Unraveling the Mistakes: An Analysis of Student Errors in Translating Literary Texts

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Abstract—The aim of this paper is to analyse the translation performance of German students at the University of Prishtina when translating literary texts from German into Albanian. The paper focuses on the question of whether errors occur during the translation process in the areas of grammar, orthography, semantics, and sentence structure, including possible interference errors between the two languages. These errors may arise due to uncertainties, carelessness, or the influence of other languages. The interference of German manifests itself primarily in the lexical level and sentence structure. If the languages have differences in sentence structure, this interference leads to grammatically incorrect sentences. An interference of Albanian is also noticeable, primarily on a pragmatic level, which is mainly determined by the cultural context. Errors are a characteristic feature of foreign language learners. They are a phenomenon that affects not only foreign language learners but also native speakers. This paper analyses and classifies the errors that German students at the University of Prishtina make when translating by applying the theoretical, analytical, and contrastive methods in the translation of literary texts.

Index Terms—translation of literary texts, error analysis, interference, sentence structure

I. INTRODUCTION

When learning a foreign language, learners come into contact with basic grammatical features and characteristics of the foreign language that were previously unknown to them. When teaching German as a foreign language, an attempt is often made to establish equivalence between the mother tongue and the foreign language, especially in grammar lectures. In translation, it is also important to identify and convey equivalent words, phrases, and structures between the two languages. This applies in particular to the translation of literary texts. In this context, Liedke (2018) deals with language skills. Her book aims to address the purposes of translation in various interpreting and translation situations as well as possible strategies that can be used.

The empirical part of this paper contains an error analysis based on a literary text translated from German into Albanian. The target group for the analysis were third-year students of German studies. Before starting their German studies at the University of Prishtina, the students learned German either at school, by attending language courses, by watching television, or (a few of them) in German-speaking countries. The Albanian language is their mother tongue and family language, while German is perceived as the written language and dominant language of communication at the university. In the discussion about the dominant language, reference is made to the definition by Steinbach et al. (2007, p. 120), which defines a dominant language as a lexically and grammatically developed language, and the language of preference is the language that is preferably used. It is emphasized that the dominant language can change dynamically.

The focus of this paper is to analyse the orthographic, morphological, and syntactic errors that occur in the translation of literary texts. The translated texts are analysed in detail in order to identify the errors and to ascertain which types of errors are most common among students.

This paper examines whether the students of German studies at the University of Prishtina make interference errors when translating from German into Albanian. The term interference is used when an assumed structural transfer leads to errors because the first and second languages differ in said structure (Rothweiler, 2007, p. 112).

II. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODS

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The introductory theoretical part of the paper offers a detailed explanation of the term “error”, focusing on the analysis of errors in the context of translation. The types of errors that occur during the process of the transfer from one language to the other are also discussed. This is followed by a description of error analysis and interference.

The second part of the paper, which consists of the empirical part, contains a detailed error analysis based on translated literary texts that were translated by third-year students. These students of German Language and Literature at the University of Pristina “Hasan Prishtina” should have reached the B2 level of the German language. The age range of the participants is between 20 and 22 years.

The research questions of this paper are:
- What types of errors occur most frequently in the translation of literary texts from German into Albanian by students of German studies?
- Are these errors due to a lack of linguistic competence, ambiguity, carelessness, or interference?
- Or are they perhaps due to a lack of general knowledge and/or context?

