

# The Adaptation of Berman's Model of Translation Criticism to Formative Literary Translation Evaluation

*Majda Chelli*

*University of Constantine*

## ملخص

يهتم هذا البحث بالتقييم المتواصل للترجمة و هو عملية يقوم بها أستاذ الترجمة بانتظام و يعتمد التقييم المتواصل على ملاحظات تقييمية تعطى حول ترجمات الطلبة.

و قد بدأنا أولا بإدراج التقييم المتواصل ضمن الإطار العام لتقييم الترجمات و إبراز خصوصية تقييم الترجمة الأدبية. ثم انتقلنا إلى عرض أشكال نقد الترجمات مع التركيز على طريقة برمان لنقد الترجمات. و حاولنا ثالثا تكييف طريقة برمان في نقد الترجمات بهدف تطبيقها مستقبلا في عملية التقييم المتواصل للترجمة الأدبية. فنكون بذلك قد حصلنا - نظريا - على أمرين أولا أخذ خصوصية النص الأدبي بعين الاعتبار أثناء عملية التقييم، و الذي فشلت معظم نماذج التقييم في الإحاطة بها، وثانيا إدخال عوامل النقد البناء لبرمان في تدريس الترجمة الأدبية

## Abstract

This article is concerned with formative translation evaluation. Classroom formative translation evaluation is based on the teachers' feedback given to students about their translations. We tried first to contextualize classroom formative translation

evaluation in the broader context of translation evaluation and delimit literary translation as a kind which requires special attention. Second, we presented translation criticism forms, with a particular reference to Berman's method of translation criticism. Third, we proceeded to the adaptation of Berman's method of translation criticism for future application in formative literary translation evaluation. We would have -theoretically- tackled two points: to account for the specific nature of the literary text which most translation evaluation methods failed to, and to introduce Berman's 'constructive criticism' elements into the teaching of literary translation.

## Introduction

In fact, translation evaluation in the context of translation teaching at the university level takes the form of both formative and summative evaluation. Formative translation evaluation which is an intrinsic part of translation teaching is necessary in order to determine the level of translation competence achieved by the students as well as areas in which this competence is still to be developed. This kind of evaluation has not been dealt with in the literature on translation evaluation. Instead, both kinds have been tackled in terms of some general forms of translation evaluation. Furthermore, little has been written about classroom literary translation evaluation. Our view was to invest in the general approach of literary translation criticism, through the adaptation of Berman's method of translation criticism to formative literary translation evaluation. A theoretical proposition which, we assume, will be taking into account the specificity of the literary text in translation evaluation and introducing Berman's 'constructive criticism' elements into the teaching of literary translation besides considering the issue of formative translation evaluation.

### 1-Translation Evaluation: An Overview

According to Hurtado Albir and Martínez Melis (2001), translation evaluation is relevant in the evaluation of published translations, the evaluation of professional translators' work and evaluation in translation teaching. As interest in this paper is on evaluation in translation teaching, the overview we will present is confined to those models applicable to the translation teaching context.

Before over viewing some of these translation evaluation models, it is worth to provide the following distinction between: *translation evaluation*, *translation criticism* and *translation analysis* found in McAlester (2000). *Translation evaluation* refers to the placing of a value (or a mark) on a translation, while *translation criticism* consists in stating the appropriateness of a translation involving a value judgement with an explicit justification. *As to*

*translation analysis*, it is taken to be a descriptive study of translation as a production or as product without ascribing a value judgement. These procedures are interdependent; evaluation being based on criticism and criticism on analysis. A fourth procedure *translation quality control* focuses on the assessment of the product or service per se rather than the producer. Further distinction concerning the very concept of translation evaluation is the quantitative versus qualitative translation evaluation made by Williams (2009) who rather used the terminology 'translation quality assessment' or TQA; based on mathematical/statistical measurement or on reader-response interviews and questionnaires respectively. Translation evaluation can also be diagnostic determining areas for improvement at the outset of a course of study; formative measuring progress and giving feedback during a course of study or summative measuring the results of learning. The present paper is interested in formative literary translation evaluation.

