

Tracing Deforming Tendencies in the English Translation of Faiz' Selected Poem

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ABSTRACT

The current study falls under the domain of translation studies, which was previously studied as a branch of applied linguistics. Translation Studies, as a new discipline, in the world of linguistics, evolved back in the 1980s and since then it has been studied all over the world due to its significant subject matter and its interdisciplinary, cultural and multilingual nature (Baker, 2003). The present research aims to investigate such imperfections and problems found in the translation of Faiz' poetry in the book 'The True Subject' (1988) by Naomi Lazard, in which she has translated 45 famous Urdu poems of Faiz into the English language but this study offers analysis of one poem with two parts. The study endeavours to address these questions; a) what are the deforming tendencies that have been detected in the English translation of Faiz' poetry done by Naomi Lazard in her book 'The True Subject'? b) which deforming tendency is mostly employed by the Naomi Lazard in the English translation of Faiz' poetry?

KEYWORDS

Faiz's Poetry, Deformity, Urdu Poems, Naomi Lazard

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INTRODUCTION

Poetry is by far considered as the most intense literary art form. Each word is weighed, each phrase carries layers of social references, literal meaning, colloquial meaning, allegory, metaphor, imagery and so on. Translating poetry from a native language to an entirely different transcript is said to be the most creative and arduous job on the part of a translator (Guowen, 2003). Poets beautifully encapsulate their ideas and emotions into rhythmic metrical structures which unfolds the poetic patterns thus peeking into the thoughts of the poet and then translating them into target language considering the linguistic, cultural and aesthetic properties of source language has never been an easy task to do (Nida, 1998). Translation activities have been practiced all over the world for ages, people from different regions belonging to different religions used translation techniques to spread their ideologies. Holy books were translated from their source language to target text language. Thus, the whole world has benefited a lot from translation techniques and it has helped to make the world a more connected place. Translation study is an emerging field and its significance lies in producing the harmony amongst different cultures and strengthening ties among them through positive interactions. People have come across the ideas prevailing beyond the boundaries and have shared each other's experiences through reading the translated text of another language in their own (O'berion & Savahna, 2014). This may seem an easy job, apparently, to replace the original work by translation but in reality, it is not so. Many times it becomes difficult to find a close equivalent for a word that has to be translated. This translation is prone to various problems because it is highly complicated to transfer the same effect of the source language into the target language (Larsen, 1984).

According to Pym (2017), during the translation procedure, the hardest job is to preserve the beauty of the essence of the material since many critics are of the opinion that the beauty of poetry cannot be preserved in any language except that in which it was originally written. Translation studies are categorized into three subdomains e.g. interlingual, intralingual and intersemiotic. In translation studies, the source language is the language that is being translated and the language in which translation is carried out is called target language. In the context of the current study, the source language is Urdu and the target language is English. The current study falls into the category of intralingual as it revolves around two languages e.g. Urdu and English. Purpose of this very study is to analyze the poetical work of Faiz Ahmed Faiz which has been translated from Urdu to English by a foreigner translator, Naomi Lazard.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

There is a number of poetry's translations that have not been properly attempted and are unable to convey the complete sense of an original text. Many factors contribute to this inaccuracy of translated work, especially the metaphorical and connotative properties of poetry. The language of poetry is kept misty by some poets while some ennoble it with speech figures. Genuinely, it is not convenient to extract the original meaning from a poem and pass it on in the translation. Hence, ambiguities arise from time to time and they make a visible reflection of imperfections in translation (Berman, 1985). The present research aims to investigate such imperfections and problems found in the translation of Faiz' poetry in the book 'The True Subject' (1988) by Naomi Lazard, in which she has translated 45 famous Urdu poems of Faiz into the English language. Since Naomi Lazard worked with Faiz, this is the reason that her translations display the borrowed understanding from Faiz. Thus, it provides us with the greater opportunity to closely see and observe whether deformities occur in such close collaboration or not.

Aims and Objectives

The current study aims;

- i. To find out which deforming tendencies have been detected in the English translation of Faiz' poetry done by Naomi Lazard in her book 'The True Subject'.
- ii. To figure out which deforming tendency is mostly employed by Naomi Lazard in her book 'The True Subject'.
- iii. To examine the impacts caused by deforming tendencies on the quality of the English translation of Faiz' poetry in the book 'The True Subject' written by Naomi Lazard.