In order to answer these questions, an analysis of the texts translated from German into Albanian is made to identify errors that occur and to classify them according to orthographic, morphological, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic errors. Since the aim of this paper is to identify the errors that students make when translating literary texts, a text segment from the novel Ridharta by Hermann Hesse was chosen for the translation. Siddharta is part of the required reading list during the studies and third-year students are expected to have read it. The selection of this text therefore takes into account the importance of contextual understanding for literary translation. A short part of the said text, which provided most of the material for the analysis is presented in this paper and consequently the errors made in this part of the text are analysed:

Siddhartha ging zum Kaufmann Kamaswami, in ein reiches Haus ward er gewiesen, Diener führten ihn zwischen kostbaren Teppichen in ein Gemach, wo er den Hausherrn erwartete.
Kamaswami trat ein, ein rascher, geschmeidiger Mann mit stark ergrauendem Haar, mit sehr klugen, vorsichtigen Augen, mit einem begehrlichen Mund. Freundlich begrüßten sich Herr und Gast.
»Man hat mir gesagt«, begann der Kaufmann, »daß du ein Brahmane bist, ein Gelehrter, daß du aber Dienste bei einem Kaufmann suchst. Bist du denn in Not geraten, Brahmane, daß du Dienste suchst?«
»Wenn du von den Samanas kommst, wie solltest du da nicht in Not sein? Sind nicht die Samanas völlig besitzlos?«
»Besitzlos bin ich«, sagte Siddharta, »wenn es das ist, was du meinst. Gewiß bin ich besitzlos. Doch bin ich freiwillig, bin also nicht in Not.«
»Wovon aber willst du leben, wenn du besitzlos bist?« (Hesse, 1974, p. 68)

The empirical analysis in this paper includes error identification, error classification and error causation. In order to achieve an accurate result, each error in the text is analysed and noted individually. The different types of errors have been found, and the causes are then presented using a qualitative analysis.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Translation studies is a wide-ranging field of study that in itself attracts an enormous influx of researchers from various disciplines, such as literature and literary studies, (example: The Poet's Other Voice: Conversations on Literary Translation by Honig, 1985; Translation Studies at the Interface of Disciplines by Duarte et al., 2006) history and politics (example: Translating Political Discourse: A Critical Review of Studies in Western and Chinese Contexts by Sun & Subramaniam, 2023), cultural studies (example: Culture-loaded Words and Translation Equivalence by Zhou & Hua, 2021), translation technology (example: Handbook of Natural Language Processing and Machine Translation by Olive et al., 2011; or Computer-Assisted Interpreting Tools: Status Quo and Future Trends by Gao et al., 2022), etc. Researchers in translation studies have also pondered the question if one can teach literary translation and proposed various methods aiming to facilitate the process of literary translation in higher education as for example the work of Bush and Malmkjaer (1998). This paper focuses on a more linguistic approach, but ultimately also including the literary perspective (discipline).

As already mentioned, the largest group of students learned German either at school, by attending a language course, or by watching television. Only a few third-year students had a connection to German-speaking countries, either by birth or school attendance. Albanian is the official language of Kosovo and the family language of the students. German on the other hand is not only a language of study, but also a professional language for most of the students, as they work during their studies, either as German teachers in private language schools or in a call centre. The German language therefore functions as the dominant language and as a “commodity on the market”1. Most students have learned German as young adults. When acquiring a second language at a later stage, it can be observed that in most cases the language can no longer be learned at a native speaker level (Liedke & Riehl, 2018, p. 12). Especially in the area of

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1 The language industry, which includes interpreting, translation, speech recognition, proofreading and the localisation of global offerings, is concerned with a broader range of languages (Busch, 2013, p. 140).
morphosyntactic structures, it can be noted that those structures that are the least salient (i.e. conspicuous) are learned less as the age increases (in German, this applies in particular to case endings) (Riehl, 2016; in Liedke & Riehl, 2018, p. 12).

The GÜM² method is considered outdated for foreign language learning (Liedke, 2018, p. 68) and is not used by our students in the context of language learning or translation. The German department offers a range of translation courses. From the second year onwards, students can attend various introductory courses and, in later semesters, a literary translation course in which German studies students prepare for the job market as literary translators.