Translation evaluation approaches and models are described differently depending on:

- The subjective and objective dichotomy (traditional and modern approaches of Mobaraki & Aminzadeh (2012)
- Nation-related traditions (German and Anglophone traditions of McAlester (2000)
- Comparative component (Comparative and Non-comparative models of Thuy (2013)).
- Views about meaning (the mentalist, response-based and text and discourse based approaches of House (2001)).

Different models and procedures are also proposed to maximize the objectivity of preceding models. These are, however, academic or professional environment- oriented (Adab (2000), Williams (2009) and (2013)), direct or inverse translation- oriented (Beeby (2000), McAlester (2000)), standards-referenced or criterion-referenced models (Williams (2009)) ..Etc. The proliferation of concerns about translation evaluation is an indication that , as O'Brien (2012) stated, the assessment of translation quality has received much attention in

the academic sphere. Despite this, there will always be a need to adapt these models to the specific requirements of local teaching situations.

## **2-Translation Evaluation Proposals**

In what follows, we will confine our discussion to translation evaluation traditions described by McAlester (2000) and House (2001) as our purpose is to situate formative translation evaluation - which is a type of translation evaluation- in a broader translation evaluation context. In fact, few studies, if any, tackled the issue of formative translation evaluation despite the nature of the translation class being based on the teacher's feedback on the students' translations. The situational context of formative translation evaluation is, thus, to be equated with providing feedback in the post-translation stage in the translation classroom. This is an important stage in which the teacher unveils the students' application of theoretical knowledge to practice (i.e., to real translation problems). A stage which -I would consider- the most essential in the translation lecture; without which no progress will take place.

### **2-1 Translation Evaluation Proposals in McAlester (2000)**

McAlester (2000) mentioned many translation evaluation proposals:

-The Anglophone tradition was, in fact, less analytical and explicit (than the German tradition); tending to be rather macrotextual, synthetic or holistic and less oriented towards a direct comparison of the target text with the source text. As an example of this tradition, Newmark (1988 ) cited in McAlester (2000) spoke about evaluating the translation first from the point of view of the translator then on the suitability of his strategy. Newmark's translation quality assessment model, according to Thuy (2013), is a five-step model that comprises:

1- A brief analysis of the SL text (focusing on its intention and functional aspects).

2- An analysis of the translator's method, and his interpretation of the SL text's purpose and likely readership.

3- A representative comparison of the translation with the original.

4- An evaluation of the translation from the translator's and critic's points of view.

5- An assessment of the place of the translation in the target culture.

-The German tradition for instance, has tended to work on an analytical, atomistic or microtextual level and a comparison of source and target texts as a basis for assessment. House's (1977) model cited in McAlester (2000), representing this tradition, excludes translations between language pairs belonging to incompatible cultures and those in which there is a change of function between the source and target texts. This was criticised by McAlester (2000) as excluding much of the activity that is part of the work of many professional translators. He said: "I would prefer to regard as a basis for translator training and evaluation the reality of the market place rather than *a priori* theory" (McAlester, 2000, p. 232).

In Nord's (1991) model, functions and effects of the text as a whole are to be regarded as crucial criteria for translation criticism. She defined a translation error as: "a deviation from the selected (or rather, prescribed) model of action" from the translator's standpoint, or "a frustration of expectations" concerning a certain action [...], as seen from the recipient point of view" (Nord, 1991, p. 170 cited in McAlester, p. 233). She further points out that assessment is a matter of grading errors; giving more weight to extratextual errors than intratextual ones.

Malcolm Williams (1989) cited in McAlester (2000), from his part, distinguishes between an evaluation system for quality control in the work place (taking into account circumstances of production such as customer's specific requirements, timeliness, language quality and accuracy) and a closed evaluation system as

used by universities and other accrediting bodies (ignoring such external factors and evaluating translation on the number and gravity of errors). This distinction was criticised by McAlester (2000) who states that universities should replicate the circumstances of production in a reasonably realistic way.

