

A Critique of Jabra's Arabic Translation of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*

TRADUCTION DE SHAKESPEARE: UNE CRITIQUE DE JABRA, AOS ARABES LA TEMPETE

Qusai A. Al-Thebyan^{1,*}; Nazmi T. Al-Shalabi¹; Fahd A. Salameh¹; Kifah M. Al-Omari¹

¹Department of English Language and Literature, The Hashemite University, Zarqa, Jordan

*Corresponding author.

Email: drsalameh@hotmail.com

Received 3 October 2011; accepted 29 November 2011

Abstract

This study critiques and evaluates Jabra's translation of *The Tempest* into Arabic. This translation poses a lot of problems stemming from the differences between English and Arabic, the difficulty and ambiguity of the original text, and the translator's approach.

The discussion demonstrates the great efforts made by the translator to convey the equivalent meanings of the text. It also clearly shows that Jabra's translation is literal, that the translator sometimes uses colloquial, inaccurate, and nonpoetic words that add to the ambiguity of the text, that he sometimes gives good translations, that he makes slight mistakes, and that he sometimes deletes or drops words or lines from the text, which represents a flagrant violation of the ethics of translation.

Despite the pitfalls, Jabra's translation of *The Tempest* is the fruit of hard work deserving of praise and appreciation. The mistakes made are ascribed to the difficulty of translating literature whose language consists of figures of speech that defy translation.

Key words: Shakespeare; Drama in translation; Language; English; Arabic; Syntax; Figures of speech; Literary translation; Strategies of translation

Résumé

Cette étude critique et évalue Jabra, traduction AO de La Tempête en arabe. Cette traduction pose beaucoup de problèmes découlant de la différence entre l'anglais et l'arabe, la difficulté et l'ambiguïté du texte original, et le traducteur, l'approche de l'AM.

La discussion montre les efforts considérables déployés

par le traducteur de transmettre les significations équivalentes du texte. Il montre aussi clairement que Jabra, traduction AOS est littérale, que le traducteur utilise parfois des mots familiers, inexacts et non poétique qui ajoutent à l'ambiguïté du texte, qu'il donne parfois de bonnes traductions, qu'il fait des erreurs légères, et que parfois il supprime ou des mots de gouttes ou de lignes du texte, ce qui représente une violation flagrante de l'éthique de la traduction.

Malgré les embûches, Jabra, traduction AO de La Tempête est le fruit du travail acharné digne d'éloges et de remerciements. Les erreurs commises sont attribuées à la difficulté de traduire de la littérature dont la langue se compose de figures de style qui défient la traduction.

Mots clés: Shakespeare; Drame en traduction; Traduction; Langue: Anglais; Arabe; Syntaxe; Figures du discours, La traduction littéraire; Stratégies de traduction

Qusai A. Al-Thebyan, Nazmi T. Al-Shalabi, Fahd A. Salameh, Kifah M. Al-Omari (2011). A Critique of Jabra's Arabic Translation of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. *Canadian Social Science*, 7(6), 64-74. Available from: URL: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/css/article/view/j.css.1923669720110706.022>
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/j.css.1923669720110706.022>

This study aims at critiquing and evaluating Jabra's translation of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Besides *The Tempest*, Jabra translated *Othello* (1978), *King Lear* (1968), *Coriolanus* (1974), *Macbeth* (1979), and a selection (forty) of *The Sonnets* (1983). Studying Jabra's translations of *The Tempest* will hopefully give an idea about Jabra's strategies in translating Shakespeare's works, the points of strength and weakness in his translations, and the difficulties a translator of such texts is likely to face.

TRANSLATION OF LITERATURE

The translator needs much effort when s/he wants to

translate a literary work. The language of literature always needs more effort on the part of the translator, for it employs many figures of speech, acoustic devices, puns, word play, and cultural expressions that charge the literary text with a multiplicity of meanings. Translation is, Dèjean argues in “*A Look into the Black Box*” (1988) “comprehending the author’s meaning and restating that meaning in the target language as the author most probably would have expressed it, had s/he been a native speaker of the target language” (p.239).

The goal of translation theory is to help find the most effective techniques, and the soundest strategies to achieve what is called ‘equivalence.’ The difficulty of achieving a very high level of equivalence is, in fact, due to many factors, among which are the cultural differences between one language and another, the differences in lexicon, phonetic systems, syntactic features and structures, word order, and style. Failure to take these differences into account might cause the translator to come up with an ‘unfaithful’ rendition of the text s/he is dealing with. Therefore, the task of the translator of literature has an added difficulty due to the above mentioned reasons. More difficulties arise when the translator deals with two languages of remote and widely different cultural backgrounds. This remoteness and discord between the said languages impact the translatability of the text and increase the difficulties for the translator; but this does not mean that translation is impossible.

Lefevre (1996) catalogs seven different strategies for translating poetry and poetic language. Those strategies might be beneficial for translating any literary language employing poetic features. His proposed strategies are:

1. Phonemic Translation: the imitation and reproduction of the source language sounds in the target language while at the same time producing an acceptable paraphrase of the sense.
2. Literal Translation: the emphasis on word for word translation.
3. Metrical Translation: reproduction of the SL meter.
4. Prose Translation or Poetry into Prose: rendering the sense of the poem into prose.
5. Rhymed Translation: considering both rhyme and meter, to use Lefevre’s words as in rhymed translation, the translator “enters into a double bondage” of meter and rhyme.
6. Blank Verse Translation: considering structure but not rhyme.
7. Interpretation: changing the form of the text but retaining the substance of the source language text (as cited in Bassnett, pp. 81-82).

