Chapter 5. Literary Translation

Activities

Extra activity 1. Support translation in literary translation
Check the interview with Julia Lovell here:

On page 6, there is a mention of using other translations as a reference. How do you think the practice is envisioned from the tone in the interview? Are you aware of other translators who have declared checking other versions when building their own? Was their stance similar? You might want to check paratexts for retranslations from classical books from languages linguistically far and paratexts to translations of old languages (Classical Greek, Latin, Sanskrit…). If you know translators working with languages far apart, ask them if they do it.

Extra Activity 2. The concatenation hypothesis:
Read this blog entry by James Hadley on the concatenation hypothesis:

Essentially, the concatenation effect hypothesis claims that indirect translations tend to omit elements of the text that are identifiable with the source culture, and describe themselves as something other than translations

Consider similar examples to the ones provided by Hadley. Think of fairy tales written by the Grimm Brothers or Andersen, but also widely translated classic collections, like The Kathāsaritsāgara or the One Thousand and One Nights (the Project Gutenberg webpage might help you with the search, see link in resources for this chapter). Then, test the hypothesis: can we talk about cultural loss? How do you measure it?

Now try testing this hypothesis in other fields (audiovisual translation, localization, technical translation, interpreting). To what extent does the hypothesis apply here?

Extra Activity 3. The concatenation hypothesis (2)
In the 2021 article, Hadley discusses other instances of indirect translation. Read it:

Using their methodology as an example, try to assess the relevance and accuracy of intermediary versions of a source text. Ideally, you should use the previously selected example.

**Extra activity 4. Chain translation experiment***

In 2007, Adam Thirlwell published the book *Multiples: An Anthology of Stories in an assortment of Languages and Literary Styles*. The experiment he proposes is for stories written in languages other than English to be successively translated by a series of novelists, each one working only from the version immediately prior to their own. In the epilog, Thirlwell translates from a language he doesn’t know at all in collaboration with a native speaker of that language. Unlike Hadley’s research on spontaneous translation practices, in-between each successive language translation there is a return to English -the pivot translation- which allows for some comparison.

Consider then: Do cultural differences disappear in this case? How do you measure that? Would it apply to all languages? Do you think that the result would be much different without English mediation?