McAlester (2000) commenting on these evaluation systems says that generally they do not make a distinction between translation into the mother tongue and translation into a foreign language. He added that the level required of the translation into a foreign language is that described by Williams (1989) as “*revisable*” (cited McAlester, 2000, p. 236).

## **2-2 Translation Evaluation Views in House (2001)**

According to House (2001), when assessing the quality of translation, one addresses the ‘the crucial question of the nature of translation’. She added that since translation deals with meaning, there are at least three different views of meaning leading to different conceptions of translation evaluation. House (2001) listed:

a)- *The Mentalist View*: this is a subjective and intuitive evaluation consisting of global judgments such as ‘the translation does justice to the original’ or ‘the tone of the original is lost in the translation’. House (2001) later criticized this ‘neo-hermeneutic relativising stance’ as being ‘inappropriate’ for argued statements about how, why and when a translation is good.

b)- *Response Based Approaches*: these aim at ‘a more scientific way of evaluating translation’. Nida’s (1968) cited in House (2001) statement that a “good translation is one leading to “equivalence of response” is a famous concept of the Behaviorist View (House (2001)). Though Nida (1968) operationalized this equivalence as comprising equal ‘informativeness and intelligibility’, these were criticized by House (2001) as phenomena that cannot be measured.

The Functionalist, Skopos -Related Approach, on the other hand, claim the purpose of translation as very important in judging a translation’s quality. This was criticized by House (2001) first

that it is very unclear how to determine the linguistic realizations of the skopos of a translation and second that it is inadequate to 'tackling the evaluation of translation in its fundamental bi-directionality'.

c)- *Text and Discourse Based Approaches*: in these literature-oriented approaches the translation is evaluated in terms of its forms and functions in the receiving culture and literature (Toury (1995) cited in House (2001)). This was criticized by House (2001) as failing to judge whether a text is a translation or not and to judge the merits and weaknesses of a 'translation'.

d)- In the *Post-Modernist and Deconstructionist Thinking*, as that of Venuti (1995), focus is on hidden forces behind the selection and the translation procedures adopted in favor of powerful individuals and groups. House (2001), while admitting the worthiness of such examinations, wonders about how to differentiate between the translation and a text resulting from operations no longer claiming to be in translation relationship with its original.

In the linguistically-oriented approaches, according to House (2001), though no specific translation assessment procedures were offered, concerns with linguistics, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, stylistics and discourse analysis were included.

e)- *House's Functional-Pragmatic Model of Translation Evaluation*: this model provides for the analysis and comparison of an original and its translation on three levels: language/text, register (field, mode and tenor) and genre. If taken together, House (2001, p. 249) claims the analysis will yield 'a textual profile characterizing the individual textual function'. House's functional-pragmatic model of translation quality assessment, according to Thuy (2013), consists of the following steps:

1-The source text is analyzed at three levels: field, tenor and mode. A text-profile is set up reflecting the individual textual function on the basis of such analysis.

2-The translated text is analyzed at the same levels and degree of delicacy.

3-The source and translation texts are compared and an assessment of their relative match is established.



Gutt (1991) quoted in Munday(2001)criticized House's model wondering about how to recover authorial intention and source text function in such a model, and how to interpret mismatches between source and target texts which are caused by some translation strategies such as explicitation or compensation.

In this paper, I will use formative translation evaluation. Formative translation evaluation, as I practice it in my literary translation class, consists in stating the appropriateness of a translation involving a value judgement with an explicit justification which is a definition given to translation *criticism* by McAlester (2000). Furthermore, the five-steps model of Newmark cited in MacAlester (2000) and the three-steps model of House (2001) seem to be the most flexible be adapted to my practice of formative translation evaluation in a three-steps model combining comparison , evaluation and assessment in the target culture together. Still this does not take into account the specificity of the literary text. In the following section, we turn to literary translation criticism to gain insights into formative literary translation evaluation.

### **3-Translation Criticism: An Overview**

In fact, the author's theoretical proposition concerning the adaptation of Berman's model of translation criticism to formative literary translation evaluation was motivated by both personal experience and the previously mentioned literature review on translation evaluation.

