2013

Poetry in translation to teach ESL composition at the college level

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Poetry in Translation to Teach ESL Composition at the College Level

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A Thesis Presented to

Eastern Washington University

Cheney, Washington

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree

Master of Arts in English:

Teaching English as a Second Language Emphasis

By

Peter M. Lacey

Spring 2013

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Master's Thesis

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Abstract

  This thesis records the L1 to English poetry translations and subsequent self-reflections on the translation process by college level ESL composition students. It analyzes and codes the characteristics of their writing as well as the experiences and information reported in their reflective essays about the translation process. Poetry translation is discussed as a way to Honor the L1 and corresponding culture and as a way to facilitate writing skill development in ESL composition students. The final chapter makes recommendations for future poetry translation assignments in college level ESL composition courses.

Preface

This thesis combines two areas in which I have experience and interest. As an undergraduate student at Walla Walla University (WWU), I earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English with a creative writing concentration. I participated in poetry workshops, created a portfolio of my writing, and published my work several times in the school journal of arts, *The Gadfly*. My work in that program and my continued interest in reading and writing poetry form one area of knowledge; I am a poet by practice and by education. Before completing my undergraduate degree, I also spent a year volunteering as a high school English and History teacher in Micronesia. Later, after completing my degree, I returned to teaching when I worked as an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher in South Korea. My history in Micronesia and South Korea is the second area, teaching English as a second language. Together, my experience as a poet and as an ESL teacher laid the foundation for the research and study that is contained in this thesis.

Background in Poetry

I have been an active poet since I was a high school student. Initially, I drew inspiration from poets such as Dickinson, Frost, Keats, and Poe when I encountered their work in textbooks. While a university student at WWU, I developed an appreciation for more contemporary poets such as Richard Wilbur and Robert Wrigley. I also began writing my own poetry consistently during my undergraduate studies, and I found my way into the creative writing program. During this time at WWU, I worked closely with Dan Lamberton, Chair of the WWU Humanities Department, Director of the WWU creative writing program, and an active member in the Northwest community of creative writers. His instruction, patience, and encouragement are to thank for my sense of craft

and appreciation for the labor of poetry writing.

My own poetry is dependent on music. I react to the relationship between sound and meaning. Contemplation of the human condition is only a minimal part of why I write; I believe a good poet is a friend, rarely a philosopher, and never a preacher. I am biased toward shorter, denser, more musical poetry. The process of writing this thesis, however, has helped to expand my understanding of the power of poetry. I am learning to understand poetry not only as entertainment, but also as a tool by which to strengthen communities. Here, I have included "By accident or illusion," a poem about my writing process.

By accident or illusion

I start on one taut, musical metaphor—
a quickly clever comparison. Inspiring,
enlightening, or universal? Unconsidered.
What matters is a sound and image.
…
I follow the first line to an unplanned end.
Call it praise-song poetry; I set a mood
and drone as long as possible —
praying some sort of substance
will appear by accident or illusion.

Language Teaching in Micronesia

My introduction to teaching came on Pohnpei, one of four island states in Micronesia. I was a volunteer High School teacher there for 10 months, teaching 7th grade English, 10th grade English, English Literature, and World History. I took the position following my first two years of college and arrived without training in education or any other qualifications to speak of. Mercifully, the school put on a one-week orientation to prepare all of its new teachers.

I did not teach to a set curriculum. I was simply given the textbooks to teach from and instructed to make daily lesson plans. Emphasis was placed on the necessity of making lesson plans, but what to teach and how to teach was entirely up to me. I struggled with the responsibility.

My students were from various backgrounds, but the vast majority spoke English as a second language. This was not something that influenced my teaching methods, though, because all were incredibly fluent in conversational English. Intelligibility was never a problem. Their spoken fluency affected my ability to understand their struggles with Academic English and with reading and written work. It was during this time that I first began to consider methods for teaching ESL students.

I wrote "A stork in the aisle" during my time teaching in Pohnpei, Micronesia. Although it did not cross my mind at the time, the poem's brevity certainly reflects my then minimal understanding of a teacher's duties.

A stork in the aisle

A stork in the aisle
Posed
Peering
At scribbling fish

Language Teaching in South Korea

I moved to South Korea to become an English teacher in a private institute after I completed my bachelor's degree. I still had no training in education, but the organization I worked for planned every minute of class time for all their teachers. It was assembly line work; I followed the same routine in every class.

