

AI Translation in Shakespeare's Sonnet 7 and Eliot's Middlemarch: DeepL and Google Translate Under Study

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Abstract: The application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) within translation studies has become a focal point of interest, especially concerning the translation of literary works as they represent almost unsolvable tasks. This research explores the complexities and strategies related to evaluating translations produced by AI, with a particular emphasis on Shakespeare's Sonnet 7 and Eliot's Middlemarch. The central goal is to create a communicative framework that assesses both the fidelity of the conveyed meaning and the retention of literary qualities and cultural subtleties. An analytical approach is employed, utilizing AI translation tools such as DeepL and Google Translate for comparative analysis. This research assumes that successful literary translation encompasses both semantic fidelity and stylistic resonance, reflecting the intricacies of the source material. The findings reveal that while AI-generated translations often convey the semantic meaning and the overarching themes, they frequently struggle with preserving poetic devices, rhythm, and tonal subtleties which results in hindering the original author's aesthetic message. For instance, the assessment of Shakespeare's Sonnet 7 indicates a partial effectiveness in capturing connotative meanings, while Eliot's Middlemarch shows a more favorable preservation of narrative tone. Ultimately, this paper posits that a detailed communicative framework based on linguistic elements is essential for critically evaluating AI translations in literature, recommending further refinement of AI tools to enhance their sensitivity to aesthetic dimensions and reader engagement.

Keywords: AI Translation; Google Translate; DeepL; Literature; Shakespeare; Eliot.

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Introduction

In the exponentially growing field of translation studies, the task of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in literary texts translation has evoked both excitement and concern (Wang, 2023). As technology becomes gradually able to translate intricate texts, scholars and critics must re-examine outmoded procedures of assessing translations. AI translation applications like Google Translate and DeepL have made substantial developments, principally in general and non-literary translations (Moneus & Sahari, 2024). Still, translating literary texts brings a new challenge which includes not only conveying meaning but also communicating the literary style, nuances of cultural identities, and aesthetic traits of the original work (Yousef, 2012). The objective of this paper, A Multifaceted Communicative Approach to Evaluate AI Translation of Literary Texts, is to propose a basis for assessing AI-generated translations of literary works which takes into consideration both the communicative precision of ideas and conveying literary aesthetics.

Theoretical Grounds

AI-Powered Literary Translation

Translating literary texts has long been viewed as an art form requiring a nuanced focus on both the meaning and style of the original work. Translation theorists like Eugene Nida, Roman Jakobson, and Lawrence Venuti have highlighted that literary translation involves more than just conveying meaning; it's about capturing the unique voice, style, and aesthetic that make a text memorable (Jiang, 2008). According to Nida's theory, mainly his

dynamic equivalence, a successful translation must evoke in the target audience the same response as the original did in its readers (Wang, 2023). Venuti, meanwhile, argues for an ethical approach to translation that acknowledges the "foreignness" of the source text, emphasizing the need to preserve the cultural and stylistic elements of the original work rather than domesticating it to fit the norms of the target language (Myskja, 2013).

Literary translation requires difficult decisions concerning tone, rhythm, figurative language, and cultural nuances (Ziyotov, 2022). These unquantifiable aspects are not only essential in any literary work, but they are also essential to the reader's experience with the text. In literary works, the form is every so often as important as the themes and contents of the text (House, 2023). Poetic devices like alliteration, metaphoric expressions, and rhymical structures convey meanings that go beyond the literal denotative words. Likewise, in prose, the author's choice of structures, diction, and syntax creates the aesthetic and emotional spirit of the text.

The advent of AI and its use in translation has presented a new type of challenges. AI, mainly through the employment of massive human-like neural networks and machine learning (Fakih et al., 2024), has unequivocally established extraordinary progress in translating expository or factual texts, in which preservation of meaning is of great necessity (Titov, 2024). Nevertheless, when the case is about literary translation, AI is programmed to tend to prioritize linguistic accuracy, grammatical correctness and word-for-word translation over the style subtleties and literary impact

(Mohamed et al., 2024). The result is usually a translation that is 'technically correct' but cannot convey the emotional and aesthetic resonance of the original literary work (Fan & Chunlei, 2023).

Linguistics-Based Communicative Approach to Assess AI Translations

This paper argues for the importance of a communicative approach to assessing AI-generated translations, one that balances the transmission of meaning as well as dealing with literary style whether adapting it to the target culture aesthetics or attempting to convey the original structural elements of the source text. The principles of the adopted communicative approach are rooted in both Julian House' functional theory of "*Translation as Communication across Languages and Cultures* (2015)" wherein she examines the neurological complexities of verbal communication system when translating and insights from various communication theories and research.

Juliane House' Functional Theory Principles

In House' words, "the verbal communication system is connected to the cognitive system where intentions to communicate a message are formulated or messages are received and interpreted according to the lexico-grammatical constraints of L1 and L2 that activate concepts and depend on pragmatic context-dependent inferences" (House, 93: 2015). To illustrate, verbal communication is a production of the human brain. It is the organ that is responsible for verbally coding and decoding messages embedded in linguistic elements within a particular setting.