First, based on the author's own experience, the teacher, in the literary translation class, engages into detailed discussions of the students' success and/or failure to transfer meaning from a source text to a target text. These discussions were a sort of '*implicit translation criticism endeavour*' (the author's own metaphor) and proved very satisfactory both for measuring students' progress and identifying areas that may need improvement.

Second, the evaluation of literary texts deals with issues different from those dealt with in the evaluation of non-literary ones. In this respect, Henson (2011, p. 03) stated that: 'TQA usually addresses different types of pragmatic texts, and thus does

not necessarily look in detail at the particular issues associated with the literary text, which requires specific methodology and criteria'. Thus, according to Henson (2011), Translation Quality Assessment failed to fully address the issue of interpretation (or of how a work is read). In fact, interpretation remains a challenging issue for both summative and formative literary translation assessment.

### 3-1 Translation Criticism and Its Forms

In fact, we do not target an exhaustive study of the existing translation criticism forms, but a mere contextualization and an identification of Berman's method of translation criticism, before proposing an adaptation of Berman's model of translation criticism to formative classroom literary translation evaluation. I relied on an **informal** translation by Luise von Flotow as well as my own translation of basic concepts taken from Berman's(1995) book

According to Berman (1995, p. 38), 'translation criticism' refers so often to the negative evaluation of translations, though criticism is in essence positive and this positive aspect is its truth. Purely negative criticism is not real criticism: 'Non seulement la critique est positive, mais cette positivité est sa *vérité*'.

Berman (1995, p. 38) added that criticism is clearly a necessity for literary works. They need criticism in order to communicate, manifest, complete and perpetuate themselves:

La critique des œuvres langagières,....., est nettement et clairement quelque chose de *nécessaire* ... Car ce sont ces œuvres qui appellent et autorisent quelque chose comme la critique, parce qu'elles en ont besoins. Elles ont besoins de la critique pour *se* communiquer, pour *se* manifester, pour s'accomplir et se perpétuer ....*La critique est ontologiquement liée à l'œuvre.*

In the same vein, Berman (1995, p. 43) states that translation criticism is just as necessary as criticism for literary works:

Si nous estimons que la critique littéraire est essentiel à la vie des œuvres (et de la lecture qui est un moment de cette vie), nous devons considérer, ....., que la critique de la traduction l'est

tout autant, et donc accorder à cette partie de critique tout le sérieux que l'on accorde à celle relative aux œuvres.

Henson (2011), from his part states that translation criticism sets to explore a literary text as translation, not to primarily judge it but to understand its relation to the original. This is done through an examination 'of the interpretive potential' resulting from the 'translational choices that have been made'.

According to Berman (1995), there has been little development in translation criticism, with two forms of criticism being judgmental:

**-Meschonic view:** provides an analysis based on knowledge of linguistics, semiotics and poetics...etc, and an explicit writing and translation theory. The analysis points to all the defects of the translation and the possible ways to remedy them and ends up with negative judgments. This structural formal position led to a negative and a destructive tone. These are basically source-oriented.

**-Tel Aviv School:** provides an analysis of the 'translated literature' based on the idea that they belong to the polysystem of a culture or a nation. It is an analysis of all socio-historical, cultural and ideological factors that led to a given translation. This functionalistic and deterministic position led to the negation of the creative and autonomous role of translation. It is basically target-oriented.

### **3-2 Berman' Method of Translation Criticism**

Berman's translation criticism takes into account forms developed by both Meschonnic and the Tel Aviv School and can be adapted to particular objectives. Berman's method (1995) is divided into a number of steps:

**1. The First Step:** deals with the actual reading of the translation and of the original as well as the many related readings supporting them:

### **a- Reading and Rereading the Translation**

The critic should engage in reading and rereading the translation, setting aside the original to identify if the translated text works as a piece of writing in the target language and uncover “problem spots” as well as “miracle spots”:

Telle est, telle sera la posture de base de l’acte critique: suspendre tout jugement hâtif, et s’engager dans un long, patient travail de lecture et de relecture de traduction ou des traductions, *en laissant entièrement de côté l’original...* Cette relecture découvre aussi, immanquablement, des « zones textuelles » problématiques, ...A l’inverse, elle découvre aussi mais pas toujours des « zones textuelles » que je qualifierai de « miraculeuses » (Berman, 1995, p. 65/66)

