

Paronomasia (الجناس)

Paronomastic or paronymous constructions which are common in Arabic but rare in English, can be used to achieve rhetorical/stylistic effects and to bring about eloquence and vividness of expression. Below are the most frequent types of paronomasia employed to demonstrate the dynamic translation into Arabic.

1. Verb-object Paronomasia

A very common type of paronomastic constructions in classical Arabic is the cognate accusative or absolute/unrestricted object (مفعول مطلق) which is a cognate nominal functioning as an adverbial for strengthening, emphasizing or magnifying the verbal content, i.e., the idea expressed by the verb. It is usually indefinite and marked by *tanwin* (تنوين) which is a phono-morphological inflection.

A cognate object (or cognate accusative) is an object that is etymologically related to the verb. More specifically, noun form of the verb. For example, in the sentence: (He *slept* a troubled *sleep*), *sleep* is the cognate object of the verb *slept*.

They loved money very much.

يحبون المال كثيراً جداً. = يحبون المال حباً جماً.

It was well designed.

صممت بصورة جيدة. = صممت تصميماً جيداً.

He was given a good beating.

ضُربَ بشكل مبرح. = ضُربَ ضرباً مبرحاً.

She slept calmly/peacefully.

نامت الطفلة بهدوء. = نامت الطفلة نوماً هادئاً.

He ran quickly.

ركضَ بسرعة. = جرى جرياً سريعاً.

He worked hard

عمل بجهد. عمل عملاً شاقاً

In Some paronomastic sentences with cognate accusative, the paronomastic noun is uninflected by the *tanwin* (تنوين) and it can be made definite by the article *al* (أل), or by a following genitive:

صاح كالمعتاد. = صاح صيحته المألوفة.

He shouted as usual.

مضى الوقت. = سار الزمن سيرته.

Time passed.

أخاف على ولدي كثيراً. = أخاف على ولدي الخوف كله.

I greatly fear for my son.

2. Verb- subject Paronomasia

In this paronomastic construction the subject or agent is common and derived from the verb, sometimes indefinite, equivalent to 'one', 'someone', 'somebody', 'something', 'some' or 'it', as an impersonal or introductory pronoun:

One of them said...

قال أحدهم. = قال قائلهم

One could hear...

قد يسمع المرأ. = قد يسمع السامع.

If someone should ask

إذا سأل شخص ما. = لو سأل سائل.

It was rumoured about him

A thunderbolt smote him

أشيع عنه. = شاعت له شائعة.

As it was morning.

لما كان الصبح. = لما أصبح الصبح.

3. Paronomastic Genitive Construction:

This construction consists of two cognate nouns, one following the other; the first is normally indefinite, that is, unprefixes by the definite article while the second is definite in the genitive case:

It is a great blessing

نعمة عظيمة. = نعمة النعم.

The greatest city

اعظم المدن. = مدينة المدن

the ambition/greed

طموح / طمع البعض . = طموح الطامحين / طمع الطامعين.

4. Paronomasia Containing Medial Substantive.

This construction consists of a substantive which can be a noun (e.g., *kulla*: كل (all) or an adjective (mostly in the comparative form), such as *azama* أعظم (greater) in the accusative case, plus a noun in the genitive case.

The noun or adjective is derived from the same root as the preceding verb or noun. The Arabic substantive plus the paronomastic noun is propounded as a dynamic translation equivalent for the English adverbials, particularly intensifiers:

I am very sorry

اسف جداً = اسف غاية الأسف

I am very keen

حريص جدا = حريص كل الحرص

He was entirely satisfied

كان راضيا تماما = كان راضيا كل الرضا

He is completely happy

انه سعيد تماما = سعيد كل السعادة

He rebuked her severely

لامها بقسوة = لامها اشد اللوم

The two vary completely

انهما يختلفان تماما . = انهما يختلفان تمام الاختلاف.

She knows very well

تعرف جيدا . = تعرف حق المعرفة.

5. Adjective-Noun Paronomasia:

In this paronomastic construction the noun and the following adjective are cognate: the adjective emphasizes the qualities expressed by the noun:

He exerted a great effort.

