THE PECULIARITY OF LEXICAL AND GRAMMATICAL TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE TRANSLATION OF THE NOVEL "ALMOST HEAVEN" BY JUDITH MCNAUGHT

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Abstract: *This study investigates lexical and grammatical transformations in the translation of the novel Almost Heaven. Lexical transformations include processes such as addition, omission, substitution, and modulation, whereas grammatical transformations involve changes in sentence structures, tense, voice, and word order. The research aims to analyze how these transformations help preserve meaning, tone, and style in translation. The study employs Vinay and Darbelnet's translation theory and Baker's framework of translation strategies.*

Introduction. Translation is not a mere word-for-word replacement of text; it is a communicative act that requires careful consideration of linguistic and cultural differences. Translators often use lexical and grammatical transformations to render the source text naturally in the target language while maintaining its original meaning. The novel "Almost Heaven" provides rich data for studying translation strategies because it contains varied linguistic elements, idiomatic expressions, and stylistically complex sentences. This study explores how translators handle these elements through transformations.

Translation is not just a matter of word substitution; it is a far more complex process. As scholars such as Hatim and Mason affirm, "translation is a communicative act in language that demands the reproduction of not only meaning but also style, tone, and cultural nuance". [2, 167] Baker also confirms that "translators often use lexical and grammatical transformations as a strategic means for obtaining a particular effect". [2, 167]

In literary translation, both lexical and grammatical transformations play a critical role. Munday argues that "the translator must balance fidelity to the source text with readability and naturalness in the target language". [3, 227] "Almost Heaven" contains idiomatic phrases, culturally specific references, and stylistically complex sentences that require careful application of both lexical and grammatical transformations. For instance, emotionally charged dialogue may undergo lexical

substitution and modulation, while descriptive passages may involve transposition and word order adjustments to maintain narrative flow.
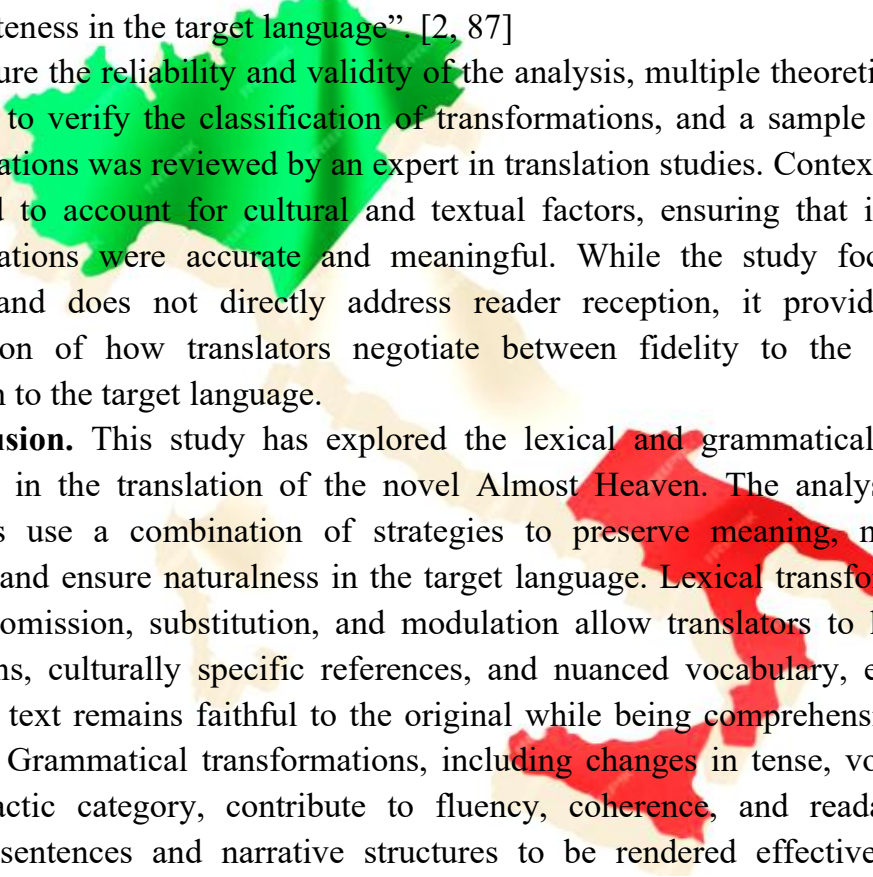
Furthermore, scholars note that translation strategies are often interconnected. Baker emphasizes that "successful literary translation involves a combination of lexical and grammatical strategies that work together to produce a coherent, faithful, and aesthetically pleasing target text". [1, 171] This interconnection is evident in novels like Almost Heaven, where maintaining the author's tone and style is as important as conveying literal meaning.

In literary translation, both lexical and grammatical transformations are of vital importance. According to Munday "the translator is faced with the challenge of ensuring that the translation is both literal and fluent". [3, 224]

"Almost Heaven" is replete with idiomatic expressions, cultural references, and complex sentences that call for careful use of both lexical and grammatical transformations. Examples of these would include literal substitutions and prosodic transformations for emotionally expressive dialogue, or transfers and sentence re-ordering for descriptive prose.