Understanding House' theory should be framed within the essence of communication in its entirety. To communicate, in spirit, is to transmit information, but literary aspects include more than meanings. Literary language contains several artistic and aesthetic features the author, consciously or unconsciously, crafts his work. Hence, language could transmit more than content as the linguistic styles transmit a reflection of how the world is perceived through the author's eyes (West, 2021). The same idea is explicitly expressed in Jackendoff's words that "language conveys more than is in the words" (2012: 8). Other literary scholars dig even deeper to say that literary "aesthetics convey not only the beauty of dharmic and vernacular performative language but also the collective reflections of the communities and the wider metaphysical understanding towards religiosity, life, and the relationships among" Cheyne, 2022). Communicating these aesthetic values falls under the umbrella of what communication is all about.

The Essence of Communication

It is believed that "the essence of communication is to create a mutual understanding between the self and others" (Addis Ababa University and Institute of Educational Research, 2004: 45); however, understanding does not only mean understanding content, but it should also mean understanding the artistic features of literary works and their aesthetic manifestations and values. This can be supported by the fact that the primary purpose "of communication is the effectiveness of its message from the Sender to the Receiver and this is usually determined or influenced by the channel through which such message or information is passed" (Akinbamijo et., 2000: 244). In this regard, literary language is a channel and is itself a message that can be received and appreciated by the readers. For literary works to be translated,

both its contents and aesthetic elements constituting its communication channel should be transferred to the target language which many theorists think is impossible, namely Roman Jakobson when he notes that poetry is untranslatable (Munday, 2016: 61).

Literary work, be it poetry or prose, is a human production that constitutes a linguistically coded message that needs to be decoded by the readers. The linguistic code with which it is written is itself, in most cases, a message on its own. That is, the linguistic levels become messages that convey aesthetic values to the readers. Thus, stylistics, aesthetic features, figures of speech, linguistic phenomena such as alliteration, assonance, rhythmic structures become codes that that need to be received by the readers. Shklovsky believed that, in poetry, the language itself becomes an aesthetic creation that "deliberately draws attention to itself," offering readers a more beautiful and profound experience by making the familiar seem new and unfamiliar. (Hatton, 2008: 12). John Crowe Ransom's *The World's body* (1938) "regards poetic language as more inclusive, more comprehensive, in its power to communicate the fullness of experience" (Selden, 2014: 269).

In brief, the assessment approach draws upon communicative translation theory, which emphasizes the role of the translator as a mediator between two cultures and linguistic systems, and seeks to find equivalence not just in words, but in the reader's experience with the text's literary styles as well. When applied to AI-generated translations, this approach calls for a further nuanced evaluation which takes into consideration how efficiently AI-generated translation conveys both the semantic meaning and the connotative richness of the original literary work.

Methodology

Study Case Research Design

The Case Study Research Design is a quite suitable methodology for this examination since it allows for nuanced investigation of AI translation tools within their context. As Shipley and Arrigo (2004: XV) note, this design "can come much closer to describing the phenomenon under consideration," allowing a thorough study of the intricacies and challenges of translating literary works like Shakespeare's *Sonnet 7* and Eliot's *Middlemarch*. Additionally, case studies are specifically suited to answering "how" or "why" research questions in complex human creations such as literary works, as observed by Hunziker and Blankenagel (2021: 167). This aligns with the study's objective to assess why AI translations often fail to communicate the messages embedded in the aesthetic devices and also fails to deliver literary qualities. Moreover, Susam-Sarajevo (2009) argues that case studies are both well-suited for and widespread within the translation studies discipline, making them an ideal choice for evaluating the semantic and stylistic fidelity of AI translations. By focusing on specific texts, this paper leverages the Case Study Design to comprehensively analyze the interplay between AI translation performance and the aesthetic demands of literary works, all for the ultimate objective of conveying the original works' embedded messages in different aesthetic and linguistic levels.

Study Cases:

DeepL's Translation of Shakespeare's Sonnet 7 to Arabic

The challenges AI confronts in dealing with literature can be explained by the unique spirit of each literary text. This section scrutinizes AI-generated translations of selected texts of Shakespeare's Sonnets. A comparative study is going to be

conducted focusing on translations from English to Arabic, and French. Shakespeare's sonnets are rich of metaphors, wordplay, rhythm, and other aesthetic elements which pose substantial contests for AI-generated translator.