Research Questions

- 1) What are the deforming tendencies that have been detected in the English translation of Faiz' poetry done by Naomi Lazard in her book 'The True Subject'?
- 2) Which deforming tendency is mostly employed by the Naomi Lazard in the English translation of Faiz' poetry?
- 3) What are the impacts caused by deforming tendencies on the quality of English translation of Faiz' poetry in the book 'The True Subject' by Naomi Lazard?

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, the whole theoretical framework of the study has been discussed. The current chapter reviews the literature and previous researches conducted upon the possibility and impossibility of translating poetry. The chapter includes a detailed analysis about different methods and approaches towards translating poetry. The basic theory of 'Negative Analytic of Translation' by Berman (1985) and other related theories supporting Berman's views have also been discussed in the spectrum of this discussion. The present research attempts to find deforming tendencies in the poetry of Faiz translated by Naomi Lazard in her book 'The True Subject' hence the division of this chapter has been done hierarchically in accordance with the research objectives.

Concept of Translation and Poetry

The word poetry has been defined by many poets and scholars as well, thus the word carries various definitions. "Poetry can be regarded as a means to express one nation's feelings and attitudes, and the translation is regarded as a bridge through which different cultures can get closer together" (Niknasab & Pishbin, 2011, p.37). Origins of the word poetry are found in the word "point" which implies the meaning of "to make or to construct." According to Coleridge, poetry is the "product of the poet's imagination" which is considered to be the compilation of best words into the best order. Ralph Waldo Emerson (1994) defines poetry as "an endeavor to express the spirit of things, to pass the brute body and search the reason of its existence." (p.21) While Edgar Allen Poe says that poetry is the creation of beauty in a rhythmical way (Gaol, 2012). Poetry is the arrangement of words in a distinct way which is notably different from common language and discourse. Poetry has specialized effects that are not produced by the ordinary discourse (Nofal, 2011). While translating poetry, if certain aspects which are not even significant, go missing, it is due to the language differences in phonology, vocabulary, literary history, prosody, syntactic structure or poetics. Such elemental scarification is more common in the translation of poems having complicated structures encompassing intertextuality, ambiguity, idiom, imagery (Attwater, 2013).

For Bennet (2001), translation is just like the process of displacement of an object from one place to a different place, during the transferring process some of its aspects may get lost. She further explained the translation process by giving another example of a water bowl, when it is moved from a sink to table, few or more drops may get spilled and lost while carrying. Same goes for the translation of poetry when a poem is translated some of its aspects may leak out thus resulting in the loss of the richness of its source. The whole of the poem, sounds, meaning, structure and shapes of words, rhythms, aggregation, stanzas sounds' effects, a form of a poem, its aesthetic aspects are a must to be taken into account while translating a poetry text. From studies, it is evident that there is not a single theory agreed upon by all translators and scholars, different translators hold onto their different beliefs and ideas in the realm of poetry translation.

Hatims & Mason (1990) described translation both as a procedure and product. By procedure, they mean the art of converting an original text into the target text. Translation implies two different meanings by procedure and product. A procedure is a kind of process. These procedures and methods are defined by a known linguist Newmark (1981) according to him procedures serve as a helping hand for translators.

The translation process is carried out between two or more languages and each language has its own distinctive properties in grammar, phonology, vocabulary, expressions, and culture. Thus creating an absolute identity between the source and target text is a dream of translators which has remained a dream due to the different complex nature of languages. It is a common belief that translating a text is much more difficult than writing the original work as the translator is bound to follow the set pattern of the creator of the original text and is by no means allowed to deviate from his style.

Bell (1991, p.11) states, "I would, therefore, describe a good translation to be that in which the merit of the original work is so completely transfused into another language". Poetry is the direct outcome of the feelings of poets. Communicating the same feelings in the target language is an exasperating task. Translating poetry is a complete process which involves two languages and two cultures. Majority of translators believe that word translation method is an appropriate way to translate accurately. But for Bell (1991), the good translation is one in which all the merit and content of source language has been completely transfused into a target language.