A GENERAL OVERVIEW OF JABRA’S TRANSLATION OF SHAKESPEARE’S WORKS

Jabra Ibrahim Jabra (1924-1994) was a highly qualified Palestinian poet, novelist, painter, critic, and translator. In his translation of Shakespeare’s works, he generally uses the prosaic and the literal methods of translation, two of Lefevre’s strategies mentioned above. The problem with the literal approach is that it does not possess much artistic effect on the reader, and its structure does not seem to be as harmonious as that of the original. In many cases, Jabra tries (in his literal approach) to follow or imitate the English structure and syntax.

Imposing the formal and contextual aspects of the English text on the Arabic linguistic system (as happens when the translator adopts the literal approach in translation) does not in fact guarantee a faithful reproduction of the original artistic devices and forms, nor their effects on the reader for the very fact that each belongs to a different linguistic system. It may, on the contrary, lead to the production of a vague, gloomy caricature of the original works.

Jabra’s choice of diction is sometimes unsuccessful. In many cases, he uses words that cannot be used in Arabic literary and poetic texts; inappropriate words, very archaic words jar with modern ones, even in the same line in his translation. Jabra sacrifices major formal characteristics of poetry – the rhyme scheme and meter. The fact that the metrical system is completely different in Arabic from that of English generally makes it difficult for the translator to preserve meter. Rhyme scheme in Shakespeare, as it is generally in all poetry, is equally important semantically, aesthetically, and even psychologically and mentally. Sounds, in poetry, are meaningful, and the meaning of what is said is tied up with how it is said; it lurks in rhyme, sound patterns, and play of imagery. Jabra sometimes tries to make up for the loss of sounds and sound effects by choosing suitable Arabic words and sounds, but in most cases, the loss is more than gain. Because rhyme scheme and meter are completely sacrificed in Jabra’s translation, this paper will not discuss issues related to these matters. It will rather discuss issues related to diction, pun and wordplay, metaphor, allusion, gender, syntax and some cultural problems.

THE TRANSLATION OF *THE TEMPEST*

The most noticeable point about Jabra’s translation of Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, in particular, and the other Shakespearean works, in general, is his insistence on giving a literal translation. Of course, he avoids literal translation wherever he feels it does not work, but still he opts for it in many cases where it is not appropriate, does not fit, and leads to a mistranslation and ambiguity. In general, Jabra does a good job in his translation and even shows brilliance and creativity in translating some parts, some of which we are going to show. Yet, there are places where he fails. Those problems are either due to the differences between English and Arabic, and,

consequently, Jabra's misunderstanding of Shakespeare's 16-century English, to his misunderstanding of the original texts, or to a mistake on his part.

English and Arabic belong to completely different language systems that are completely different in terms of syntax, word order, and sounds. For this reason, literal translation would be risky and could lead to many problems since it tries to force a given language to follow the system and rules of another. Translators who choose to translate literally try, for example, to do their best to follow the word order of the original text. Jabra, following this strategy, comes up, at specific points, with odd lines, strange expressions, erroneous collocations, faulty, incorrect usages, etc.

Metaphors, puns, and wordplay are among the most difficult areas to translate especially when it comes to translating from English into Arabic, or vice versa due to the differences between both languages culturally and linguistically. *The Tempest* is believed to be one of Shakespeare's most difficult plays of Shakespeare to analyze and interpret since it is compressed and endlessly suggestive. The language Shakespeare uses is marked by its unique sounds and structures, creative images, and complex metaphors. The play abounds with puns, allusions and wordplay. All these elements, among others, hinder translatability and pose problems for the translator.

Jabra, though tries to strictly stick to the original text, ignores some of the important poetic features of the play. This does not mean that he does not use a poetic language in Arabic. On the contrary, he does his best to do that with, in fact, some exceptions that will be demonstrated later. He does not have meter, and does not rhyme wherever rhyme is available. Even though he tries to translate line by line, the Arabic version is not metered. Metrical and rhymed translations are nothing an easy task. What Jabra comes up with is blank verse that does not follow a meter or a rhyme.

It is noticeable also that Jabra translates the whole play using almost the same level of language. The variation in the level of language among the characters of the play is not present in the Arabic translation. It can be easily noticed that the characters of the original text use different levels of language, while in the Arabic version everyone almost uses the same level and the same way of expression.

In some cases, Jabra uses colloquial words in Arabic, non-poetic words that do not fit a poetic text, and, sometimes, uses words or structures that make the sentence ambiguous, or even vague. One can notice that he, sometimes, opts for translating names into Arabic, and, at times, keep them English but writes them in Arabic letters, and, at a few times, he Arabicizes them, i.e., he adapts the name to the Arabic phonetic system: Arabicized

names sound Arabic since they abide with the Arabic rules phonetically and spelling-wise, while they are not Arabic. English and Arabic have differences in gender; many masculine English common names are considered feminine in Arabic, and the reverse is right.