Fig. 1: DeepL's Unedited Translation of Shakespeare's Sonnet 7

The Original Text in Elizabethan English: Shakespeare's Sonnet 7	AI-generated Translation by DeepL.com into Arabic
Lo! in the orient when the gracious light Lifts up his burning head, each under eye Doth homage to his new-appearing sight, Serving with looks his sacred majesty;	لو! في الشرق عندما يرفع النور الكريم يرفع رأسه المشتعل، كل عين تحت العينين تحبى بصره الجديد الذي ظهر حديثاً، تخدم بنظراتها جلالته المقدسة؛
And having climb'd the steep-up heavenly hill, Resembling strong youth in his middle age, yet mortal looks adore his beauty still, Attending on his golden pilgrimage;	وبعد أن تسلق الليل السماوي الشاهق يشبه الشباب القوي في منتصف عمره، ومع ذلك ما زالت النظارات الفانية تعشق جماله بحضر في حجه الذهبي؛
But when from highmost pitch, with weary car, Like feeble age, he reeleth from the day, The eyes, 'fore duteous, now converted are From his low tract and look another way:	ولكن عندما ينزل من أعلى الدرجة، بعربة مرهقة كالشيخ الضعيف، يتراجع عن النهار، العيون ، قبل أن تتحول العيون ، قبل أن تتحول الأن من مسالكه الوضيعة ونظره في طريق آخر:
So thou, thyself out-going in thy noon, Unlook'd on diest, unless thou get a son.	فأنت، أنت أيضاً، خارجاً في ظهرك، غير ناظر إلى المؤتمن ما لم تُخْطِبَ يوماً.
(Shakespeare, NICHOLSON & Phelps, 1852: 35)	Translated with DeepL.com

Fig. 2. DeepL's Unedited Translation of Sonic Aesthetics

The table below presents the sonic properties of before and after the translation of DeepL for Shakespeare's Sonnet 7 from Elizabethan English to Arabic.

Poetic Elements	Source Text	Translated Text
End rhymes	ABAB CDCD EFEF GG	Loss of end rhymes
Internal rhymes	Lo! in the orient when the gracious light	Loss of internal rhymes
Alliteration	light Lifts heavenly hill with weary thou, thyself	Loss of alliteration
Assonance	Lifts up his burning head, each under eye Attending on his golden pilgrimage;	Loss of assonance of the vowel [i]
Consonance	Attending on his golden pilgrimage;	Loss of assonance of the consonants [t] [s] [n]

	yet mortal looks adore his beauty still,	
Euphony	Soft sounds in English: [t] [n] [s] [i]	Euphonic effects are not transmitted

Fig. 3. Meaning-Carrying Linguistic Particles

Poetic Aspects	Original Text	DeepL's Translation
Lexical Choices	gracious light burning head steep-up heavenly hill His golden pilgrimage	النور الكريم رأسه المشتعل التل السماوي الشاهق حجه الذهبي
Archaism	Lo! Doth Reeleth thou, thyself	لو! تحني يتراجع أنت، أنت
Morphological construction	new-appearing his beauty golden Attending	ظهر حديثاً جماله الذهبي بحضر
Syntax	in the orient when the gracious light Lifts up his burning head, each under eye Doth homage to his new-appearing sight	في الشرق عندما يرفع النور الكريم يرفع رأسه المشتعل، كل عين تحت العينين تحدي بصره الجديد الذي ظهر حديثاً

Fig. 4. An assessment Grid to Measures the Transmission of Phonic Aesthetics.

Poetic Aspects	Original Text	DeepL's Translation	Criteria to Assess	Assessment
End Rhyme	ABAB CDCD EFEF GG	No Rhymes	Transmission of end rhyme musicality	Ineffective: Loss of End Rhymes
Internal Rhyme	Lo! in the orient when the gracious light	لو! في الشرق عندما يرفع النور الكريم	Transmission of internal rhyme	Ineffective: Loss of Internal Rhymes
Alliteration	light Lifts heavenly hill with weary thou, thyself	يرفع النور الكريم التل السماوي بعربة مرهقة أنت، أنت	Conveying sonic characters of (alliteration)	Ineffective: Alliteration is not conveyed
Assonance	Lifts up his burning head, each under eye Attending on his golden pilgrimage;	يرفع رأسه المشتعل، كل عين تحت العينين يحضر في حجه الذهبي؛	Resonance of the [i] vowel qualities	Ineffective: The translation does not convey the original sound [i]
Consonance	Attending on his golden pilgrimage; yet mortal looks adore his beauty still,	يحضر في حجه الذهبي؛ ومع ذلك ما زالت النظارات الفانية تعشق جماله	Resonance of the consonants [t] [n] [s]	Ineffective: The translation does not convey the sound properties.

Fig. 5. An Assessment Grid to Measure the Delivery of Structural Aesthetics

Poetic Aspects	Original Text	DeepL's Translation	Criteria to Assess	Assessment
Lexical Choices	gracious light burning head steep-up heavenly hill His golden pilgrimage	النور الكريم رأسه المشتعل التل السماوي الشاهق حجه الذهبي	Transmission of original lexical meaning	Partially effective: transmitting semantic meaning
Archaism	Lo! Doth Reebleth thou, thyself	لو! تحبي يتراجع أنت، أنت	Conveying the historicity of the archaic language	Ineffective: translation does not relate to Shakespeare's poem
Morphological construction	new-appearing his beauty golden Attending	ظهر حديثاً جماله الذهبي يحضر	Compounds Synthetic/Analytic Agglutinative/fusional Wordclass	Ineffective: Complete distinction in the morphological nature of English and Arabic
Syntax	in the orient when the gracious light Lifts up his burning head, each under eye Doth homage to his new- appearing sight	في الشرق عندما يرفع النور الكريم، يرفع رأسه المشتعل، كل عين تحت العينين تحبي بصره الجديد الذي ظهر حديثاً	Abiding by the target language's syntax	Ineffective: The translation does not convey the original sound [i]
Lexical Choices	gracious light burning head steep-up heavenly hill His golden pilgrimage	النور الكريم رأسه المشتعل التل السماوي الشاهق حجه الذهبي	Transmission of original lexical meaning	Partially effective: transmitting semantic meaning