### **b-Reading and Rereading the Original**

The critic, then, must carry out a pre-analysis that selects a certain number of stylistic examples of the original based on an interpretation of the work. These are the significant points where a work achieves its own objectives at its own centre of gravity: « Ces passages sont les *zones signifiantes* où une œuvre atteint sa propre visée (pas forcément celle de l’auteur) et propre centre de gravité » (Berman, 1995, p. 70).

### **c-Translation Position, Translation Project and Translator’s Horizon**

After knowing about the stylistic “system” of the original, remains the stylistics of the translated text. This is possible, according to Berman (1995, p. 74), by determining the translator’s *translational position, his translation project, and his horizon of translation*: ‘Il faut aller plus loin, et déterminer sa position traductive, son projet de traduction et son horizon traductif’

*-Translational Position:* Every translator has a specific relationship to his work, a certain “conception” of translation:

‘Tout traducteur entretient un rapport spécifique avec sa propre activité, c’est à dire une certaine “conception” ou “perception du traduire, de son sens/, de ses finalités, de ses formes et modes’(Berman, 1995, p. 74)

*-The Translation Project:* Every translation is sustained by a project which is determined both by the translational position and by the specific constraints set by the work to be translated:

‘ Toute traduction conséquente est portée par un projet, ou visée articulée. Le projet ou visée sont déterminés à la fois par la position traductive et par les exigences à chaque fois spécifique posées par l’œuvre à traduire’ (Berman, 1995, p. 76).

*-The Translator’s Horizon:* The translator’s position and the project of translation are both bounded by a horizon. The horizon may be defined by all the linguistic, literary, cultural and historical parameters that “determine” how a translator feels, acts, and thinks: ‘L’ensemble des paramètres langagiers, littéraires, culturels, et historique qui “déterminent” le sentir, l’agir et le penser d’un traducteur’ (Berman, 1995, p. 79).

**2- The Second Step:** deals with the crucial stage of the act of criticism itself: its written form and the basic categories structuring it. It is *Analyzing the Translation*

### *a-The Form of Analysis*

The form of the analysis may differ, depending on the genre of the works translated, whether it is concerned with a translation by one translator or that it involves comparison with other translations of the same text:

‘La forme de l’analyse pourra différer selon, d’abord, qu’il s’agit d’une traduction, ...de la traduction d’un ensemble ou d’une œuvre entière de traducteur.. (et) selon que l’analyse porte seulement sur une traduction de traducteur...ou procède à des études comparatives avec d’autres traductions de la même œuvre’ (Berman, 1995, p. 83/84).

### ***b-Comparing the Texts***

The comparison operates at four levels.

1-First, selected elements and passages from the original are compared with the corresponding passages of the translation.

2-Then, ‘problems spots’ as well as ‘miracle spots’ of the translation - parts of the translation that seem either problematic or particularly accomplished- are compared with the corresponding parts of the original.

3-Then, there is the comparison with other translations, if applicable.

4-Finally, the translation is considered in terms of its project. This reveals how the translation was carried out and links it to the translator’s subjectivity and decisions. Any disparity further calls for a search for causes (Translated from Berman (1995)).

### ***c-The Style of the Comparison***

For the analysis to be transparent, rich, and open to the many ‘questions’ raised by the phenomena of translation, three ‘procedures’ can be suggested:

-The first is the clarity of expression

-The second is the constant reflexivity of the discourse, which “opens up” the face to face confrontation between the original and the translation.

-The third is that the analysis must be digressive. This means whenever necessary opening up a series of questions, perspectives, and insights about some textual elements, and reflecting on them. These digressions allow the analysis to move away from traditional “textual analysis;” they give it the status of a commentary, or what Berman (1995) called commentativity (Translated from Berman (1995)).

