

Abstract

Translation of a piece of literature, particularly of poetry, from the original language to another is a delicate matter. Since all languages are unique, there is no such thing as a so-called direct, or literal, translation. Therefore, it is the task of the translator to take into account the many complexities of language (both the language of the original text and the language into which they are translating the text) and use this working knowledge to craft a translation that is as true to the original text as they can manage. However, this "trueness" is a multifaceted concept that is extremely subjective and hard to pinpoint. Therefore, the translator must take several factors into consideration as they translate the literary work. Two of these factors, as outlined in Burton Raffel's *The Art of Poetry Translation* are that:

- *No two languages having the same syntactic structures, it is impossible to re-create the syntax of a work composed in one language in another language.*
- *No two languages, having the same vocabulary, it is an impossible to recreate the vocabulary of work composed in one language in another language.*

To demonstrate the impossibility of crafting a perfect translation, I have taken three poems that I have written, translated them to Japanese, and analyzed them based on the linguistic differences of English and Japanese. Through this process, I discovered examples that illustrate the difficulties of translating poetry and the specific linguistic differences that cause it.

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