Many linguists have discussed and analysed the term error. According to Jung (2007, p. 50), error analysis is a description, explanation, and evaluation of linguistic errors. It makes it easier to prevent errors or to eliminate them through suitable learning and practice material. Spiller (2003, p. 35) argues that error analysis plays an important role in applied linguistics by diagnosing errors through the analysis of the main points of errors statistically and linguistically and determining the causes of errors psycholinguistically. Kleppin (1998, p. 19f) has summarised the most important definitions of linguists and language learning researchers who have dealt with the concept of error:

A. An error is a deviation from the linguistic system.
B. An error is a deviation from the applicable linguistic norm.
C. An error is a violation of how one speaks and acts within a language community.
D. An error is what a communication partner does not understand.
E. An error is what a native speaker does not understand.
F. An error is something that violates the rules in textbooks and grammar books.
G. An error is what a teacher calls an error.
H. An error is what a native speaker would not say or do in a particular situation.
I. An error is what goes against the norm in the teacher’s mind.
J. Errors are relative. What is considered an error for one group of learners in a particular phase of a lesson is tolerated by another group in a different phase.

These definitions overlap to a certain extent. The definitions contain a different view of the phenomenon of error. The question here is: Why does one want to identify something as an error? What is the purpose of it?

Following Huneke and Steinig (2013, p. 238), an error can provide important information about which linguistic elements have already been stored in the learner’s linguistic system and which elements have not yet been processed. Errors can also indicate that the acquisition of a linguistic element is in the process of being initiated by the learner making and testing hypotheses about it.

In defining the term error, almost all aspects of language are included. According to Kleppin (1998, p. 42f), errors can be categorised as follows:
- Phonetic/phonological errors (pronunciation or orthographical errors)
- Morphosyntactic errors (morphology and syntax, e.g. verb conjugation errors, sentence structure errors, etc.)
- Lexico-semantic errors (wrong word in a certain context and/or change of meaning).
- Pragmatic errors (a break in style, an utterance that is not appropriate in the situation in question, a culturally inappropriate behaviour).
- Content errors (an incorrectly formulated statement, e.g. Berlin is in southern Germany).

In order to better understand this term and to find out the cause of the errors, it is useful to carry out an error analysis. Chlosta et al. (2008, p. 273) divides the error analysis into four important steps, which are also followed in this paper: Error Identification, Error Levels and Error Classification, Error Causation, Error Evaluation. Linguists are fairly unanimous about the structure of error analysis.

Error assessment is very important in foreign language teaching. “Grammatical errors generally have less of an impact on comprehension than lexical errors. As a general rule, even if there is a grammatical error, it is usually possible to understand what the learners intended to say. When there are lexical errors the meaning is often not clear. Pragmatic or content-related errors can lead to misunderstandings to an even greater extent” (Kleppin, 1998, p. 67).

The aforementioned errors may occur because of language interference, which is primarily evident in the morphosyntactic level. Syntactic interference refers to the insertion of sentence patterns from one language into another. In order to begin the error analysis, the errors must first be identified and then classified. “An error is a deviation from the linguistic system [and also], a deviation from the applicable linguistic norm” (Kleppin, 1998, p. 20). An essential aspect of error analysis is identifying the causes. The cause of errors can be the influence of the mother tongue or foreign language, the influence of elements of the foreign language itself - overgeneralization, regularization, simplification, the influence of communication strategies, the influence of learning strategies, the influence of elements of foreign language teaching - transfer of practice and/or the influence of socio-cultural factors. (Kleppin, 1998; Harden, 2006; Röslers, 2012). Röslers (2012) also deals with the causes of errors, which he categorizes as follows: interference, overgeneralization, competence- and performance errors. He classifies the errors according to the subject matter: a distinction is made between pronunciation errors, vocabulary errors, grammatical errors, pragmatic errors, or errors relating to factual inaccuracy.