PUN AND WORDPLAY

As we mentioned earlier, *The Tempest* is full of puns and wordplay, which is a strength point in the play, but a challenge for the translator. Puns and wordplay rely basically on sounds. When two different words are pronounced closely, or when one word with two different meanings is used in a text, the translator of that text is usually put in a difficult situation. Translating puns and showing wordplay in translation are next to impossible, and ignoring them is usually a big loss. While some puns in the play are impossible to render into Arabic, Jabra tries his best to find a way. Admittedly, there is always a loss.

Let's consider this example:

Sebastian: A dollar.

Gonzalo: Dolor comes to him, indeed. You have spoken truer than you purposed.
(II.I. lines. 20-2)

The problem is obviously in translating "dollar," and "dolor" into Arabic, keeping the similarity between the two words. While "dollar" in Arabic means "doolaar," "dolor" means "huzun," or "asaa." The similarity between the English "dollar" and "dolor" will be completely lost if the two words appear in Arabic respectively as "doolaar" and "huzun," or as "doolaar" and "asaa," which are completely different. To avoid this, Jabra opts for something else. While we cannot argue or claim that he was successful in what he did, it seems to me it was the best option available. He changes "dollar" to "deenaar" [Lit. "dinar"²] and "dolor" to "duwaar" [Lit. "dizziness"] instead of "huzun or asaa" [Lit. grief]. Being yet different, the Arabic words "deenaar" and "duwaar" share some sounds in Arabic, which makes them relate to one another in a way. Certainly, there is a big loss in translation, but in such a situation it is unavoidable. While using footnotes in translation is not recommended by many theorists and practitioners, we believe, in such a case it might help compensate for the loss. Jabra does give a footnote here. The problem with dramatic texts is that they are supposed to be performed not read; in performance, footnotes in the script are completely useless.

Another interesting example that shows the impossibility of translation is the following:

Stephano: Be you quiet, monster.- Mistress line, is not this my jerkin? [*He takes it down.*] Now is the jerkin under the line, you are like to lose your hair and prove a bald jerkin.

Trinculo: Do, do! We steal by the line and level, an't like Your

²A currency used in many Arab countries and other countries.

text is lost in the translation. Antonio evidently suggests that "tender and delicate temperance" sounds like a Puritan phrase, which Antonio then mocks by applying the words to a woman rather than an island. He began this bawdy comparison earlier with a double entendre on "inaccessible" (Line 40): "Uninhabitable and almost inaccessible-." Sebastian joins Antonio in baiting the Puritans with his use of the pious cant phrase "learnedly delivered." All this is not delivered into the Arabic version.

As we mentioned earlier, the play is full of puns and wordplay which the translator wrestled with and lost more than he could maintain, basically because such elements are not easy, if possible at all, to translate.

ALLUSION

Allusions are indirect references to something. Understanding allusions requires knowledge on part of the reader or translator about the referent or the thing referred to. Without being aware of the referent, interlocutors will not be able to figure out the message lurking there, and, thus, allusion fails to pass any meaningful message. This lack of knowledge disrupts discourse and communication. Many allusions use popular referents in their culture. Therefore, many of them are culture-bound and understood by people belonging to that culture; hence the difficulty in translating them. Some translators do not even recognize the existence of allusion in the texts they are dealing with since they are not familiar with them. Literal translation does not work most of the time, and if a translator translates them literally, s/he will most probably end up with a 'truncated' message. Jabra does his best in showing allusions wherever he recognizes them. To compensate for the inevitable loss, he furnishes the text with footnoting, which is, as we argued earlier, a useless method especially in dramatic texts; footnotes work only as long as the play is read not performed. Let's consider this short example:

Prospero:
 Like a good parent, did beget of him
 A falsehood in its contrary as great
 As my trust was
 (I.II. lines. 94-6)

Prospero, in the above excerpt, talks to Miranda about Antonio. The phrase "a good parent" alludes to the English proverb that good parents often bear bad children. Jabra translates "a good parent" into Arabic as "al-'um at-tayyiba" [Lit. "the good mother"]. The English word "parent" could refer to the father or the mother. Jabra uses it to refer to the mother, which is not a problem here. The Arabic text/ translation does not give any idea about this allusion at all. Though the idea the English proverb gives is available in Arabic, Arabic does not have a similar proverb. The meaning is conveyed, but the allusion and its reference are not shown.

Let's look at this example:

Stephano: Come on your ways. Open your mouth. Here is that which will give language to you, cat. Open your mouth. This will shake your shaking, I can tell you, and that soundly.
 (II.II. lines. 83-6)

Stephano, addressing Caliban, tries to make him drink some liquor. Unless familiar with the allusion here, the reader will not figure out how liquor would give Caliban "language," and will wonder why Stephano is calling him "cat." The reader, or viewer, of the play should be familiar with the English proverb: "Good liquor will make a cat speak." Jabra translates the sentence literally without explaining it, leaving the Arab reader who is not aware of the allusion or the said proverb with questions. If a person is described as being a "cat" in Arabic, this means that he/she is cowardly. The cat which is symbolic of cowardice in Arabic might symbolize something else in other cultures. This argument is also true of the owl which symbolizes a bad omen in Arab culture, but may also be symbolic of wisdom in some cultures. Even though not recommended, a footnote seems to be necessary to explain the illusion.