### ***d-The Basis of the Evaluation***

Berman (1995, p. 92) proposed basing the evaluation on double criteria which are located in the realm of *ethics* and *poetics*

-*The poetic* nature of a translation manifests itself in the textual work of a translator : ‘La poéticité d’une traduction réside en ce que le traducteur a réalisé un véritable travail textuel, *a fait texte*, en correspondance plus ou moins avec la textualité de l’original’.

-*The ethical* aspect resides in the respect for the original: ‘L’éthicité, elle réside dans le respect, ou plutôt, dans *un certain respect de l’originale*’.

Berman (1995) added that translators have all the rights provided they reveal their intentions: «Le traducteur a tous les droits dès qu’il joue franc jeu» (Berman, 1995, p. 93)

For Berman (1995), ethics and poetics ensure that the processes of creation in the target language, enlarge, amplify, and enrich it at every possible level:

« Ethicité et la poéticité garantissent ensuite qu’il y a un faire œuvre dans la langue traduisante qui l’élargit, l’amplifie et l’enrichit...à tous les niveaux, ou il y a lieu »

### **e-The Reception of Translation**

Is a step of criticism that is as important as any study concerning the reception of a literary work. It necessitates recognition, evaluation and analysis by the critic, and judgment and presentation to the public.

### **f- Productive Criticism**

This is the last step of criticism; it applies in cases where a translation calls for a retranslation. It should indicate the principles for the re-translation and thus for new translation projects, or just show the excellence of the work if the translation is successful: ‘ .. cette critique productive énoncera donc, ou s’efforcera d’articuler, les principes d’une retraduction de l’œuvre concernée, donc de nouveaux projets de traduction... (ou) Le pouvoir fécondant de l’analyse réside alors et dans la (dé)monstration au lecteur du *faire œuvre positif* du traducteur, et dans *l’exemplarité* de la traduction même’ (Berman,1995, p. 96/97)

With this last stage, according to Berman (1995), the analysis of translation becomes criticism in the highest sense and achieves fulfillment as a productive, enriching, critical act.

### **3-Adaptation of Berman's Model: A Pilot Text**

Formative translation evaluation consists in providing feedback in the post-translation stage in the translation classroom. This feedback is the comparison proper in Berman's model.

Our adaptation of Berman's model of translation criticism to formative translation evaluation focuses on the inclusion of Berman's categorization of tasks and their relevant terminology into the three-steps general model of translation evaluation as follows:

**-Analysis of the original text:** this corresponds to Berman's first step. This is the pre-translation stage in the translation class, where students are assigned semester readings to be done at home (a piece of prose, a novel and a play) and weekly translations of texts. At the class, the students engaged in the discussion of their readings of the source text (delimiting the fundamental stylistic characteristics of the original). The **pilot text** of the present research paper was read and translated at the classroom by groups of four students, thus we got six translations, only two of which are presented here.

**-Analysis of the translation:** this corresponds as well to Berman's first step. In House's model, the analysis of the translation should be done at the same levels and degree of delicacy.

#### **-Comparison of the original and translation and assessment of the translation:**

Berman's second step of translation criticism was adapted to the specific requirements of our formative literary translation evaluation as follows:

A-The form of analysis: we can choose to deal with one individual translation and its original text at a time (be it an



individual work or a group work). The focus of attention thus engenders the best of the productive criticism. Or we can choose to deal with two translations or more and their original text. This as well has its own benefits in terms of the discussion of translational options. Whole passages are juxtaposed to minimize the risk of missing the richness of the borders (Gaddis Rose: 1997).

B-The comparison proper: the comparison operates at three levels:

1-First, selected elements and passages from the original are compared with the corresponding passages of the translation. If we use Berman's terminology, 'problem spots' as well as 'miracle spots' of the translation are compared with the corresponding parts of the original.

2-Then, there is the comparison with other translations, if applicable.

3-Finally, the translation is considered in terms of its project. The project of the translation is the same for all the students. This directs efforts to the productive criticism proper and the two bases of Berman's criticism (ethics and poetics) are the main concern and focus of the formative translation evaluation.

### **c-A Sample Activity**

#### **Aim**

-Adapting the steps of Berman's translation criticism into the requirements of our practice of formative literary translation evaluation.