بذل جهدا عظيما = بذل جهدا جهيدا

It is a very dark shade

انه ظل داكن تماما = انه ظل ظليل

The strangest thing

أغرب/ أعجب الأشياء = العجب العجاب

Study was his greatest concern

كانت الدراسة أعظم اهتماماته = كانت الدراسة شغله الشاغل

6. Paronomastic Prepositional Phrase:

It usually consists of two cognate nouns split by the preposition *min* (من) (*of, from*); the first noun is normally singular, whereas the second is usually plural:

في ذات يوم = في يوم من الأيام

One day

في ليلة صيف = في ليلة من ليالي الصيف

on a summer night

في احد أطوار/ مراحل حياته = في طور من أطوار حياته

during one phase of his life

an English poet of the eighteenth century

شاعر إنجليزي من القرن الثامن عشر = شاعر إنجليزي من شعراء القرن الثامن عشر

in an old building on Al-Rashid Street

في بناية قديمة من بنايات شارع الرشيد = في بناية من بنايات شارع الرشيد القديمة

7. Paronomastic Nominal phrase:

The paronomasia between the two nouns, e.g., subject and object, expresses the reciprocal idea of '*each other*', or '*one another*'.

Sometimes close friends do not help each other.

لا يساعد أحياناً حميم حميماً.

Media nowadays is a weapon with which one foe stabs another.

الإعلام هذه الأيام سلاح يطعن به المرء عدوه. = الإعلام هذه الأيام سلاح يطعن به العدو عدوه.

8. Paronomastic verbal constructions: In these paronomastic sentences two verbs of the same root are used:

He received me very warmly.

استقبلني بحفاوة بالغة. = استقبلني بأحسن ما يستقبل به المرء = استقبلني استقبالا حاراً

It is up to you to believe it or not.

الأمر متروك لك أن تصدق أو لا = الأمر متروك لك أن تصدق أو لا تصدق

9. Subject-Predicate Paronomasia:

In Arabic nominal sentences, subject and predicate are the same in order to express the undoubted identity of the subject in and of itself or in its characteristics or qualities:

You are always the same; you never change

أنت دائماً نفس الشيء: إنك لا تتغير إطلاقاً. = أنت دائماً (كما) أنت لا تتغير.

It is my fault.

انه ذنبي أنا. = الذنب ذنبي.

Those letters were yours.

كانت تلك الرسائل لك. = كانت تلك الرسائل رسائلك.

The parliament is like any other institution...

البرلمان مثل أية مؤسسة أخرى. = البرلمان شأنه شأن المؤسسات الأخرى ...

Idioms, Collocations and proverbs:

Most of literary texts are replete (full or crowded) with collocations and idiomatic expressions. An *idiom* is a combination of two or more words whose meaning cannot be derived from the meanings of the individual words, i.e., the combination functions as a unit of meaning. A *collocation*, is a structured combination of particular lexical items referred to by Crystal and Davy (1976:56) as "regular patterns of cooccurrence". A collocation is a grouping of words which "naturally" go together through common usage and whose meaning can usually be understood from the individual words. An idiom, on the other hand, is a fixed group of words with a special meaning different from the meaning of individual words.

Sometimes the dynamic translation of *idioms* demonstrates certain types of paronomasia in Arabic:

When the chips are down

حين تتأزم الأمور = حين يجد الجد

For ever and ever

الى الأبد = الى ابد الأبد/ الى أبد الأبدین

To follow suit

يقلد = يحذو حذو

To be on the move from pole to pole

قطب الى قطب = من أقصاه الى أقصاه = من مشارق الأرض الى مغربها

To take into account

يضع في الاعتبار = يحسب حساب

To make a point

يسهم في الحوار = يدلوه بدلوه

Not to breath a syllable /one's lips are sealed

يلتزم الصمت/ يسكت = لا ينبس ببنت شفة

To turn to one's heels

يستدير = ينقلب على عقبه

The tip of the iceberg

قمة جبل الثلج = ما خفي كان أعظم

As old as the hills /old and worn out

قديم كالتلال/ قديم وبالي = أكل الدهر عليه وشرب

It rains cats and dogs

تمطر بغزارة = تمطر كأفواه القرب

Without a bean

مُعدَم = لا يملك شروى نقير

Collocations

Hit and run

أضرب وأهرب = كزّ وفرّ

Clean hands

أيدي نظيفة = أيدي أمينة

They exchanged swears

تبادلا الشتائم = تكايلا الشتائم

Give an order

يعطي أمراً = يصدر أمراً

Give an example

يعطي مثلاً = يضرب مثلاً

Give information

يعطي معلومات = يدلي بمعلومات

Give advice

يعطي النصيحة = يسدي النصيح

Make money

يجمع مالاً

Make a fortune

يكسب ثروة

Make a promise

يقطع وعداً

Make room

يفسح المجال

Proverbs

A proverb is a short pithy (concise: brief and meaningful) saying in common use; a concise sentence which is held to express some truth ascertained by experience or observation and familiar to all.