Another interesting example, to which Jabra gives an explanatory footnote, is:

Stephano: Doth thou other mouth call me? Mercy, mercy! This is a devil, and no monster. I will leave him. I have no long spoon.
 (II.II. lines. 97-99)

Again, Jabra translates the lines above literally into Arabic and explains the allusion contained with a footnote. Without the footnote, an Arab reader with no familiarity with the English proverb: "He that sups with the devil has need of a long spoon," "we have no long spoon" will be confused. Even in English, a person not familiar with that English proverb will seek help for explanation. Footnoting seems to be the only option available. Inserting the proverb into the Arabic translation (i.e., making it look like: "... I have no long spoon, for who sups with the devil has need of a long spoon") will be an addition that strips the text of its beauty and figurative nature. Besides making the text longer, addition in this context will be unfaithful. Footnoting is one of the very limited ways in which the faithful translator can interfere with the original text, and mentioning the problem with it is needless to repeat.

COLLOCATION

Collocations are sets of two words or more that usually go together. A collocation is a word or phrase which is frequently used with another word or phrase, in a way that sounds correct to the speaker of the language. For example, "heavy rain" is a collocation in English. If this phrase is literally translated into Arabic as "matar thaqeel" it will be odd. In Arabic the phrase "matar ghazeer" is

used to mean “heavy rain.” The Arabic word “thaqeel” [“heavy”] does not collocate with “matar” [“rain”]. Because Jabra tries to be literal, he sometimes comes up with strange collocations. In most cases he gives the right collocation in Arabic, but there are cases where he fails. For example:

Ferdinand: No, noble mistress, 'tis fresh morning with me when
you are by at night.
(III.I. lines. 33-4)

The problem is with “fresh morning.” “Fresh” and “morning” collocate well in English. Jabra literally translates it as “sabaah tari,” which is strange for the Arab speaker. Not only is Jabra’s translation odd, but also fails to give the meaning intended of the English string. The Arabic collocation “sabaah mun’ish” is acceptable, understandable, and gives the meaning of “fresh morning” pretty well in Arabic.

Another example is Jabra’s translation of the English phrase “soft music” (IV.I. line. 59) as “muuseeqa naa’ima,” which is the literal meaning of the English term. The Arabic better collocation is “muuseeqa haadi’a” [Lit. “serene, or slow music”]. For more demonstration, let’s consider this example:

Prosper: Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and groves,
And ye that on the sands with printless foot
Do chase the ebbing Neptune, ...
(V.I. lines. 33-5)

The problem is with “printless foot” which Jabra translates as “‘aqdaam la waq’a lahaa” [Lit. “feet with no footsteps”]. The English “foot print” refers to the mark left on the ground by the foot, so it involves vision. Jabra’s translation refers to the sound produced by feet through the act of walking not the marks left. Jabra’s translation is an excellent collocation in Arabic, but it does not match with the English one for it gives a different meaning. We suggest the Arabic phrase: “qadam laa ‘athara lahu” [Lit. “foot that leaves no print,” or simply “printless foot”] as a substitute since it captures the meaning and poses an acceptable collocation in Arabic. By the same token, Jabra literally and oddly translates “curled clouds” (I.II. line. 193) as “ghuyuum ja’daa’.” To the best of our knowledge, Jabra’s translation is not familiar in Arabic. Some might argue that Jabra’s translation might be a new metaphor in Arabic that could be accepted. Arabic does have a collocation that precisely gives the meaning of the English phrase and equals it in its poetic and aesthetic force: “ghuyuum mutalabbida” [Lit. “accumulating clouds”]. If the language has an accurate, equivalent, and acceptable term or collocation, then why not to use it instead of introducing a new image that might need a long time to

become familiar to the speaker of that language?

Jabra, on the other hand, gives very good translations of some collocations. For example, he translates “I’ the dead of darkness” (I.II. line. 130) into Arabic as: “fee ‘izzi d-dalaam,” which is a successful translation at all levels. Another example is “strongest oaths” (IV.I. line. 52) which he translates as “aghladh al-eemaan” [Lit. “thickest oaths”]. The word “aghladh” [“thickest”] is the right word that collocates with “oath” in Arabic not “strongest” as the case in English. Similarly, Jabra shows brilliance in translating Prospero’s “good night your vow,” (IV.I. line. 53) which is addressed to Ferdinand, as “‘iqra’ al-salaam ‘alaa wa’dik” [Lit. “read peace on your vow”]. This translation is very accurate and matches the English sentence at all levels. He also brilliantly translates “disgrace and dishonor” (IV.I. line. 209) as “‘aar wa-shannaar,” which is an excellent collocation in Arabic that gives the meaning of the English phrase almost exactly.

