

Translating Fantasy: Not So Fantastic. A Study on Challenges of Translating Fantasy Fiction, Based on the Experience of Translating the Fantasy Fiction Novel: The Lord of the Rings

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Contrary to the popular belief, translation is NOT just a matter of words but a matter of making intelligible a whole culture, says Anthony Burgess the English writer/composer. However, this proves challenging, especially when the culture of the source text and that of the target language appreciate contrasting values and aspects. The translation of expressions, idioms, similies and metaphors might not generate the original feeling and the tone intended by the author. In addition to the usual challenges of translation, the translation of fantasy literature requires a skill of another level. A fantasy fiction might include fantastic creatures or beings, invented languages, fictional places, fictional periods or history. The translator is in dilemma as to the strategies of translation which are to be used. Should the translator invent new words, keep the foreign words as they are or should s/he try to localize it? It is possible to domesticate certain terms and expression, which would include making the target text closely confirm to that of the source, thereby risking a loss of information. On the other hand, it is possible to use foreignization which involves retaining the information of the source text. There, the translator has to deliberately defy the conventions of the target language in order to retain the meaning. In addition, every chapter of this particular work of fiction includes poetry. Maintaining the exact meaning, while including the poetic element and spirit of the source in the translation is an exigent task. The researcher intends to explore whether the method of localizing, foreignization or recreation is the most effective way to produce a successful translation. For this purpose, the researcher aims to carry out a comparison of strategies and methods used in overcoming the challenges and obstacles that she had to encounter while translating the above work of fiction.

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