**Type:** group work

#### **The sample text**

I remember when I was a boy going upon the beach & being charmed with the colors & forms of the shells. I picked up many & put them in my pocket. When I got home I could find nothing that I gathered –nothing but some dry ugly mussel & snail shells. Thence I learned that Composition was more important than the beauty of

individual forms to effect. On the shore they lay wet and social by the sea and under the sky. (Emerson, 1965:51-52)

### Translation of group one:

اذكر حينما كنت صبياً أني كنت اذهب إلى الشاطئ فأنبهر بألوان الأصداف و أشكالها... و كنت أجمع العديد منها و أضعها في جيبتي... و عند عودتي إلى البيت لا أجد شيئاً مما جمعت ' لا شيء سوى بعض من محار البحر الجاف و القبيح و قواقع الحلزون. و من ثمة أدركت أن جمال الأصداف في تكاملها كان أكبر تأثيراً من جمال أشكالها منفردة. فهي تبدو على شاطئ البحر و تحت زرقة السماء أكثر بريقاً و انسجاماً

### Translation of group two:

عندما كنت صبياً، ذهبت إلى الشاطئ لأمتع نظري ببهائه و بريق أصدافه الجميلة. فجمعت تلك الأصداف في جيبتي و عندما ذهبت إلى البيت لم أجد إلا محاراً باهت اللون جافاً و كذلك القواقع التي كانت في جيبتي فهي لا تشبه التي كانت على الشاطئ. و من ثم أيقنت أن جمال الأصداف في تكاملها و تجمعها مع بعضها فهي في مكانها المناسب في الحقيقة- تعطي جمالاً للطبيعة التي منحتها البحر بزرقته و الشمس بضيائها و الشاطئ بأصدافه البراقة

### Formative Literary translation evaluation:

#### 1-Analysis of the original text

The ideas of the present text leading to the climax are:

1-going to the beach,

2-being charmed with colors and forms of the shells,

3-picking up shells,

4-but when returning home, not finding what one gathered (climax)

The challenge here is to express the meaning of the negation: the negation here is not about ‘not finding shells’, but ‘not finding the shells I thought I gathered’, ‘not finding the beautiful shells I gathered’. The following exception:

#### **5-nothing but some dry ugly shells**

Reinforces the idea that I gathered beautiful shells; but these are ugly! Here an immediate link between ‘being charmed with the colors and forms of the shell’ and ‘nothing but some dry ugly mussel & snail shells’ in made, preparing the reader for a possible explanation of an ‘apparent contradiction’.

#### **6-announce wisdom: composition has a more important effect than the beauty of individual parts.**

The challenge here is rendering comparison; which is the wisdom of the story. The two compared parts are ‘composition’ and ‘beauty of individual forms’ and the relation is that of one having a ‘more important effect’ than the other. ‘Composition’ is a concept in English that has to be related to shells in Arabic to fulfill the comparison.

#### **7- describe the setting of shells on the beach**

The challenge here is how to link the wisdom to the setting of shells on the beach

#### **2-a-Analysis of the translation of the first group and comparison with the original:**

The translation of the original text is small in size that is why there will be information redundancy if we analyze the translation and then compare it to the original in two separate steps. Hence, analysis and comparison were done in one step:

-‘I remember when I was a boy going upon the beach& being charmed with the colors & forms of the shell. I picked up many & put them in my pocket. When I got home I could find nothing that I gathered –nothing but some dry ugly mussel & snail shells.

اذكر حينما كنت صبياً أنني كنت اذهب إلى الشاطئ فأنبهر بألوان  
الأصداف وأشكالها... و كنت أجمع العديد منها و أضعها في جيبتي... و عند  
عودتي إلى البيت لا أجد شيئاً مما جمعت‘ لا شيء سوى بعض من محار البحر  
الجاف و القبيح وقواقع الحلزون.

Considering the first part of the text and its translation, we notice that the Arabic translation of this part was successful at rendering the exact meaning of the negation, through **لا أجد شيئاً مما** reading ‘I do not find anything of what I gathered’ which is high expression in Arabic that conveys the English meaning perfectly. Thus, both ethics and poetics are preserved.