PROBLEMS IN WORD CHOICE AND DICTION

These problems arise from misunderstanding the source language, using the wrong synonym, or from literal translation. Let’s consider this example:

Gonzalo: The King and Prince at prayers! Let’s assist them,
For our case is as theirs.
(I.I. lines. 54-5)

Jabra translates the English verb “assist” into Arabic as “nusaa’id” [“help, assist”], which makes the sentence in Arabic ambiguous, since it could mean “to guard the king and the prince,” or “to help them find a place for praying,” or even “to help them prepare the place for praying.” To disambiguate the translation, the Arabic “nandhammu ‘ilaihim” [Lit. “join them”] would make a better option.

Jabra translates “unstanch’d wench” (I.I. line. 49) in:
Gonzalo: I’ll warrant him for drowning, though the ship were no
stronger than a nutshell and as leaky as an unstanch’d wench.
(I.I. lines. 47-9)

as “muumis naazifa” [Lit. “a bleeding wench”]. In English, “unstanch’d” means insatiable, loose, and/or unrestrained. Probably Jabra translates it as “bleeding” since it goes with the word “leaky.” His translation is not accurate this way. The best translation in Arabic would be “muumis shabiqa” [Lit. “insatiable, unrestrained wench”].

Let’s look at these words from the play and at the way Jabra translates them into Arabic; the first column gives the English word, the second its definition in English, the third the translation Jabra gives, the fourth the English literal meaning of Jabra’s translation, and in the fifth our suggested better translation³:

³These are our suggested translations; we consider them better since they are closer to the original; they fit the context better and take into consideration the poetic, connotational, and contextual features of the original text. We do not hold them to be the ideal translations, however.

| English Word | Meaning in English | Jabra's Arabic Translation | Literal Meaning of Arabic Word in English | Suggestion for a Better Option |
|--------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| perdition | loss | lawtha | dirt, madness | fuqdaan |
| verdure | vitality | khudra | greenness | hayawiyya |
| closeness | retirement, seclusion | diraasaati al-khaasa | private studies | 'uzlati w-inghilaqi |
| storm | tempest | zawba'aa | twister | 'aasifa |
| ague | fever | lisaan | tongue | humma |
| discord | difference | nashaaz | oddness | 'ikhtilaaf |
| high-day | holiday | yaa huu | hooray/ hurrah | 'ijaaza |

The word "virtue" in "The very virtue of compassion in thee" (I.II. line. 27) is translated as "fadeela," while it is better to be translated as "jawhar" [Lit. "essence"], which is the meaning of "virtue" in this line. The same word "virtue" appears again in "Thy mother was a piece of virtue" (I.II. line. 56). Here Jabra is right in choosing the Arabic word "fadeela," which is the right translation. Jabra translates "my secret studies" (I.II. line. 77) as "diraasaati al-baatiniyya" [Lit. "my internal studies"]. "Internal studies" are not necessarily secret; they might refer to studies of the internal world of man or anything. The element of secrecy can be obtained if that English phrase is translated into Arabic as "diraasaati al-sirriyya" [Lit. "my secret studies"].

Let's consider this example:

Ariel: Sometimes I'd divide
And burn in many places; on the topmast,
The yards, and bowsprit would I flame distinctly,
Then meet and join. Jove's lightning, the precursors
O' the dreadful thunderclaps, ...
(I.II. lines. 199-203)

Our reservation on Jabra's translation concerns his translation of the word "precursors." He translates it as "rusul" [Lit. "messengers"]. In Arabic, "rusul" is a positive word; "rusul" usually bring happy news and things. They are usually associated with goodness and good luck. The Arabic word "natheer" [Lit. "messenger" also] is associated with bad news, evil happenings, and bad omen. So the Arabic "nathaa'ir" (plural of "natheer") is the right option in this context, since it captures the negative connotations the English word "precursors" subsumes.

Shakespeare, in *The Tempest*, uses many images of acting. Dawson (1978) states that "images of acting occur throughout the play and emphasize the fact that these men are indeed taking part in a theatrical action, though without being aware of it" (p.163).

Let's have a look at this example:

Antonio: She that from whom
We all were sea-swallowed, though some cast again,
And by that destiny to perform an act
Whereof what's past is prologue, what to come
In yours and my discharge.
(II.I. lines. 251-55)

Dawson argues that "Antonio's exhortation to Sebastian [...] moves easily from the dominant sea metaphor to

the theatrical one" (1978, p.163). He goes on to say that "Antonio understands destiny, thinking it fortuitous, and resolves to direct the subsequent action, to write his own play as it were, failing to realize that he is already an actor" (p.163). Jabra's translation does not show any of these theatrical images or metaphors. In the Arabic translation, there is no way one can feel this move from sea imagery to theatrical imagery. The key words for the purposes of this discussion in the English text are: "cast," "perform," and "act." Jabra translates "cast" as "lafada" [Lit. "disgorge"], and "perform an act" as "naquum bi-fi'l" [Lit. "do something"]. While Jabra's translations of the above terms are *literally* right, the intended pun and wordplay they are supposed to show are lost. His translation of the terms does not show any relevance to the theater at all. Both the theatrical imagery and the move from the sea metaphor to the theatrical one are lost and sacrificed.