² Grammatik-Übersetzungs-Methode /Grammar translation method
IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The aim of this paper is to see how the students perform when faced with a slightly more difficult task, namely the translation of literary texts. The analysis of the students’ translations revealed errors in various linguistic fields, such as: morphosyntactic, lexical-semantic and pragmatic. The reasons for the errors seem to be different, namely: interference, linguistic incompetence, lack of general knowledge, etc. Students of the Department of German Language and Literature are fairly good at communicating in German language, but this analysis shows that they do lack linguistic competence.

The analysis of the texts translated by the students revealed that most of the errors were of a grammatical nature and occurred in the morphological-syntactic area, e.g. the verb in the wrong person, e.g.: shkoi = gehe / ‘I go’, instead of shkoi = geht / ‘he goes’. Since the difference between the ending of the verb in the first and third person (ji) is not easily recognizable in speech in the Albanian language, this can lead to a generalization of the use of the verb form in writing as well.

The analysis found that the nouns were also translated incorrectly in many cases, often using the plural instead of the singular: (kryefamiljari) = die Hausherrn / ‘masters of the house’, instead of kryefamiljarit or të zotin e shpëtësisë = der Hausherrn / ‘the master of the house’). The reason for this could be the confusion of the N-declension with the plural ending. The N-declension is a characteristic of the German language. In this declination-type all the nouns take the ending -n or -en, in all the cases in singular and plural, except in nominative singular.

The use of the wrong tense is also evident. Instead of the aorist, the continuous present tense is often used, e.g.: po e përcollin = führen / ‘he is being directed’, instead of e përcollëm = führten / ‘he was directed’.

Even though the Albanian language has two tenses for the German Präteritum (aorist and imperfect), the students tend to use the present continuous most probably because the verb führen itself describes a continuous action.

In this case, the verb is incorrectly translated with the passive instead of the active: ishëtë drejtau = ist geführt worden / ‘has been directed’, instead of e conin, e drejtau = führten / ‘was directed’. The students thus emphasise the action and not the subject which does not correspond with the sentence in the original, an error that may have occurred because of carelessness, which also leads to the use of the wrong preposition; the preposition with a local function has been used instead of the preposition with a directive function: mes = in, in der Mitte / in, in the centre instead of përgjatë = entlang / ‘along’. This is an overgeneralization, and the use of the passive voice in this case may have been intended to make the text sound more sophisticated and closer to standard Albanian.

It is noted that the students used incorrect adjective cases, like in: tek një shëti të pasur = [...] in ein reiches Haus / ‘he went to a rich house’. In Albanian the preposition te/tek ‘to’ requires the nominative case. In this example it was translated in the definite case. The translation should read: E drejtau të një shëti e pasur = [...] ein reiches Haus ward er gewiesen / ‘He was sent into a rich house’.

In many cases students also confuse the object with a subject: ku aty e priste zotër i shtëpisë ku e priste i zoti e shpëtësisë = wo ihn der Hausherr erwartete / ‘where the master of the house awaited him’. The correct translation would be: ku e priste të zotin e shpëtësisë = wo er den erwartete / ‘where he awaited the master of the house’. The error can be categorized as a pragmatic error, possibly made out of carelessness, as the students assumed that the host is normally the one who receives the guest, and not the other way around, characteristic especially in Albanian culture. Another pragmatic error that possibly occurred because of cultural interference is that most students mistakenly translated an adjective that is not commonly used in the Albanian culture to describe men’s features. Therefore, in this case they confuse the subject with the object e.g.: Gojë për lakm, gojë tërheqëse = mit einem begehrlichen Mund / ‘with a desirable mouth’, as: gojë për të lakmuar, gojë lakmuese, me gojë lakmitare = Ein Mund, der (etwas) begehrt / ‘a greedy mouth’. The students understand from the sentence that the man is the one who desires, not the desired one.