Translatability and Untranslatability of Poetry

There has always been a broad discussion on the topic of translatability and untranslatability of poetry, what are the appropriate ways for the translation, which factors should be given consideration in the process of translation. Whereas there are a number of scholars who pose that poetry can be translated, others contend the idea of untranslatability of poetical works. Translatability means the possibility of converting a text from one language to another language keeping its linguistic and cultural properties. (Almasaeid, 2003)

Due to having expressive and aesthetic values, literary translation is considered to be much more difficult than any other type of text to be translated. The aesthetic values of a text involve the diction, figurative language, metaphors, etc while the expressive value or function highlights the importance of a writer's ideas or emotions or their processing. Responsibility lies upon the translator to transfer these values in the target language (Hariyanto, 2003).

Hovhannisyan (2001) states poetry translation as one of the most problematic and challenging tasks for every scholar or translator who endeavors to translate a text. He supports the argument presented by Robert Frost that poetry loses some of its essences when it is translated into another language. There aren't any one-to-one equivalents for every element. He says that even the translators who have profound and enriched knowledge of SL would not be able to produce the work in replacement to the original text.

Nida's Formal and Dynamic Theory of Equivalence in Translation

As a Bible translator pushing Christianity, Nida (1964) made a noteworthy commitment to the exploration of translation and translating religious writings. Nida's hypothesis of equality was a change in the realm of translation studies. Nida proposed two essential sorts of equality:

- a) Formal equivalence of ST and TT
- b) Dynamics of translating religious texts.

Formal equivalence centers consideration around the message itself, in both form and substance (p.159). The one that is worried about the message in the receptor dialect should coordinate as nearly as conceivable the diverse components in the source dialect (Nida, 1964). In this manner, it can be reasoned that formal comparability is strongly in light of the source dialect content structure which assumes a key part in deciding precision and rightness in translation. The use of scholarly footnotes to let students gain close access to the language and customs of the source culture is of marked characteristics of formal equivalence (Munday, 2001).

Lawrence Venuti's Domestication and Foreignization Strategies

The ideas of training and foreignization are firmly identified with the target oriented and source-situated methodologies, separately. As translation is a reworking of a unique content, it is normal to anticipate from it to reflect a specific ideology. In reality each content serves as an ideology. Subsequently, while translating content, a translator embraces either creator's ideology or reflects his/her own ideology to the translation. The decision of the translator decides the methodology that he/she will use amid the translation process: training or foreignization. Inside the extent of these methodologies, the American translation theorist Lawrence Venuti, the German theologian and philosopher Friedrich Schleiermacher, the French translation theorist Antoine Berman and the etymologist Eugene Nida's opinions will be included in order to clarify the subject matter better. Above all else, Venuti attests that "translation is regularly respected with doubt since it unavoidably trains foreign texts, engraving them with linguistic and cultural values that are comprehensible to particular domestic constituencies" (1999, p.67).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The current study is based on a content analysis technique which is a significant method of qualitative research. The qualitative content analysis is defined as “a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p.127). Content analysis is considered as a research tool in the domain of qualitative research, used to identify or determine the presence and absence of certain concepts or words within the given texts or set of texts. Any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings (Patton, 2002, p.453).

Many theorists and analysts have presented different strategies and models to check the faithfulness of translated work. Thus there is a complete range of strategies used by the researchers to analyze translation qualities. In the current study, “Text Deformation System” (1985) proposed by Antonio Berman is the starting point. Berman proposed twelve deforming tendencies that deprive the source text of its foreignness, “rationalization, clarification, expansion, ennoblement and popularization, qualitative impoverishment, quantitative impoverishment, the destruction of rhythms, the destruction of underlying networks of signification, the destruction of linguistic patterning’s, the destruction of vernacular networks and their eroticization, the destruction of expressions and idioms and the effacement of superimposition of languages.” (1985, p. 244). Through the help of this model, Berman performed a comparative analysis of English and French languages focusing on stylistics, identifying and noting the differences in translation strategies employed by the translator. In the present research, the researcher aims to carry out a comparative analysis of the translated text with the source text, keeping the twelve deforming tendencies under observation to find out which deformities have made their way in the translation according to Berman’s model (1985).

