

A study on the dichotomy between translation and adaptation

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The dichotomy between translation and adaptation is one of the major classifications of translation methods related to literary translation. Though these two terms stand for two distinguishable methods, their boundaries appear to have blurred to a certain extent and differentiating each method has become a confusing matter. This study is an attempt to make a clear boundary between the two methods, taking into account definitions and standpoints, etymologies of the terms and the manner that literary translation is conducted. There is a common standpoint that translation means converting the source text into a different language without changing its content whereas adaptation means converting the source text into a different language with changes done according to the preference of the translator. Nevertheless, since aesthetic experience is the expected outcome and the translator is expected to produce on his reader an impression similar to that produced by the original, direct translation is not always adequate for literary translation. Thus, it should be noted that a literary translator necessarily deserves the freedom to add, omit and replace certain elements of the source text during the translation process. Therefore, the method identified as 'translation' in literary translation has a wide range which expands from direct translation to free translation. However, due to the changes made to the source work, some translations are misinterpreted as adaptations. In this respect, etymology is a helpful factor in differentiating adaptation from translation. Accordingly, adaptation can be defined as the process of change in which a work of literature finds a way to suit to its target environment. Thus, it should be noted that only the works of literature which are completely modified to fit the target audience, so that it appears to have emerged from that particular background can be identified as adaptations.

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