Furthermore, there are even cases in which an additional person is inserted as subject, turning the subjects into objects: I përshendeti përzemërsisht zotërit dhe musafirin = Er begrüßte herzlich den Herrn und den Gast / ‘He greeted the host and the guest warmly’. Instead of: U përsndetëpërzëmërsisht i zotit dhe shpëtësisë dhe musafir = Freundlich begrüßten sich Herr und Gast. / ‘The host and the guest greeted one another friendly’. Another translation even adds an object that is grated by the students: Shoqërisht e përshendëtnët atë i zoti dhe musafiri = Freundlich begrüßten ihn Herr und Gast / ‘The host and the guest greeted him friendly’. The insertion of another subject and/or object is possibly due to the fact that the students did not understand the German reciprocal pronoun sich.

As for the morphosyntactic nature of the texts, there are not only problems between object and subject, but also incorrect use of mode or number, e.g.: Wisse /’know that’ is translated as: e di, a e dini se= Ich weiss, wissen Sie dass, ... / ‘I know, do you know that ...’. As the example shows the students used the indicative or even the interrogative form instead of the imperative, due to lack of grammatical competence.

There is also another category of error to be detected: students tend to translate some words into the Kosovar variety of Albanian and not in the standard Albanian. For example: musafir instead of myusafir = Gast/ guest’. Not sufficient competence in standard Albanian may be another source for errors.

Many errors also become evident in the translation of nouns from German into Albanian. The reasons for this seem to be manifold, such as interference, a lack of general knowledge and/or context. For example, it is noticeable that, the students who did not read the novel, don’t use the correct terms in Albanian for the concepts Brahman and Samanas, but try to find Albanizations or adapt the terms into Albanian. We can detect an interference from the German language, as
common nouns are often capitalised, which contradicts the grammar rules in Albanian. The translations come in the following forms, for example: Samanas, Samanëve, Samana, Brahman, Braham, Brahma, Brahmans, Brahmas. Interference is also observed with the known names, as: Zotëria dhe Musafiri, Kryefamiljarët, Zoti, Tregtari etc. = Herr and Gast, Hausherrnen, Herr, Kaufmann/‘Host and Guest’, ‘Masters of the House’, ‘Merchant’, etc. The linguistic incompetence in the German language is particularly noticeable when even a name such as Kaufmann – Merchant is left in the original and not translated at all but is regarded as a proper noun.

In some cases, what Kleppin (1998) characterizes as morphological errors, such as Brahman and Samanas, where the students use non-existent forms of nouns, cause lexi-semantic problems. The fact that the students did not understand these words is best demonstrated by the way they translated the noun Samanas. There are cases where the students used the relative pronoun in the singular: te i cili = bei welchem/‘to which’ and thus changed the meaning of the sentence by considering Samanas as a person or even a place, which is shown by the use of the local preposition në të cili kan jetuar shmë gjatë, ku kam jetuar= wo ich lange gelebt habe! ‘where I lived for a long time’. The translation should have been: me të cilët kam jetuar gjatë= bei welchen ich lange Zeit gelebt habe! ‘with whom I have lived for a long time’.

It can be observed that the students had doubts when translating derived words, such as ein Gelehrter/‘scholar and freiwillig/‘voluntarily’, because they focused on the meaning of the basic form of the word. For example, with the word ein Gelehrter they focus on lernen and the translations then read: i shkollluar, i mësuar, një nxënës= gebildet, ein Student/‘educated’, ‘a student’. On the other hand, with the word freiwillig the focus is on frei and often is translated as follows: jam i lirë = Ich bin frei/‘I am free’. We also find errors of a lexical-semantic nature when students, because they do not understand a group of words, try to fit them into the context of a sentence and thus change the meaning, for example: ward er gewiesen = ‘he was directed’ is translated as ka ishte rritur = wo er aufgewachsen ist! ‘where he grew up’, or in ein Gemach= in a room is translated as në rehatinë e tij= in seiner Bequemlichkeit/‘in his comfort’.

In addition to the errors mentioned above, we come across many pragmatic errors. For example, the expression ich bin nicht in Not geraten, the word Not is translated as: nuk jam në urgjencë = ich bin nicht in Dringlichkeit/‘I am not in urgency’.