Google's Translation of George Eliot's Middlemarch to French

Translating Eliot's prose in her novel *Middlemarch* using AI-generated translation of Google Translate presents evident challenges that can impact the thematic and stylistic qualities of literary works. Eliot's writing is rich and characterized with a

unique linguistic complexity, featuring tricky sentence structures and a concentrated engagement with philosophical ideas and emotional states. In this paper, a study of AI-generated translation of selected extracts is presented about how the novel might appear when translated into French using Google Translate, along with perceptions into the weaknesses of Google Translate.

Original Passage from Eliot's <i>Middlemarch</i>	The translated text by Google Translate into French
<p><i>In Chapter 2,</i></p> <p><i>"Dorothea felt a little more uneasy than usual. In the beginning of dinner, the party being small and the room still, these motes from the mass of a magistrate's mind fell too noticeably. She wondered how a man like Mr. Casaubon would support such triviality. His manners, she</i></p>	<p>« Dorothée se sentit un peu plus inquiète que d'habitude. Au début du dîner, la compagnie étant petite et la salle calme, ces particules de poussière qui se trouvaient dans la masse de l'esprit d'un magistrat tombèrent trop visiblement. Elle se demanda comment un homme comme M. Casaubon pouvait supporter une telle trivialité. Ses</p>

<p><i>thought, were very dignified; the set of his iron-gray hair and his deep eye-sockets made him resemble the portrait of Locke. He had the spare form and the pale complexion which became a student; as different as possible from the blooming Englishman of the red-whiskered type represented by Sir James Chettam.</i>" (Eliot, 2009: 18)</p>	<p>manières, pensait-elle, étaient très dignes ; la disposition de ses cheveux gris fer et ses orbites profondes le faisaient ressembler au portrait de Locke. Il avait la silhouette élancée et le teint pâle qui convenaient à un étudiant ; il était aussi différent que possible de l'Anglais épanoui du type aux favoris roux représenté par Sir James Chettam. »</p>
<p><i>In Chapter 4,</i></p> <p><i>"How could he expect it?" she burst forth in her most impetuous manner. "I have never agreed with him about anything but the cottages: I was barely polite to him before."</i></p> <p><i>"But you have been so pleased with him since then; he has begun to feel quite sure that you are fond of him."</i></p> <p><i>"Fond of him, Celia! How can you choose such odious expressions?" said Dorothea, passionately.</i></p> <p><i>"Dear me, Dorothea, I suppose it would be right for you to be fond of a man whom you accepted for a husband."</i> (Eliot, 2009: 52-53)</p>	<p>« Comment pouvait-il s'attendre à cela ? » s'écria-t-elle avec la plus grande impétuosité. « Je n'ai jamais été d'accord avec lui sur autre chose que les cottages : je n'ai jamais été polie avec lui auparavant. »</p> <p>« Mais vous êtes si contente de lui depuis lors qu'il commence à se dire que vous l'aimez. »</p> <p>« Aimer pour lui, Célia ! Comment pouvez-vous choisir des expressions aussi odieuses ? » s'exclama Dorothée avec passion.</p> <p>« Mon Dieu, Dorothée, je suppose qu'il serait juste que vous aimiez un homme que vous avez accepté pour mari. »</p>
<p><i>In Chapter 7</i></p> <p><i>"Mr. Casaubon, as might be expected, spent a great deal of his time at the Grange in these weeks, and the hindrance which courtship occasioned to the progress of his great work—the Key to all Mythologies—naturally made him look forward the more eagerly to the happy termination of courtship. But he had deliberately incurred the hindrance, having made up his mind that it was now time for him to adorn his life with the graces of female companionship, to irradiate the gloom which fatigue was apt to hang over the intervals of studious labor with the play of female fancy, and to secure in this, his culminating age, the solace of female tendance for his declining years. Hence he determined to abandon himself to the stream of feeling, and perhaps was surprised to find what an exceedingly shallow rill it was."</i> (Eliot, 2009: 100)</p>	<p>« M. Casaubon, comme on pouvait s'y attendre, passa une grande partie de son temps à la Grange ces dernières semaines, et l'obstacle que la cour posait à la progression de son grand ouvrage – la Clef de toutes les mythologies – le fit naturellement attendre avec plus d'impatience l'heureuse fin de sa cour. Mais il avait délibérément encouru cet obstacle, ayant décidé qu'il était temps pour lui d'orner sa vie des grâces de la compagnie féminine, d'irradier la tristesse que la fatigue avait tendance à imposer aux intervalles de son travail studieux par le jeu de l'imagination féminine, et de s'assurer dans cet âge, son âge culminant, la consolation des tendances féminines pour ses années de déclin. Il résolut donc de s'abandonner au courant des sentiments, et fut peut-être surpris de constater à quel point ce ruisseau était peu profond. »</p>
<p><i>In Chapter 12,</i></p> <p><i>"The ride to Stone Court, which Fred and Rosamond took the next morning, lay through a pretty bit of midland landscape, almost all meadows and pastures, with hedgerows still allowed to grow in bushy beauty and to</i></p>	<p>« Le trajet jusqu'à Stone Court, que Fred et Rosamond prirent le lendemain matin, traversait un joli paysage de moyennes terres, presque entièrement composé de prairies et de pâturages, avec des haies encore autorisées à pousser en beauté touffue et à étaler des fruits de corail pour les</p>