Faiz’ poetry has been translated by a number of local and foreign translators. Naomi Lazard’s book ‘The True Subject’ was selected because, among all the translators of Faiz, she had the privilege to know Faiz in a personal capacity. Moreover, she was guided by Faiz when she expressed her desire to translate his work from Urdu to English (Jabbar, 1991). Faiz helped her in getting familiar with contextual concepts of his poetry and explicitly discussed the ideas of his poetry style. The selected book for the research is comprised of 45 poems that depict different life periods of Faiz’ life and carry various themes. The sample for the current research consists of 11 love poems in the book, ‘The True Subject’ (1985) written by Naomi Lazard in which she has translated Faiz Ahmed Faiz’ 45 famous poems.

List of English and Urdu name of the selected poem is given below in table no. 1.

Table no. 1 List of Poems

Sr.no	Sr.no Translated text poems	Source text poems
1.	Any lover to any beloved I	Koi ashq kisi Mehbooba sy I
2.	Any lover to any beloved II	Koi ashq kisi mehbooba sy II

Note. Table 1 shows the selected Poems’ names in ST and TT.

DATA ANALYSIS

This section provides the analysis and the presentation of the research findings. The current chapter attempts to trace existing deformities in the English translation of Faiz’ poetry caused by Naomi Lazard in her book ‘The True Subject’. The model used for data analysis is “Text Deformation System” proposed by Antonnie Berman (1985) in which he has described 12 deforming tendencies which deprive the translated text of their foreignness. In this chapter, the researcher explains twelve deforming tendencies of Berman’s model (1985) and through the lens of each deforming tendency, scrutinizes all eleven poems selected as research sample for the current research in order to trace all the existing deformities in the translation.

Any Lover to any Beloved I

In this poem, addition of punctuation marks is evident in the translation as the translator has made use of comma at various places e.g the use of comma in 1st, 2nd, 6th, 12th, 17th, 18th, 20th, 21st lines can be seen in the extract given below. Moreover the use of question mark in 3rd line and Dash symbol in 7th, 8 th line and 19th line is also an example of rationalization. The whole process of adding punctuation marks make the translated text more rationalized.

Table. 2. Rationalized Extract of Selected Poem

ST Line	TT Line	Source text	Translated text
1	1	gulshan-e-yād meñ gar aaj dam-e-bād-e-sabā	Today,if the breath of breeze
2	2	phir se chāhe ki gul-afshāñ ho to ho jaane do	Wants to scatter petals in the garden of memory,why shouldn't it?
6	6	phir se chāhe ki farozāñ ho to ho jaane do	wants to burst into flame again, let it happen.
7	7	jaise begāne se ab milte ho vaise hī sahī	Though you act like a stranger now —
8	8	aao do char ghaDī mere muqābil baiTho	Come— be close to me for a few minutes.
17	17	gard-e-ayyām kī tahrīr ko dhone ke liye	left by the dust of time on your face,
18	18	tum jo chāho to suno aur jo na chāho na suno	you can listen or not, just as you like.
19	19	aur jo harf kareñ mujh se gurezāñ	And what your eyes fail to hide from me
20	20	tum jo chāho to kaho aur jo na chāho na kaho	If you care to, of course you may say it,or not, as the case may be.

Table no 2 shows that not only the addition of punctuation marks has been made by the translator but syntactic structure has also been altered in the first three lines of last stanza. Deformity occurs as orders of lines in source text have been changed by the translator in translated text. At another instance, the line number 9 has been omitted by the translator in the translated text, which is another example of rationalization. In the 8 line of the source text of this poem, the words ‘ehsās-e-ziyāñ’ have been written by the poet, means the feeling of losing someone. These are the powerful words which describe the loss of someone having a realization of the guilt associated with that loss, but the translator has simply used the single word ‘lost’ to describe this expression. As a result, the quality of the original text has been deteriorated by the translator. In domain of this deformity the translator has done good work in this poem. He tried to convey the significant ideas accurately. The main theme of the poem has been conveyed truly. Though, there are some deficiencies while conveying the minor ideas, but overall the translation stands up to the mark.

Any Lover to any beloved II

In this poem, rationalization occurs in first line of second stanza and first line of fourth last stanza in translated text where the use to colon can be seen. Use of comma in third line of third stanza and first and second line of last stanza is also a symbol of rationalization.