Moreover, it is observed that translation strategies can also be interconnected. Baker states that "effective literary translation must achieve both lexical translation strategies and grammatical translation strategies concurrently to attain a consistent, accurate, and aesthetically valuable translation". [1, 166] This is visible in novels such as "Almost Heaven", in which it is imperative to retain the tone as well as the style of the texts apart from their literal translations.

This research delves into the lexical and grammatical shifts that occurred in the translation of the "Almost Heaven" novel, focusing on how translators maintain meaning, style, and tone. A qualitative descriptive methodology was followed because such a methodological framework offers an exhaustive treatment of linguistic features together with their respective translation strategies. Using a comparative framework, the research examines selected excerpts from the source text and their corresponding translations, with particular attention to the way lexical and grammatical modifications occur. The theoretical framework also consists of Vinay and Darbelnet's 1995 model of translation procedures complemented by Baker's 2011 framework of translation shifts. Vinay and Darbelnet's model presents "a distinction between direct translation techniques, namely borrowing, calque, and literal translation, and the indirect ones: transposition, modulation, equivalence, and adaptation". [4, 145] Baker adds to this another classification of identifying "lexical shifts-addition, omission, substitution, and modulation-and grammatical shifts, namely tense, voice, word order, or syntactic category". [1, 163]

The study employed purposive sampling to select excerpts from Almost Heaven that represent idiomatic dialogues, descriptive passages with complex syntax, culturally specific references, and emotionally charged sentences. These excerpts were chosen to ensure that the sample captured a broad range of linguistic and stylistic challenges faced by translators. The analysis process involved reading each excerpt carefully to identify instances of lexical and grammatical transformations, documenting the source text, the translated text, the type of transformation, and its functional purpose. Transformations were then examined for their effectiveness in conveying meaning, maintaining stylistic features, and ensuring readability. "Lexical transformations were assessed for their role in clarifying idiomatic or culturally bound expressions, while grammatical transformations were evaluated in terms of their contribution to narrative flow, coherence, and syntactic appropriateness in the target language". [2, 87]

To ensure the reliability and validity of the analysis, multiple theoretical sources were consulted to verify the classification of transformations, and a sample of the identified transformations was reviewed by an expert in translation studies. Contextual analysis was conducted to account for cultural and textual factors, ensuring that interpretations of transformations were accurate and meaningful. While the study focuses on textual analysis and does not directly address reader reception, it provides a systematic examination of how translators negotiate between fidelity to the source text and adaptation to the target language.

Conclusion. This study has explored the lexical and grammatical transformations employed in the translation of the novel Almost Heaven. The analysis revealed that translators use a combination of strategies to preserve meaning, maintain stylistic qualities, and ensure naturalness in the target language. Lexical transformations such as addition, omission, substitution, and modulation allow translators to handle idiomatic expressions, culturally specific references, and nuanced vocabulary, ensuring that the translated text remains faithful to the original while being comprehensible to the target audience. Grammatical transformations, including changes in tense, voice, word order, and syntactic category, contribute to fluency, coherence, and readability, allowing complex sentences and narrative structures to be rendered effectively in the target language.

The findings indicate that successful translation is not merely a linguistic exercise but also a creative and interpretative process in which the translator negotiates between fidelity to the source text and adaptation for the target culture. In the case of Almost Heaven, the combined use of lexical and grammatical transformations ensures that the novel's emotional depth, narrative flow, and cultural context are preserved. This study contributes to a broader understanding of literary translation, highlighting the importance of carefully analyzing both vocabulary and grammatical structures to achieve equivalence
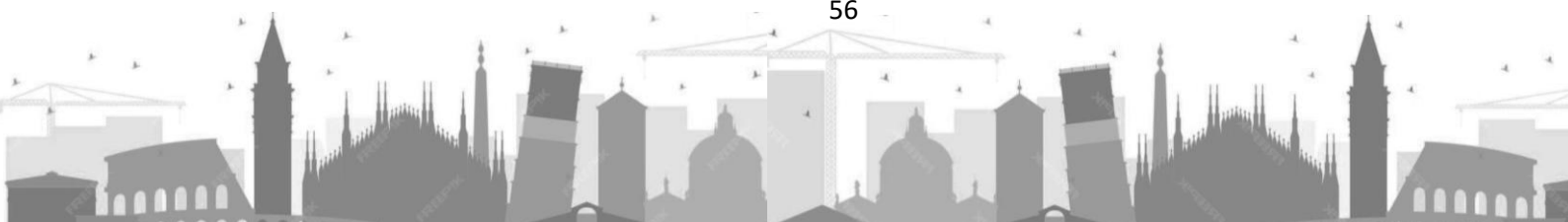
between the source and target texts. Future research could expand this study to include translations into multiple languages or comparative analyses of different translators' approaches, which would further illuminate the strategies employed in literary translation and their impact on target readers.

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