<p><i>spread out coral fruit for the birds. Little details gave each field a particular physiognomy, dear to the eyes that have looked on them from childhood: the pool in the corner where the grasses were dank and trees leaned whisperingly; the great oak shadowing a bare place in mid-pasture; the high bank where the ash-trees grew; the sudden slope of the old marl-pit making a red background for the burdock; the huddled roofs and ricks of the homestead without a traceable way of approach; the gray gate and fences against the depths of the bordering wood; and the stray hovel, its old, old thatch full of mossy hills and valleys with wondrous modulations of light and shadow such as we travel far to see in later life, and see larger, but not more beautiful." (Eliot, 2009: 174)</i></p>	<p>oiseaux. De petits détails donnaient à chaque champ une physionomie particulière, chère aux yeux qui les observaient depuis l'enfance : l'étang dans le coin où les herbes étaient humides et les arbres penchés en murmurant ; le grand chêne ombrageant un endroit nu au milieu du pâturage ; la haute berge où poussaient les frênes ; la pente soudaine de l'ancienne marnière faisant un fond rouge pour la bardane ; les toits et les meules recroquevillées de la ferme sans voie d'accès traçable ; le portail gris et les clôtures contre les profondeurs du bois limitrophe ; et la mesure égarée, son vieux, vieux chaume plein de collines et de vallées moussues avec de merveilleuses modulations de lumière et d'ombre telles que nous voyageons loin pour en voir plus tard dans la vie, et en voyons plus grandes, mais pas plus belles. »</p>
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Assessment Grids

Assessment Grid for DeepL's Translation of Shakespeare's Sonnet 7 to Arabic

The assessment grid has been divided into two sections. One concerns the sonic properties, and the other assesses the translation

in terms of other linguistic aspects. Below is the grid that assesses how well the sound properties are conveyed in the translated text.

Sonic Aspects	Original Text	DeepL's Translation	Criteria to Assess	Assessment
End Rhyme	ABAB CDCD EFEF GG	No Rhymes	Transmission of end rhyme musicality	Ineffective: Loss of End Rhymes
Internal Rhyme	Lo! in the orient when the gracious light	لو! في الشرق عندما يرفع النور الكريم	Transmission of internal rhyme	Ineffective: Loss of Internal Rhymes
Alliteration	light Lifts heavenly hill with weary thou, thyself	يرفع النور الكريم الثل السماوي عربية من هقة أنت، أنت	Conveying sonic characters of (alliteration)	Ineffective: Alliteration is not conveyed
Assonance	Lifts up his burning head, each under eye Attending on his golden pilgrimage;	يرفع رأسه المشتعل، كل عين تحت العينين يحضر في حجه الذهبي؛	Resonance of the [i] vowel qualities	Ineffective: The translation does not convey the original sound [i]
Consonance	Attending on his golden pilgrimage; yet mortal looks adore his beauty still,	يحضر في حجه الذهبي؛ ومع ذلك ما زالت النظارات الفنانة تعشق جماله	Resonance of the consonants [t] [n] [s]	Ineffective: The translation does not convey the sound properties.
Euphony	Soft sounds in English: [t] [n] [s] [i]	Arabic sounds:	Conveying euphonic/cacophonic qualities	Ineffective: Euphonic effects are not transmitted

The second assessment grid below assesses how well the meaning embedded in the linguistic aspects of the translated text are conveyed to the target language.

Linguistic aspects	Original Text	DeepL's Translation	Criteria to Assess	Assessment
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Lexical Choices	gracious light burning head steep-up heavenly hill His golden pilgrimage	النور الکریم رأسه المشتعل التل السماوي الشاهق حجه الذهبي	Transmission of original lexical meaning	Partially effective: transmitting semantic meaning
Archaism	Lo! Doth Reebleth thou, thyself	لو! تحي بتراجع أنت، أنت	Conveying the historicity of the archaic language	Ineffective: translation does not convey archaism in Shakespeare's poem
Morphological construction	new-appearing his beauty golden Attending	ظهر حديثاً جماله الذهبي بحضر	Compounds Synthetic/Analytic Agglutinative/fusional Wordclass	Ineffective: Complete distinction in the morphological nature of English and Arabic
Syntax	in the orient when the gracious light Lifts up his burning head, each under eye Doth homage to his new-appearing sight	في الشرق عندما يرفع النور الكريم يرفع رأسه المشتعل، كل عين تحت العينين تحي بصره الجديد الذي ظهر حديثاً	Abiding by the target language's syntax	Ineffective: The translation does not convey the original sound [i]