Table no. 3 Rationalized Extract of Selected Poem

ST Line	TT line	Source text	Translated Text
6	5	saañs thāme haiñ nigāheñ ki na jaane kis dam	My eyes can't bear it:
13	15	dūsrī baat bhī jhūTī hai ki dil jāntā hai	The other possibility is equally false:
10	11	phuuT niklegī vahāñ aur koī rāhguzar	elsewhere, another road like this one
16	18,19	tum se chaltī rahe ye raah, yūñhī achchhā hai	So, let the same road go on as it does, with you on it,

Table no. 3 shows deformities of rationalization which have been caused in TT. In the same pattern, the order of first two lines have been changed where the translator uses the second half of the second verse and joins it with the first half of the first verse. In the first line of this poem of the source text shows a deformity, there is a word ‘rāhguzar’ which has been translated as a road. The utilization of the word road does not do justice to the meaning of the original word used. This expression lacks richness. ‘Path’ could be much better word as compared to that of road. Though, the translator has skipped many expressions and idioms of the source text, but still he was able to manage it well and the underlying meanings of the poem have been conveyed in a very good manner. It can be seen that at some places expansion has taken place in the poem and at some other places the translator has omitted some words of the source text, but still he was able to maintain the idea of the poet and the message conveyed by the poet has been preserved in a very good manner. In line number 5 the utilization of ‘colon’ results in the use of word ‘But’ at the start of the third stanza. The actual word used in the original text ‘garcha’ means although. The translator here has destroyed the structure of whole poem and as a result destruction of linguistic patterning has occurred here. The difference in the length of the source text and the translated text can be seen easily, the poem consisting of seventeen lines has been translated into twenty one lines. The pattern that is the structure of the original text has been deteriorated at many instances, for example, last stanza of the original text has been translated as two stanzas in the translated text. In the same way extra phase has been added by the translator in the sixth line which goes on as ; ‘they don’t know if you might return’ has been added by the translator out of nowhere ,and has resulted in deteriorating the real meanings of the poetry.

The Destruction of Linguistic Patterning

The deliberate idea of the content can't be confined to signifiers or different methods of expression, and so forth, it likewise incorporates sentence writes and developments as per Berman (2012, p. 249). Each creator has his very own arrangement and makes his work and each expansion to or rejection from the original content endangers its framework. Thus such deforming tendencies as rationalization, clarification or expansion crush the methodical idea of the source content. Berman states that translated writings are more homogeneous than the original ones so they are ambiguous and conflicting. He looks like he made a translation of attempts to an interwoven on the grounds that the translator utilizes various types of composing. Subsequently, deciphered content "isn't a 'genuine' content; it does not have the recognizing highlights of a content, beginning with its deliberate nature" (2012, p. 249). The destructive linguistic patterning means that translation deformities such as “rationalization, clarification, and expansion” used by translators ruin the structures and patterning of the source text, even though the TT is said to be linguistically homogenous, it is incoherent in meaning because the systematicity of the original is destroyed. One dialect can have unique vocabulary which is not present in any other dialect. Comparative analysis of source and target text would be drawn to closely observe this deformity in the selected poems.

DEFORMITIES IN THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF FAIZ’ POEM

Any Lover to any Beloved I

This deformity can be seen at various instances, basically when the translator tries to use the punctuation marks like ‘dash’ etc in the 7th line and the third last line of the translated text. While doing so, the systematic pattern of the original text has been destroyed by the translator. It can be seen that at various occasions like end of the poem, starting three lines and first three lines of the last stanza, the translator has explained the things which consisted of two lines in the source text, in three lines. This thing has destroyed the systematic flow of the original text.

Any lover to any beloved II

In line number 5 the utilization of ‘colon’ results in the use of word ‘But’ at the start of the third stanza. The actual word used in the original text ‘garcha’ means although. The translator here has destroyed the structure of whole poem and as a result destruction of linguistic patterning has occurred here. The difference in the length of the source text and the translated text can be seen easily, the poem consisting of seventeen lines has been translated into twentyone lines. The pattern that is the structure of the original text has been deteriorated at many instances, for example, last stanza of the original text has been translated as two stanzas in the translated text. In the same way extra phase has been added by the translator in the sixth line which goes on as; ‘they don’t know if you might return’ has been added by the translator out of nowhere and has resulted in deteriorating the real meanings of the poetry.