When an English word has more than one meaning in Arabic, or has several synonyms in Arabic, the translator should be more careful with his/her choice of the right and the most suitable word: the one that most fits the context, the most acceptable in the language s/he translating to, the one that best goes with the general mood of the text, and, above all, the closest one to the original text. Jabra makes a slight mistake, for example, in translating the English word "harshness" by choosing a less appropriate synonym in Arabic, while a perfect one is available:

Ferdinand: O, she is
Ten times more gentle than her father's crabb'ed,
And he's composed of harshness
(3.1. lines. 7-9)

"harshness" could mean in Arabic "khushuuna," "qaswa," and "ghlazah" among other synonyms. Jabra uses "khushuuna" as a translation for "harshness," while its synonym "ghlazah" is the better option. Being literal, Jabra's translation looks like this: "he is made of "khushuuna" ["harshness"]." Changing "khushuuna" (Jabra's word) to "ghlazah" will make the sentence more acceptable, understandable and closer to the original. Still, Arabic has a better way of translating the whole sentence. A more poetic, innovative, metaphoric and more emotive way is: "qalbu qudda min sakhr" [Lit. "his heart is cut from stone/ rock"]. This last translation that we are suggesting here says a lot in a fewer words, is

highly poetic and emotive, very strong stylistically, and aesthetically, and it suits Shakespeare's style.

NAMES AND GENDER PROBLEMS

Translating names is not usually much problematic. The Arab translator can write the English name using Arabic letters following the way it is usually pronounced in English, or s/he can Arabicize the name, i.e., to change and write the name in a way that suits and goes with the Arabic rules of spelling and pronunciation, or, if the English name has a meaning, s/he can simply give the meaning of the English name in Arabic. For me, the first strategy is the best way. But the translator has to be consistent; if s/he chooses one way, s/he has to use it all the way through. Jabra, however, is not consistent in that, and he mixes all the three ways we have mentioned above. When he translates "Hymen," he opts for the first way, i.e., he writes the name using Arabic letters, keeping it the same as it is read/ pronounced in English. He uses the second method (Arabicization) for translating "naiads." He adapts the name to the Arabic phonetic, linguistic, and writing rules, and, thus, the name looks Arabic: "al-naayidaat." The third strategy is also used by Jabra when he translates the names: "Mountain," "Silver," "Fury," and "Tyrant." He gives their meanings in Arabic: "Jabal" ["Mountain"], "Fidhdha" ["Silver"], "Aneef" ["Fury"], and "Taaghi" ["Tyrant"]. Jabra should have been consistent in translating such names, and should have chosen one way to deal with them all.

The problem with gender arises from the fact that some masculine nouns in English are considered feminine in Arabic, and vice versa. An Arab translator, for example, who is not familiar with the fact that "sun" is considered masculine in English will deal with it as feminine as it is considered in Arabic. Let's have a look at the following table that contains words from the play:

| English Word | Gender in English | Arabic Equivalence | Gender in Arabic |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| vessel ⁴ | feminine | markib | masculine |
| Moon ⁵ | feminine | qamar | masculine |
| patience | feminine | sabr | masculine |

Translating the following text, Jabra had to change the pronouns "her," and "she" to the masculine form: "his," and "he":

Gonzalo: You are gentle men of brave mettle; you would lift the moon out of her sphere if she would continue in its five weeks without changing.
 (2.1. lines. 183-5. *Emphasis added*)

METAPHORIC, ALLITERATIVE, AND RHYMING USES AND PATTERNS

Metaphor, alliteration, and rhyme could be problematic and difficult to render. Translating cultural metaphors had an added difficulty for translating. Alliteration and rhyme basically rely on sounds, which makes them almost impossible to translate. Let's consider this example:

Prospero: ... Which raised in me
 An undergoing stomach, to bear up
 Against what should ensue
 (2.1. lines. 156-8)

"An undergoing stomach" is metaphorically used to mean to have "courage and go on." Jabra translates it as "mi'da saamida" [Lit. "solid stomach"], which does not have a clear meaning in Arabic. The Arabic translation does not give the meaning of its English counterpart, it does not denote anything related to courage and going on, and it is almost meaningless in Arabic. We suggest the Arabic "mimmaa maddani bish- shajaa' a wal-israar" [Lit. "that gave me courage and insistence"].

Another example that involves the word "stomach" in a metaphoric use is:

Alonso: You cram these words into mine ears against
 The stomach of my senses.
 (2.1. lines. 108-9)

The English phrase "against/ the stomach of my senses" means "against my will." Jabra translates it "didda raghbati" [Lit. "against my desire"]. We have no reservation about Jabra's translation, but the Arabic word "iraada" ["will"] is better than "raghba" ["desire"].

There are some instances where the metaphor moves from one domain to another. The example mentioned earlier about the move from sea imagery to theatrical is a good one. For more illustration, let's consider this example:

Prospero: Now does my project gather to a head.
 My charms crack not, my spirits obey, and Time
 Goes upright with his courage
 (5.1. lines. 1-3)

The words that interest me here are: "project," "gather to a head," and "crack." It seems that Shakespeare intended his metaphor to be alchemical. A good translation would be one that involves alchemical image as well. Jabra's translation, however, does not. If Shakespeare's is really alchemical, then Jabra's is not equivalent. The above mentioned words are translated respectively into Arabic as: "khitta" [Lit. "plan"], "talta'im" [Lit. "convene"], and "laa tufad" [Lit. "cannot be avoided or deactivated"]. The translation is far a way from the original as far as the

⁴The word "ship," which can be a synonym for "vessel" is considered feminine in Arabic; vessel, as noted above, is masculine, however.