With the exception of proverbs that have debased to cliches, slang or vulgar sayings, many convey witticisms and display figurative, symbolic and succinct style. They represent a very significant aspect of the literary heritage of the nation to which they pertain. The literary artistry of many classical proverbs can be perceived in their abundant stylistic ornaments and figures of speech such as similes, metaphors, allegories, antitheses, parallelisms, paronomasia, rhythm and even rhyme which can only be salvaged by dynamic translation that seeks a functional, proverbial equivalence to the original in highly literary prose or verse as exemplified below:

A bean in liberty is better than a feast in prison. OR:

Better starve free than be a fat slave.

Static: حبة فول تأكلها وأنت حر خير من وليمة وأنت عبد.

Dynamic: وبيت تخفق الأرواح فيه أحب الي من قصر منيف

A man is known by the company he keeps.

Static: يعرف المرأ بقريته

Dynamic: عن المرأ لا تسال وأسال عن قريته فكل قرين بالمقارن يقتدي

Charity begins at home.

Static: الصدقة/ الإحسان يبدأ في البيت

الأقربون أولى بالمعروف: Dynamic

Lies have short legs.

Static: الكذب ارجله قصيرة

Dynamic: حبل الكذب قصير

Practice what you preach.

Static: طبق ما تعظ به

Dynamic: لا تنهى عن خلقٍ و تأتي بمثله عار عليك إن فعلت عظيم

I taught him to swim, he tried to drown me.

Static: علمته السباحة فحاول إغراقه

Dynamic: أعلمه الرماية كل يوم
وكم علمته نظم القوافي
فلما قال قافية هجاني
قلما اشتد ساعده رماني

It is not easy to change a vicious nature. OR:

Nature overcomes nurture.

Static: ليس من السهل تغيير الطبع السيء.

Dynamic: الطبع يغلب التطبع / من شب على شيء شاب عليه.

Many words hurt more than swords. OR:

words cut more than swords.

Static: كم من كلام ابلغ جرحاً من الحسام

جراحات اللسان لها التئام
وما يلتأم ما جرح اللسان

Conclusion

A literary text usually undergoes one of two acts of translation: literary or nonliterary, i.e., dynamic or static translation. The process of translation brings forth a literary product only when the original text does not only enter the target linguistic system but also the target literary system. In other words, the static translation may be very faithful and linguistically acceptable but it falls short of literary, creative version of the original. Such a translation is no more than an interlingual transmutation of a text which happens to be a literary text. Although faithful, it is often awkward, insipid and at best mediocre. Conversely, dynamic translation endeavours to produce an aesthetically pleasing effect on the target readers equivalent to that produced by the original text on its receptors, and therefore, to occupy a position in the target literature as an original work of literary art. As a corollary, dynamic translation seeks a delicate equilibrium of fidelity of transference of content and beauty of form by utilizing fully and deeply the target linguistic and

literary/ rhetorical resources. The exploitation of the dynamic morphological derivation, paronomasia, classical proverbs, collocations and idiomatic expressions are good cases in point in English-into-Arabic effective, dynamic translation.

Exercise

ST: Out of the frying pan into the fire.

Static:

Dynamic:

ST: Physician heal yourself.

Static:

Dynamic

ST: Strike while the iron is hot.

Static:

Dynamic:

ST: Like father, like son.

Static:

Dynamic:

ST: To the wise a word may suffice.

Static:

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Dynamic:

ST: Try your friend before you trust him.

Static:

Dynamic:

ST: Two things ought to be the object of fear: the envy of friends and the hatred of enemies.

Static:

Dynamic:

ST: Weak things united become strong. or: Union gives strength.

Static:

Dynamic:

ST: We shall never have friends if we expect to find them without faults.

Static:

Dynamic:



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