Apart from the examples mentioned above, the interference of German on the Albanian language can be seen in the use of verbs. Interference can be observed in the position of the verb, in the tense and even in the use of the auxiliary verbs. For example, the sentence: Ich bin nicht in Not geraten is translated as: nuk jam rënë në varfëri = Ich bin nicht in Armut geraten/‘I am not in poverty’, which follows the verb bin, that is ich bin/‘I am’ in German. The interference is also observed in the syntactic aspect. The syntactic interference can occur mainly in subordinate clauses in which the finite verb appears at the end of the sentence in German, because in Albanian the finite verb usually occupies the second position. For example, […] wo er den Hausherrn erwartete is translated as: […] ku ai të zotin e shtëpisë e priste [=] /[‘where he the master of the house awaited’, with the verb priste = erwartete/‘awaited’ in the last position, corresponding to the sentence structure in German. In this example the interference is also noticeable in the use of the verb form, where the student has decided for the imperfect form influenced by the German ending -te, priste instead of priti, which can lead us to morphological interference. This becomes more emphasised because the Albanian language has two forms of past simple tense, namely aorist and imperfect, while German on the other hand only has one, namely Präteritum. In the aforementioned example the interference of the German language is noticeable also in the unnecessary use of the personal pronoun ai e.g. ai e priste = er erwartete/‘he awaited’. ‘In Albanian, due to their functional and semantic determination in the functions of the subject, the direct and indirect object, the personal pronouns can always be omitted if they do not need to be particularly emphasized due to contextual or constitutive conditions. The omission is also based on the fact that the verb form reflects certain grammatical features of the subject (in the personal ending) and the object (in the object sign)” (Buchholz & Fiedler, 1985).

As far as the semantic aspect is concerned, the use and translation of the modal particle denn plays an important role. The use of denn in the original sentence in German emphasises the question and conveys more emotion. The students have not translated this particle but decided to omit it altogether. This shows that they either did not recognize its meaning in German or did not consider the emotional tone of the text important.

As can be seen from the above examples, in most cases students make errors of a morphosyntactic or lexical-semantic nature when translating literary texts. As a result, the sentences take on a different meaning in the translated language, leading to a lack of textual coherence. There are also cases where a sentence becomes completely incomprehensible due to numerous errors, for example:

Siddhartha shkoj tek tregtari Kamaswami, ai e shpratuar tek një shpër të pasur, Shërbëtori e shpiu atë ndërmyet qilma të çmueshëm për në një dhomë, ku ai e priti Zotin e shtëpisë = Siddhartha gehe zum Kaufmann Kamaswami, er ist gewiesen zu einem reichen Haus, der Diener führte ihn zwischen kostbaren Teppichen zu einem Zimmer, wo er den Hausherrn erwartete. ‘Siddhartha go to the merchant Kamaswami, he is been sent to a rich house, the servant led him among precious carpets to a room where he awaited the master of the house’.

In this sentence the errors in Albanian are: wrong verb form (shkoj), unnecessary use of the pronoun (ai), wrong number (Shërbëtori), wrong case (qilma), wrong capitalisation (Shërbëtori, Zotin).

