



## TRANSLATION PROBLEMS IN LITERATURE

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### ABSTRACT

*This article discusses major translation problems in literary texts and examines linguistic, cultural, and stylistic difficulties faced by translators. Literary translation requires not only language proficiency but also deep understanding of culture, artistic style, and authorial intention.*

### Introduction.

Translation is an important form of intercultural communication. Literary translation occupies a special place because it transfers artistic meaning, emotional expression, and cultural values from one language to another.

Unlike scientific translation, literary translation requires creativity and interpretation. Translators must preserve both meaning and style.

### Main Part.

#### Lexical Problems.

Translation of literary texts is one of the most complex and challenging areas in linguistics and translation studies. Unlike technical or scientific translation, literary translation requires not only linguistic accuracy but also artistic sensitivity, cultural awareness, and deep understanding of the author's intention. Because of these factors, translators often face various problems when working with literature.

One of the main problems is linguistic differences between languages. Every language has its own grammatical structure, vocabulary system, and stylistic features. A phrase that sounds natural in one language may not have a direct equivalent in another. For example, idiomatic expressions, metaphors, and proverbs often lose their original meaning when translated literally. Therefore, translators must find equivalent expressions that preserve the meaning rather than the exact words.

Another significant difficulty is cultural differences. Literature is deeply connected with the culture in which it is created. Customs, traditions, historical references, and social norms may not be easily understood by readers of another culture. For instance, cultural symbols or religious references in a text may require explanation or adaptation to be meaningful for

foreign readers. This often forces translators to choose between staying faithful to the original text or making it more understandable for the target audience.

A further problem is the preservation of style and tone. Every author has a unique writing style that includes rhythm, emotional coloring, and artistic expression. In poetry and prose, especially, maintaining the original aesthetic effect is very difficult. The translator must carefully balance meaning and artistic form, which is not always possible due to structural differences between languages.

Wordplay and figurative language also create serious challenges. Puns, metaphors, irony, and symbolism are often untranslatable in a direct way. For example, a joke based on word similarity in English may lose its humor in another language. In such cases, translators may need to recreate the effect rather than the exact wording.

In addition, contextual interpretation is another important issue. A word or phrase may have multiple meanings depending on the context. Incorrect interpretation can lead to distortion of the original message. Therefore, translators must carefully analyze the entire text before choosing the most appropriate translation.

One common challenge in literary translation is lexical equivalence. Words in different languages rarely have exactly the same meanings.

Idioms and phraseological expressions are especially difficult. Expressions such as “break the ice” cannot be translated literally because they have figurative meanings.

**Grammatical Problems.**

Languages differ in grammar and syntax. Translators often face difficulties with:  
tense systems;  
articles;  
passive constructions;  
word order.

Long English sentences may sound unnatural if translated word-for-word into another language.

**Stylistic Problems.**

Every writer has a unique style expressed through vocabulary, metaphors, and rhythm. Translators must preserve the artistic beauty of the original text.

Poetry translation is especially difficult because rhyme and rhythm are closely connected with meaning.

**Cultural Problems.**

Culture strongly influences language and literature. Literary texts contain traditions, customs, and historical references that may not exist in another culture.

For example, food names or social customs may require descriptive translation or explanation.

**The Problem of Equivalence.**

Equivalence is a key concept in translation studies. Complete equivalence is rarely possible because languages and cultures differ.

Therefore, translators focus on preserving meaning and emotional effect rather than translating every word exactly.

**Literary Translation and Creativity.**

Literary translation is often considered a creative activity. Translators must balance fidelity to the original text with artistic adaptation.

Machine translation technologies still face serious problems with metaphors, irony, and cultural references. Therefore, human translators remain essential.

Conclusion.

Translation problems in literature arise from linguistic, stylistic, grammatical, and cultural differences. Literary translation requires creativity, linguistic competence, and cultural understanding.

The study of literary translation remains an important field in philology and translation studies because it promotes intercultural communication and global understanding.

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