Assessment Grid for Google's Translation of Eliot's Middlemarch to French

Literary aspects	Source Text: Eliot's Middlemarch	Google Translate's translation to French	Criteria to assess	Assessment
Lexical choices	<i>Uneasy usual. the party still, motes noticeably. triviality resemble the portrait</i>	inquiète d'habitude la compagnie calme, particules de poussière visiblement. trivialité. ressembler au portrait	Transfer of meaning through equivalent lexical items	Partially effective since DeepL does not use equivalent items.
Number of words	99 words	111 words	Using an almost equal number of words	Partially effective as though DeepL tends to expand the TT
Morphological aspects	<i>The His manners his iron-gray hair</i>	Au (à+le) Ses manières ses cheveux gris fer	Keeping morphological constructions	Ineffective due to the partial tendency of French to be fairly fusional and inflectional
Syntax	<i>She thought His iron-gray hair</i> <i>"I have never agreed with him about anything but the cottages...</i> <i>The ride to Stone Court, which Fred and Rosamond took the next morning, lay through a pretty bit of midland landscape, almost all meadows and pastures, with hedgerows still</i>	pensait-elle ses cheveux gris fer « Je n'ai jamais été d'accord avec lui sur autre chose que les cottages... Le trajet jusqu'à Stone Court, que Fred et Rosamond prirent le lendemain matin, traversait un joli paysage de moyennes terres, presque entièrement composé de prairies et	Preserving the syntactic order	Effective mostly because DeepL keeps the syntactic order from English to French as much as possible. As seen in the passage. The subjects precede the verbs. However, the adjectives are not kept in their positions when translated to French due

	<i>allowed to grow in bushy beauty and to spread out coral fruit for the birds</i>	de pâtures, avec des haies encore autorisées à pousser en beauté touffue et à étaler des fruits de corail pour les oiseaux		
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Discussion

Shakespeare's Sonnet 7 to Arabic by DeepL

DeepL's produced translation of Shakespeare's Sonnet 7 does not convey the poem's aesthetic aspects due to its neglect of aesthetic channels that are central to poetic communication. In communication theory, an aesthetic channel refers to the medium through which the artistic and emotional resonance of a message is transmitted. Here, the translation disregards critical poetic devices such as alliteration, assonance, and euphony, which serve as sonic vehicles of beauty and meaning in the original text.

The loss of end rhymes, internal rhymes, and consonance severely disrupts the rhythmic structure, which in Elizabethan English amplifies the sonnet's lyrical quality. Furthermore, the failure to replicate archaisms or the nuanced morphological constructions diminishes the historicity and stylistic depth essential for Shakespearean works. Without preserving these aesthetic elements, the translation becomes a mere semantic transfer rather than an authentic reproduction of the poetic experience. Effective communication in translation mandates not only fidelity to meaning but also a preservation of form, which DeepL's output regrettably fails to achieve.

The syntax of Shakespeare's Sonnet 7 has also been stripped from its aesthetic components. To start with, Shakespeare's complex sentence in "Lo! in the orient when the gracious light / Lifts up his burning head" creates a sense of grandeur and progression. DeepL's Arabic rendering simplifies this structure, losing the fluidity and elegance that mirrors the rising motion described in the original. For DeepL's lexical choices, words like "gracious light" and "golden pilgrimage" carry a sacred and noble connotation in the source text. The translated phrases, such as "النور الكريم" and "حجه الذهبي," fail to evoke the same imagery and depth, offering a flat and literal interpretation instead. Morphological constructions have not also been carried to Arabic with their aesthetic loads. Compact expressions like "new-appearing" are diluted into verbose renderings like "ظهور حديثاً," which lack the poetic economy and vividness of the original.

Shakespeare's Sonnet 7 exemplifies the use of euphony to create pleasant imagery, captivating readers through carefully arranged sounds and harmonious word choices. As Cruttenden (1870) explains, "Euphony is applied to the science and art of arranging sounds so that they can be easily produced and uttered by the organs of speech, and thus be made pleasant to the ear" (p. 57). The poem's frequent use of soft consonants such as t, n, and s contributes to its melodic quality, corroborating Day's observation that these sounds are inherently euphonic (1875: 77). Phrases in verses like "the gracious light," "serving with looks his sacred majesty," and "attending on his golden pilgrimage" resonate with a smooth flow that mirrors the poem's imagery of the sun's majestic ascent, evoking a sense of amazement and peacefulness.

Furthermore, Shakespeare's use of euphony enhances the descriptive power of the poem according to Erro y Azpiroz and

Erving's claim that euphony expresses "the characteristic qualities of objects" (1829: 58). The "gracious light" that "lifts up his burning head" and "climbs the steep-up heavenly hill" is depicted in a manner that is not only visually evocative but also aurally delightful, as the interplay of soft consonants and vowels creates a soothing auditory experience. Such language captures the sun's grandeur and vitality, evoking the "strong youth in his middle age," while maintaining a rhythmic harmony that pleases the ear.