Key Findings and Discussion

There are total nine deforming tendencies which are identified in the translated text i.e rationalization, clarification, expansion, qualitative impoverishment, quantitative impoverishment, destruction of rhythm and destruction of network of signifiers, destruction of linguistics patterning and ennoblement and rhetoricization. Rationalization occurred most frequently throughout all the poems while others were present only in few instances. There are three tendencies i.e destruction of expression, destruction of vernaculars and the effacement superimposition of language that are not traced in the translated text of the poems. Form of the poems have been greatly compromised in the translated text as they deviate from the syntactical structure of the original text. Content is pretty much delivered in all translated poems except in few places where translator omits some phrases and words by making translation more readable for his target text readers.

Brief overview of the deforming tendencies found and their impact on translation is as follows: Rationalization wherever occurred, damaged Faiz' easy going flow with multiple implications both positive (despite the deforming action) and negative. Presence of punctuation marks which were not present in the original poems, made the movement across the lines jarring and turbulent. The silky smoothness of the actual composition was gone in a deliberate attempt by Lazard to stay close to the meaning of the poem. That being said, the added emphasis introduced by commas to list the three elements had another, unintended, effect: the composition gained a fantastical and rather majestic vibe. A beautiful example of the said is the following line.

Bām-o-dar khāmushī ke bojh se chuur

The weight of silence crushes doors, walls, windows;

Clarification as discussed earlier is a rather detrimental tendency. It not only takes away the wit and aphoristic style of the source language but also adds to the meaning of the translated. To do so, the translator elaborates in an attempt to make the translated version clearer. Purpose is to compensate for the the perceived lack of cultural understanding on the part of readers. A necessary evil that accompanies this tendency is the tendency of translation to become expanded. Many a times the expansion is the result of clarification and hence hardly ever occurs on its own.

The art of doing poetry lies in enclosing the sea within a cube and as soon as there happens some clarification it takes that quality away. A great illustration of the effect can be seen in the following lines where the English version of the originally Urdu work takes the liberty of clarifying what is meant in the Urdu verse. Some notable, although previously mentioned examples, are as follow:

saaz sab baj ke kho ga.e haiñ

What music there was played once, then was lost;

pāyaleñ baj ke so ga.ī haiñ

the ankle bells on feet that used to dance

mujhe kā.enāt kī sarvarī

An atom of dust without a name

mujhe daulat-e-do-jahāñ mile

this describes my being.

The line above mentioned is also a great example of destruction of network of signification as the translated text even though translates the idea it failed to convey the despair that accompanies losing the youth and dreams. While evident in source text, the silent sigh is nowhere to be found in target language. From the empirical data that has been tabulated it is apparent that rationalization occurs a lot more than the rest of the tendencies.

CONCLUSION

The present research investigated imperfections and problems identified in Naomi Lazard's book 'The True Subject', in which she has translated Faiz' reknown 45 poems from Urdu to English language. The current study is based on 'Text Deformation System' (1985), a negative analytic model (1985) proposed by Antonnie Berman. Berman proposed twelve deforming tendencies that deprive translation of its foreignness i.e 'rationalization, clarification, expansion, ennoblement and popularization, qualitative impoverishment, quantitative impoverishment, the destruction of rhythms, the destruction of underlying networks of signification, the destruction of linguistic patterning, the destruction of vernacular networks and their eroticization, the destruction of expressions and idioms and the effacement of superimposition of languages.' Faiz' original poems and their translations by Naomi Lazard's were compared and analyzed from the perspective of each deforming tendency to identify all the problems and deviations in the translated text.

In the research, the purpose of the researcher was to inspect whether any of the Berman's Deforming Tendencies had made their way into the work of Lazard even after her close collaboration with the poet. The purpose was to see which tendencies made their way into the translation and how they impacted the translated work. In this research, researcher found out the nine deforming tendencies including "rationalization, clarification, expansion, ennoblement and popularization, qualitative and quantitative impoverishment and destruction of networks of signification, linguistic patterns and rhythms" which appeared in the translation of Ms. Lazard while showing with empirical data as to which tendencies occurred more than others.

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