In this paper, the translation of a literary text was used for the analysis, focusing on the identification of linguistic, lexical and pragmatic errors which, as mentioned above, render the text incoherent. However, due to numerous
oversights committed by the students, such as the failure to translate a word, an adjective or a particle, the stylistic nuances of the literary text are lost in the Albanian language, which in the original does not achieve the same expressive power or sound in the translated language. When translating literary texts particular importance should be attached to an author’s style because literary finesse that Hesse’s text possesses in the original does not achieve the same expressive power or sound in the translated language. When translating literary texts particular importance should be attached to an author’s style because literary finesse that Hesse’s text possesses in the original does not achieve the same expressive power or sound in the translated language. When translating literary texts particular importance should be attached to an author’s style because literary finesse that Hesse’s text possesses in the original does not achieve the same expressive power or sound in the translated language. When translating literary texts particular importance should be attached to an author’s style because literary finesse that Hesse’s text possesses in the original does not achieve the same expressive power or sound in the translated language. When translating literary texts particular importance should be attached to an author’s style because literary finesse that Hesse’s text possesses in the original does not achieve the same expressive power or sound in the translated language. When translating literary texts particular importance should be attached to an author’s style because literary finesse that Hesse’s text possesses in the original does not achieve the same expressive power or sound in the translated language. When translating literary texts particular importance should be attached to an author’s style because literary finesse that Hesse’s text possesses in the original does not achieve the same expressive power or sound in the translated language. When translating literary texts particular importance should be attached to an author’s style because literary finesse that Hesse’s text possesses in the original does not achieve the same expressive power or sound in the translated language. When translating literary texts particular importance should be attached to an author’s style because literary finesse that Hesse’s text possesses in the original does not achieve the same expressive power or sound in the translated language. When translating literary texts particular importance should be attached to an author’s style because literary finesse that Hesse’s text possesses in the original does not achieve the same expressive power or sound in the translated language. When translating literary texts particular importance should be attached to an author’s style because literary finesse that Hesse’s text possesses in the original does not achieve the same expressive power or sound in the translated language. When translating literary texts particular importance should be attached to an author’s style because literary finesse that Hesse’s text possesses in the original does not achieve the same expressive power or sound in the translated language. When translating literary texts particular importance should be attached to an author’s style because literary finesse that Hesse’s text possesses in the original does not achieve the same expressive power or sound in the translated language. When translating literary texts particular importance should be attached to an author’s style because literary finesse that Hesse’s text possesses in the original does not achieve the same expressive power or sound in the translated language. When translating literary texts particular importance should be attached to an author’s style because literary finesse that Hesse’s text possesses in the original does not achieve the same expressive power or sound in the translated language.

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it can be said that the translation of literary texts is a challenge for the students of the German department at the University of Pristina, be it due to a lack of linguistic competence, a lack of general knowledge, but also a noticeable influence of German language, which in most cases lead to faulty and incorrect translations. The analysis shows that morpho-syntactic errors occur most frequently in translation, such as: incorrect use of verbs, wrong tense, wrong plural form, the use of attributive adjectives, pronouns, confusing object with the subject, wrongly inserting subjects, pragmatic errors, etc. The interference of the German language is evident in the translation of nouns, which in most cases are capitalised (as in German), misunderstood, or not translated at all. The same pattern of interference can be observed in the use of personal pronouns. Students use the same ones in Albanian as in German, although in most cases they are unnecessary, as their function in Albanian is derived from the verb endings from or the short form of the personal pronouns. In some cases, interference also led to syntactic errors, for example, the students transferred the structure of the sentence from German into Albanian, thus mostly putting the verbs in the wrong positions. The interference is not only to be observed from German into Albanian, but also vice-versa. As seen from the examples, cultural interference can also be a reason for translating errors. As far as the lexico-semantic aspect is concerned, the students in some cases used the wrong words and thus changed the meaning, or did not translate them at all, as is the case with the modal particle denn. Some of the mistakes made by the students can be classified as competence errors, due either to a lack of general or linguistic competence, but some of them can be classified as performance errors. This means that the students made these errors out of carelessness and when given the time and opportunity to check their translations, they noticed and corrected them. For example, the errors in capitalising the nouns or the confusion of the subject with the object because of the reciprocal verb.

In cases where students do not understand some of the words, the translated text loses coherence and meaning. This could be because their vocabulary in German is simple and has not yet reached the academic level and therefore they have difficulty understanding the complexity of literary texts and translating them. However, even if they have sufficient knowledge of the German language and translate most of the words correctly, they do not succeed in transferring the author's style into Albanian.

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