The euphonious nature of the sonnet shapes the reader's emotional response, consistent with Lee's assertion that "euphony conveys effects on the readers" (1959: 43). The poem's rhythmic arrangement and smooth transitions between images of ascent and decline—"from highmost pitch, with weary car"—emphasize the cyclical nature of life and beauty. This pleasing sonic quality reinforces the sonnet's meditation on the ephemeral nature of glory and the necessity of perpetuation, as articulated in the closing couplet. Overall, Shakespeare employs euphony not merely as a stylistic device but as a powerful means to evoke imagery and emotion, engaging both the ear and the imagination.

DeepL disregards the aesthetic channels through which Shakespeare communicates, particularly euphony. Euphony is elucidated by the soft consonants ([s], [t], [n]) in "Serving with looks his sacred majesty" which create a melodic effect, absent in the translation, which does not replicate these sound qualities. Moreover, alliteration in phrases such as "light lifts" and "heavenly hill" emphasize key themes through repeated sounds. The Arabic translation omits this device entirely, sacrificing the rhythmic and thematic unity it provides. In addition, the assonance of the Sonnet that is illustrated by the repeated [i] sound in "Attending on his golden pilgrimage" evokes harmony and smoothness, critical to the poem's aesthetic. All in all, this resonance is entirely absent in the translation. By failing to preserve these aesthetic elements, DeepL's translation undermines the holistic communication of the sonnet. The omission of euphony and poetic devices results in a text that lacks emotional depth and sensory impact. Moreover, the literal rendering of linguistic components strips the poem of its layered meanings, reducing it to a straightforward and uninspired narrative.

Eliot's Middlemarch to French by Google Translate

AI translations, like Google Translate for George Eliot's Middlemarch, could explain the difficulties and problems that AI may confront whenever it is tasked with translating literature. Literary works usually are loaded intentionally or unintentionally with layers and hierarchies of meaningful aspects, linguistic structures, and stylistic nuances that defy any literal interpretation. In this analysis, specific examples are going to be presented from the original text and its translation to demonstrate some of these challenges.

In Chapter 2, Eliot captures Dorothea's growing discomfort with the opening lines: "Dorothea felt a little more uneasy than usual." This simple yet evocative phrase sets the tone for the character's internal struggle. The translated phrase "Dorothée se

sentit un peu plus inquiète que d'habitude" maintains the core sentiment, yet the choice of "inquiète" lacks the subtlety of "uneasy," which implies a specific kind of discomfort. The distinction is critical, as "uneasy" conveys a sense of psychological tension that "inquiète" may not fully capture (Eliot, 2009: 18). Such nuances in emotional expression are difficult for AI to replicate, reflecting its challenges in understanding the emotional context of literary characters.

Eliot's depiction of social dynamics is essential to understanding her characters. For instance, when Dorothea observes, "these motes from the mass of a magistrate's mind fell too noticeably," the phrase reveals both a critique of Mr. Casaubon and an introspective moment for Dorothea (Eliot, 2009: 18). The term "motes" suggests something delicate and almost transient, while "mass of a magistrate's mind" juxtaposes the weight of authority with the lightness of distraction. In the translation, "ces particules de poussière qui se trouvaient dans la masse de l'esprit d'un magistrat" shifts the imagery from "motes" to "particules de poussière," which lacks the ethereal quality of the original (Eliot, 2009: 18). This choice diminishes the literary aesthetics and the nuanced critique embedded in Eliot's prose.

In Chapter 4, the dialogue between Dorothea and Celia further highlights the challenges of translation. Dorothea's passionate response, "Aimer pour lui, Célia! Comment pouvez-vous choisir des expressions aussi odieuses?" translates as "Fond of him, Celia! How can you choose such odious expressions?" (Eliot, 2009: 52-53). Here, the emotional weight is palpable in the original, but the translated phrase "choisir des expressions aussi odieuses" lacks the intensity of the word "fond," which in English carries a more complex emotional implication. The translation may accurately convey the words, but it falls short in conveying the depth of Dorothea's passionate objection, highlighting AI's limitations in grasping the subtleties of emotional language.

Chapter 7 offers another example of how AI struggles with the intricate social commentary woven throughout Eliot's narrative. The original sentence, "the hindrance which courtship occasioned to the progress of his great work—the Key to all Mythologies—naturally made him look forward the more eagerly to the happy termination of courtship" (Eliot, 2009: 100) highlights the tension between Casaubon's scholarly pursuits and his romantic aspirations. In the French translation, "l'obstacle que la cour posait à la progression de son grand ouvrage – la Clef de toutes les mythologies – le fit naturellement attendre avec plus d'impatience l'heureuse fin de sa cour," the word "obstacle" replaces "hindrance," which feels more direct and less nuanced. The original conveys a sense of inevitability and frustration, while the translation presents a more straightforward interpretation, losing some of the literary flair that characterizes Eliot's style.

