* (rev. ed.). Princeton: Princeton UP.
- Darbelnet, J. (1970). Dictionnaires bilingues et lexicologie différentielle, *Langages*, (19), 93-94.
- Delisle, J. (1986). Dans les Couloirs de l'Adaptation Théâtrale, *Circuit 12*, pp. 3-8. Delabastita, D. (1993). *There's a Double Tongue: An Investigation into the Translation of Shakespeare Wordplay with Special Reference to Hamlet*. Amsterdam-Atlanta (Georgia): Rodopi.
- Déprats, J. M. (1990). Traduire, Adapter, Ecrire, *Traduire le Théâtre*. Paris: Actes Sud.
- Derrida, J. (1988). Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences. In Lodge, D. (ed.), *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader* (pp. 108-123). New York:

Longman.

- Fortier, M. (2002). Undead and Unsafe: Adapting Shakespeare (in Canada). In D. Brydon, & I. R. Makaryk, *Shakespeare in Canada: A World Elsewhere?* (pp. 339-352) Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Foucault, M. (1979). *What is an author?* In J. Harare (ed.), *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structural Criticism* (pp. 313-335). Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell UP.
- Gambier, Y. (1992). Adaptation : Une Ambiguïté à Interroger, *Meta*, 37, (3), 421–425. *Hamlet Online*, Available at <http://www.tk421.net/hamlet/hamlet.html#spinoffs>
- Jakobson, R. (2000). On Linguistic Aspects of Translation. In L. Venuti (ed.), *The Translation Studies Reader*, pp. 113-118. London and New York: Routledge.
- Johnson, M. A. (1984). Translation and Adaptation, *Meta*, 29, (4), 421-425.
- Koustas, J. (1995) From homespun to awesome: Translated theatre in Toronto. In J. Donohue Jr. & J. M. Weiss (eds.), *Essays on Modern Quebec Theatre* (pp. 81-109). East Lansing: Michigan State UP.
- Ladouceur, L. (1995). Normes, Fonctions et Traduction Théâtrale, *Meta*, XL, (1), 31-38.
- Laliberté, M. (1995). La problématique de la traduction théâtrale et de l'adaptation au Québec, *Meta*, 40, (4), 519–528. Available at <http://www.erudit.org/revue/Meta/1995/v40/n4/003377ar.html>
- Latin Dictionary*, Available at <http://www.sunsite.ubc.ca/LatinDictionary/HyperText/latin/dict-full.html>
- Lefebvre, P. & Ostiguy, P. (1978). L'Adaptation Théâtrale au Québec. *Jeu*, 9, 32-47.
- Lefevre, A. (1985). Why Waste Our Time on Rewrites? In T. Hermans (ed.), *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation* (pp. 215-243). London and Sydney: Croom Helm.
- LePage, R. (1994, 5 Oct.) *Interview with Robert LePage*, *The Guardian*.
- Le Petit Robert: Dictionnaire alphabétique et analogique de la langue française* (2013). Paris: Dictionnaires Le Robert.
- Lotman, Y. M. (2005). On the Semiosphere. Trans. Wilma Clark, *Sign Systems Studies*, 33, (1), 205-29.
- Mailhot, L. (1987). *L'Altérité dans la Littérature Québécoise*. Bologne: CLUEB.
- Mounin, G. (1968). *Poésie et Société*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.
- Osimo, B. (2004). Translation Course. Available at http://courses.logos.it/pls/dictionary/linguistic_resources.traduzione_en?lang=en
- Pavis, P. (2002). *Dictionnaire du Théâtre* (rev. ed.). Paris : Armand Colin.
- Poupart, R. J. (1976). Communication Théâtrale et Traduction, *Cahiers Internationaux de Symbolisme*, 31-32, 77-88.
- Raddadi, M. (1979). *Davenant's Adaptations of Shakespeare*. Uppsala: Almqvist and Winksell.
- Rey, A. & Rey-Debove, J. (1991). *Le Petit Robert*. Paris: N.P.
- Rosenthal, L. J. (1996). (Re)Writing Lear: Literary property and dramatic authorship. In J. Brewer & S. Staves (eds.), *Early Modern Conceptions of Property* (pp. 323-338). New York: Routledge.
- Salter, D. (1996). Acting Shakespeare in Postcolonial Space. In J. C. Bulman (ed.), *Shakespeare, Theory and Performance*, (pp. 113-132). London: Routledge.
- Steiner, G. *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*. 1975. Rev. ed. Oxford

and New York: OUP, 1992.

Theatre Guide, The. Available at

<http://www.theatreguidelondon.co.uk/reviews/edinburgh2002.htm>

Wellwarth, G. E. (1981). Special Considerations in Drama Translation. In *Translation Spectrum: Essays in Theory and Practice*, (pp. 140-146). Albany: State University of New York Press.