⁵Compared to "moon," which is feminine in English and masculine in Arabic, "sun" is quite the opposite: it is masculine in English but feminine in Arabic.

intended metaphor is concerned.

In the same example above, Jabra deletes "with his courage," probably assuming that in Arabic "go upright" is enough to denote the idea of courage. This is not the case. The Arabic translation with such a deletion lends itself to vagueness. The reason why "Time/ Goes upright" is not recognizable in the Arabic version. Adding the Arabic equivalence to "with his courage" to the Arabic translation will sort this problem out.

Alliteration is a device that Shakespeare uses very frequently in his works. Roberts (1991) defines alliteration as "a means of highlighting ideas by the selection of words containing the same *consonant* sounds" (p.189). Peck and Colye argue, in *Literary Terms and Criticism* (1989), that alliteration serves to reinforce the meaning of words which are intended to create a vivid impression of something or idea (line. 16). Translating alliteration is probably extremely difficult, especially when it comes to two remotely different languages. A sentence like "She has a tongue with a tang" (2.2. line. 50) is extremely difficult to render into Arabic, maintaining the phonetic alliterative relation between the two words "tongue" and "tang." Sacrificing this similarity, Jabra translates the sentence to mean literally in English as: "She has a sharp tongue." Even if Jabra's translation succeeds ideationally, there is still a considerable loss. Sounds have meanings and they contribute to the overall meaning of the text. They give pace, beauty, coherence, and cohesion to the lines as well.

Rhyming is equally similar to alliteration in that it is untranslatable. Rhyming is very important in poetry. Generally, *The Tempest* does not have a lot of rhyming lines; regular rhyme schemes are generally kept to a minimum in the play. The only parts that rhyme are the songs of Ariel ((2.1. lines. 302-7), (4.1. lines. 44-8), (5.1. lines. 88-94)), Caliban (2.2. lines. 178-84), and that of Stephano (2.2. lines. 46-54). Jabra ignores rhyme and meter, which are, in fact, almost impossible to maintain in translation.

COLLOQUIALISM AND TECHNICAL TERMINOLOGY

Jabra sometimes uses colloquial Arabic in translating some English words or expressions from the play. While some might consider these colloquial terms as good 'touches,' we think they are not suitable in many cases. The language of translation should match the language of the original at the level of formality, mood, tone, etc. A highly formal text in English should be translated as a highly formal text in Arabic. A scientific text cannot be translated into a highly emotive text. The translator should always do his/her best to maintain these features. Irony and sarcasm are also supposed to be shown in translation. Even though this might be off track, we will give an

example on how irony or sarcasm is lost in translation. Let's consider this example:

Sebastian [*To Alonso*]: Sir you may thank yourself for this great loss,
(2.1. line. 125)

This line is not void of a sense of humor and/or sarcasm. Jabra's translation shows nothing of this comic and sarcastic sense. It can be literally back translated into English as: "You are the reason of this great loss." We know from the English text that Sebastian is not sincere in his feelings about the loss of Ferdinand. On the contrary, he was happy deep inside, and then he joins with Antonio in an abortive plot to kill Alonso. The Arabic translation, by sacrificing the ironic tone of the original, gives a sense to the reader of the Arabic text that Sebastian is serious in his feelings and that he sympathizes with Alonso about the "great loss."

Back to the topic of this section, we believe using colloquial words to translate formal words will be a violation. Let's have a look at these examples:

1. Alonso: Good Boatswain, have care. (1.1. line. 9)
 2. Gonzalo: Good, yet remember whom thou hast a board. (1.1. line. 19)
 3. Antonio: Hay, good my lord, be not angry.
Gonzalo: No, I warrant you, I will not adventure my discretion so weakly. (2.1. lines. 187-9)
- [*Emphasis added in all the examples above*]

In the first example, Jabra translates "Good" into Arabic as "ibn al-halaal," which literally means in English "legitimate son." This Arabic term is widely used in Arabic and it might be taken as an equivalent to the English "good," except that it is informal. There are many formal terms in Arabic that can substitute Jabra's translation. In the second example, Jabra translates "Good" as "tayyib," which might also be considered equivalent, but it is informal. The Arabic term "tayyib" is similar to "O.K." in English. A better option is the Arabic word "hasanan," which is more formal and suits the language of Shakespeare. In the final example, Jabra informally translates "No, I warrant you" as: "la wihyaatak" [Lit. "no, by your life"]. The Arabic expression is so informal compared to the English expression. We consider this imbalance in the level of formality in translation a problem.