Lastly, the descriptive passages in Chapter 12 demonstrate how AI can struggle with the lyrical quality of Eliot's prose. Eliot writes, "the pool in the corner where the grasses were dank and trees leaned whisperingly," a line that evokes sensory imagery and a sense of intimacy with nature (Eliot, 2009: 174). The translated version, "l'étang dans le coin où les herbes étaient humides et les arbres penchés en murmurant," captures the basic meaning, but the term "humides" lacks the depth of "dank," which carries connotations of richness and decay. Furthermore, phrases like "leaned whisperingly" are translated as "penchés en murmurant," which loses the evocative quality of the original, thereby dulling

the sensory experience that Eliot intended to create (Eliot, 2009: 174).

AI translation tools, mainly Google Translate, while partially proficient in converting text from one language to another, often struggle to capture the musicality inherent in literary prose. For instance, in Eliot's writing, the rhythm and cadence of sentences play a crucial role in establishing mood and character. Consider the phrase "the spare form and the pale complexion which became a student" from Chapter 2 (Eliot, 2009: 18). The choice of "spare" and "pale" creates a subtle musicality that enhances the description of Casaubon, imbuing it with a sense of deliberate precision. In the French translation, "la silhouette élancée et le teint pâle qui convenaient à un étudiant," while accurate, lacks the same rhythmic impact. The use of "élancée" feels more generic, resulting in a loss of the poetic resonance present in the original. Such shifts not only diminish the aesthetic experience for the reader but also rob the text of its unique musicality, which is essential for conveying character and atmosphere.

Furthermore, the morphological, syntactic, and morphosyntactic elements of Eliot's prose contribute significantly to its structural aesthetic value. Eliot often employs complex sentence structures and layered clauses to build intricate meanings and relationships among characters. For example, the phrase "the hindrance which courtship occasioned to the progress of his great work" incorporates multiple layers of meaning through its syntactic arrangement (Eliot, 2009: 100). In the French translation, "l'obstacle que la cour posait à la progression de son grand ouvrage," while the meaning remains intact, the syntactic variation alters the flow and depth of interpretation. The original construction allows for a more profound engagement with the characters' emotional states, while the translation's simpler structure flattens this complexity. This transformation of syntactic elements illustrates a critical failure in AI translation, as it compromises the original text's structural integrity and the nuanced interplay of its components, ultimately leading to a diminished aesthetic appreciation of Eliot's work.

Conclusively, Google Translate's translation of Eliot's *Middlemarch* stresses the significant encounters AI confronts when dealing with literature. The emotional nuances, the particularities of character development, the distinctions of dialogue, and the lyrical qualities of narrative and descriptive passages all aid in creating a rich tapestry of multiple levels of meanings which can easily be lost in AI-generated translation. As exhibited through the selected examples, the AI translation could convey surface-level meaning but often fails to capture the emotional intensity and aesthetic depth of the original text. This emphasizes the ongoing need for skilled human translators who can appreciate and replicate the artistry inherent in literary works, providing a deeper understanding of the text's complexities.

Conclusion

The analyses presented in this paper highlight the necessity of a communicative framework to evaluate AI-generated translations within the field of translation studies, particularly when addressing the complexities inherent in literary texts such as Shakespeare's Sonnet 7 and Eliot's *Middlemarch*. This framework advocates an assessment approach that transcends mere linguistic accuracy, emphasizing the preservation of stylistic elements,

cultural nuances, and emotional depth that define literary artistry. By positioning the translator—be it human or artificial—as a critical mediator in the transfer of meaning across cultural and linguistic boundaries, we underscore the importance of a holistic evaluation that harmonizes semantic fidelity with aesthetic resonance. While AI translation tools present valuable assistance, the findings reveal significant shortcomings in their ability to replicate the interpretive depth and cultural sensitivity offered by original works. As AI technologies continue to evolve, it is imperative for scholars and practitioners to cultivate a critical awareness of these developments and advocate for evaluative frameworks that honor the nuanced interplay between technological innovation and the irreplaceable human touch in the art of literary translation.

The empirical analysis of AI translation tools, specifically Google Translate and DeepL, underscores significant challenges in the communicative transfer of literary texts such as Eliot's *Middlemarch* and Shakespeare's *Sonnet 7*. These tools, while capable of conveying basic semantic meaning, often falter in preserving the intricate interplay of linguistic and aesthetic elements that contribute to the richness of the original prose. The nuanced selection of words, morphological complexity, and syntactic arrangements serve as critical channels of communication, shaping the reader's emotional and intellectual engagement. For instance, the translations of phrases like "the spare form and the pale complexion which became a student" fail to replicate the original's rhythmic and lyrical qualities, thereby introducing noise that disrupts effective meaning transmission. The identified disjunctions underscore the significant challenges AI translation tools encounter in preserving literary texts' aesthetic and thematic richness. This analysis highlights the pivotal function of human translators, who possess the nuanced understanding necessary to navigate the intricate web of communicative elements that shape reader engagement. By fostering effective channels of communication, skilled translators facilitate a deeper interaction between the text and its audience, thereby enhancing the reader's experience and appreciation of the original work's complex emotional and intellectual landscape. Therefore, as AI translation technologies evolve, there remains a pressing need for a deeper understanding of the communicative dynamics at play, advocating for methodologies that prioritize the preservation of literary artistry in translation.

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