-Thence I learned that Composition was more important than the beauty of individual forms to effect. On the shore they lay wet and social by the sea and under the sky.

و من ثمة أدركت أن جمال الأصداف في تكاملها كان أكبر تأثيراً من جمال  
أشكالها منفردة. فهي تبدو على شاطئ البحر و تحت زرقاة السماء أكثر بريقاً  
وانسجاماً.

In this translation, ‘composition’ was rendered by **جمال** reading ‘the beauty of shells in their composition’ which is a necessary explicitation in Arabic to preserve the inherent logic of the comparison; ‘beauty of shells in their composition’ to ‘beauty of individual shells’. Though poetics is relatively preserved and that the discussion was directed towards more poetic options, the ethics was preserved.

## **2-b-Analysis of the translation of the second group and comparison with the original:**

The translation of the original text is small in size that is why there will be information redundancy if we analyze the translation and then compare it to the original in two separate steps. Hence, analysis and comparison were done in one step:

-‘I remember when I was a boy going upon the beach& being charmed with the colors & forms of the shell. I picked up many & put them in my pocket. When I got home I could find nothing that I gathered –nothing but some dry ugly mussel & snail shells.

عندما كنت صبيا، ذهبت إلى الشاطئ لأمتع نظري ببهاء و بريق أصدافه الجميلة. فجمعت تلك الأصداف في جيبتي و عندما ذهبت إلى البيت لم أجد إلا محارا باهت اللون جافا و كذلك القوقعات التي كانت في جيبتي فهي لا تشبه التي كانت على الشاطئ.

The second group rendered ‘going’ by **ذهبت** reading ‘I went’ which had a double effect of a ‘purposeful’ activity happening ‘one time’ only. This is defective as it doesn’t render the meaning. The meaning of the negation was rendered as follows: ‘when returning home, I did not find but ugly shells, in addition, the snail shells in my pocket do not resemble those on the beach’. When the students started explaining the climax, by stating explicitly that ‘shells in my pocket’ do not resemble ‘shells on the beach’, they broke the complexity of the image, and produced the affirmative effect that we are comparing different shells. Here both ethics is specifically not preserved.

-Thence I learned that Composition was more important than the beauty of individual forms to effect. On the shore they lay wet and social by the sea and under the sky.

و من ثم أيقنت أن جمال الأصداف في تكاملها و تجمعها مع بعضها فهي في مكانها المناسب في الحقيقة- تعطي جمالا للطبيعة التي منحتها البحر بزرقته و الشمس بضيائها و الشاطئ بأصدافه البراقة

The Arabic translation omitted the comparison all together, and started to explain the ‘beauty of the shells in their composition in their appropriate place which adds beauty to nature. The latter gave it the blue sea, the lightning sun and the beach with bright

shells'. This is a complete departure from the source text's meaning. Here both ethics and poetics are not preserved.

### **Important Remarks:**

-It is worth to mention that the comments being written in a reported speech mode lost most of their attractiveness. The reported speech mode as well cannot account for the richness of the students' comments and participation.

- The analysis was confined to two groups out of six for space constraints purposes.

### **Conclusion:**

In this research, I tried to set the theoretical grounding to adapt Berman's method of translation criticism to formative literary translation evaluation. The practical application of the method-though presented in a contracted form- proved very satisfactory to the evaluation of a literary text. Berman's ethics and poetics were pertinent elements therein. The constructive feedback received by the students is also meant to help them improve their translation competence. Assessing its effect, however, can be the concern of an experimental study. An important concern to be gained from the application is the presentation of the 'positive' influence of 'productive criticism' on students' translations. This requires further consideration. The three-step model was applied on the translation of novels and plays and it yielded similar results. Moreover, the practical application of the model unveiled students' progress as well as areas where they need improvement. Federici (2010: 77) further explained 'The issue of constructive feedback is also important in relation to the support of learning, because formative feedback on translation develops students' independence of thought and a professional awareness'.

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