The technical terms we have in mind are: "art," "drollery," "masque," and "plantation." Jabra translates "art" into Arabic as "fann," which does not mean magic. While it could mean deception, we prefer the use of the Arabic words "makr" and "heela" together as a better translation. As for "drollery," Jabra translates it as "mahzala," which has nothing to do with theater at all. The Arabic word "mahzala" refers to crazy actions and behavior. The Arabic term "mash-had hazali" [Lit. "droll act or scene"] is a better alternative. The English term "masque" is translated as "al-qinaa'iyya," which we doubt to be understood by the Arab reader. Though we are not

sure whether Arabic has a one-to-one correspondence (i.e., one Arabic word that gives the same meaning) for the English term, we suggest “masrahiyya tanakuriyya” [Lit. “disguise play”]. The problem with the word “plantation” is its double meaning in the play. Arabic does not have one word that has these two meanings together. In English, it refers to an area of growing crops, for example, and to a colony or settlement. The latter meaning is in harmony with the idea of colonization that has been frequently pointed to and studied by some critics. Jabra translates this word into Arabic as: “muzaara’a,” which could literally mean in English “farm,” or “cultivation.” The Arabic word Jabra uses is not enough to stand as an equivalent for the English word. It might be difficult to find one in Arabic, but there should be a way to avoid the loss in meaning and find a good alternative if it is given some more thought.

MISTRANSLATION RELATED TO OTHER REASONS

In this section we will give some brief examples of problems caused by other factors. These problems are generally caused by misunderstanding, deletion, or, again, literal translation. Let’s consider this example:

Miranda: O, my heart bleeds
To think o’ the teen that I have turned you to,
Which is from my remembrance! Please you, father.
(1.2. lines. 63-5)

Here Miranda apologizes to her father for reminding him of incidents that make him feel sad and gloomy. Jabra understands it differently; his translation gives the impression that Miranda is apologizing for all the trouble she must have caused for her father when she was very young when they were first exiled to the island, a trouble that she does not now remember. Jabra’s misunderstanding leads to a faulty message. It is easy to straighten the translation by making some amendments to words or syntax.

The coming example has a slight problem caused by a syntactic issue concerning word reference:

Prospero: O, cherubin
Thou wast that did preserve me. Thou didst smile,
Infused with a fortitude from heaven,
When I have decked the sea with drops full salt,
Under my burden groaned, which raised in me
An undergoing stomach, to bear up
Against what should ensue.
(1.2. lines. 152-8. *Emphasis added*)

The underlined “which” refers to Miranda’s smiling which gives Prospero “An undergoing stomach, to bear up/ Against what should ensue.” In Jabra’s translation, Prospero’s courage and bearing up are attributed to his having “decked the sea with drops full salt” and groaning. Jabra’s failure to recognize the referent of “which” leads to this slight misunderstanding, and consequently,

mistranslation.

Ambiguity is problematic in translation. If the original text is direct and straightforward, the translation should be likewise. Ambiguity leads to different possibilities in meaning and this is not necessarily good, especially when the source language text has one meaning only. Following is an example on this issue:

Prospero: Being once perfected how to grant suits,
How to deny them, who t’ advance and who
To trash for overtopping, new created
The creatures that were mine,
(1.2. lines. 79-82)

What Prospero means is that Antonio ran too far ahead of others, surmounting and exceeding his authority, and suppressing and preventing anyone from exceeding him. The Arabic translation is ambiguous and gives two contradictory meanings; it means both that Antonio would prevent anyone from surmounting and exceeding him, and that he would stop when someone precedes him or whenever he is surmounted by someone. This ambivalence in the Arabic translation can be easily solved by changing the word order, or adding a pronoun that would help disambiguate the sentence, giving the same sentence intended by the original.

The final set of examples includes lines or words that have been dropped from the translation. The translator might have mistakenly overlooked them, found difficulty in translating them and, thus, ignored them, intentionally dropped them, or felt that they were not necessary to be added to the translation. To me, deletion, regardless of the reason, remains a violation of the ethics of translation. The underlined words, phrases and lines show parts that do not appear in the Arabic translation. Though we are not giving all the cases, the cases are very limited in number.

1. Prospero: Well demanded, wench.
My tale provokes that question. Dear, they durst not,
So dear the love my people bore me, nor set
A mark so bloody on the business, but
....
(1.2. lines. 139-142)

2. Stephano:
(sings)
“The master, the swabber, the boatswain, and I,
The gunner and his mate,
....”
(2.2. lines. 46-7)

3. Ceres:
Her and her blind boy’s scandaled company
I have forsworn.
(4.1. lines. 90-1)

4. Ferdinand: Let me live here ever!
So rare a wonderful father, and a wife
Makes this place paradise.
(4.1. lines. 122-4)

5. Prospero:
Bear with my weakness. My old brain is troubled.

Be not disturbed with my infirmity.
If you be pleased,
(4.1. lines. 159-61)

CONCLUSION

We like to state that theorizing about translation is, to a great extent, different from practice, and what has been said in this paper does by no means degrade the efforts of the translator, who accepted the challenge of translating such a difficult type of literature. It is an effort he is to be commended and thanked for. Our focus on the problems of his translation, the pitfalls and the mistakes, if any serious, does not mean at all that we do not appreciate his translation. His translation is appreciated and the problems are mostly justifiable; many of the problems are forced by the differences that exist between the two languages involved; some are by difficulty of the original; some are related to the ambiguity of the English text; some others by the translator's use of the literal approach of translation; and others by mistake, misunderstanding or

being unaware of the existence of better options in Arabic. *The Tempest* is probably one of the most challenging works to render into Arabic.

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