The classes I taught combined audiolingualism with grammar translation and aspects of communicative approaches. I modeled pronunciation and grammar and

directed my students to respond chorally during drills. The students ended each class with conversation; they were given dialogues based on a general topic and were encouraged to practice speaking with a partner, making changes to the content to reflect their own lives. The organization and thoroughness of the program were exceptional; however, the level of authenticity in students' speech was limited.

The students were mostly adults—business people, university students, retirees, and housewives. Most of them had enthusiasm for learning English. Some wanted work promotions, some were studying for the TOEIC, and some were simply interested in "Western" culture. Interacting with them was very rewarding and convinced me to pursue a career in teaching English. My decision to join the MATESL program at EWU came as a result of my time in South Korea.

Language Learning Experience

My experience learning a foreign language is varied, though not particularly extensive. During high school and university, I took a number of Spanish classes in order to fulfill degree requirements. The classes were often enjoyable and never very difficult, but I did not develop an interest in the language. Although I could sense my skill slowly improving, after my final Spanish class, I never used the language again.

Having lived in both Micronesia and South Korea, I also had the opportunity to learn the local languages through interaction with native speakers. But as an English teacher, much of my communication with native speakers was required to be in English. Subsequently, my knowledge of the Pohnpeian language is limited to a handful of words, and my ability in Korean is very low. Although I can relate to English language learners (ELLs) because I have struggled to learn and use an unfamiliar language, the depth of my

experiences does not match those of a serious ELL. That is, I have not been committed to the study of any language other than my first language (L1), English.

Occasionally, I documented my experience as a monolingual foreigner in South Korea in poetry. "The only ones prepared" describes a visit to a grocery store.

The only ones prepared

The way she offered me the paper bag
was by pointing and reluctantly raising her brow.
Then all I responded was '네 주세요,'
but the two words broke free confidently.
Startled, she raised her brow differently,
complimented my Korean skills, I think,
and I froze—not wanting to gesture
and reveal the two I had just spoken
were the only ones prepared.

Teaching Philosophy

I believe teachers serve students and the surrounding community. Teachers help people improve themselves—teachers make life better. But they cannot do that if they do not understand their students' needs. It is incredibly important that teachers understand student goals and circumstances. An international salesman needs English for different purposes than a university exchange student, and a teacher needs to recognize that in order to serve both types of students effectively.

All service requires humility, and it is one of the most important parts of teaching. Whatever faults or mistakes a teacher makes can be overcome by a humble attitude. Willingness to make corrections to one's approach and consider different perspectives is a necessity, because teachers grow their skills the same way that students do. I believe a teacher that approaches their work with humility will find a way to be successful.

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<div align="center">**Chapter 1**</div>

<div align="center">**Introduction, Research Questions, and Assumptions**</div>

Chapter one is an introduction to poetry in an English as a Second Language

(ESL) context. It discusses the general theories about making meaning through poetry

and how this may relate to English Language Learners (ELLs). The chapter concludes

with the research questions and assumptions of this study.

Introduction to poetry in an ESL context

"Carrying On like a Crow"

by Charles Simic

Are you authorised to speak

For these trees without leaves?

Are you able to explain

What the wind intends to do

With a man's shirt and a woman's nightgown

Left on the laundry line?

What do you know about dark clouds?

Ponds full of fallen leaves?

Old model cars rusting in a driveway?

Who gave you permission

To look at the beer can in a ditch?

The white cross by the side of the road?

The swing set in the widow's yard?

Ask yourself, if words are enough,

Or if you'd be better off

Flapping your wings from tree to tree

And carrying on like a crow?

How do poets make meaning in one language when they are raised in another? This is the question that ESL writers must solve. But, it is not as simple as finding words with corresponding definitions, or even as simple as finding corresponding idioms. Sometimes words really are not enough. Cultural perspective and tradition control language, but no two cultures are the same, and it follows that no two languages operate in the same way. There is an incongruence of traditions. This incongruence is often referred to as contrastive rhetoric when the subject is academic prose or various forms of informative or persuasive writing. Those that study contrastive rhetoric view language through its relationship with the culture—as Connor puts it, "it considers texts not merely as static products but as functional parts of dynamic cultural contexts" (493). But poetry eschews linguistic tradition. In English at least, poets have creative license to compose with disregard to rhetorical conventions and even the rules of syntax and grammar. (Consider E. E. Cummings well known and frequently anthologized poem, "anyone lived in a pretty how town.") So, the challenges of writing poetry across cultures have less to do with linguistic structures and modes of communication, and more to do with personal, cultural experience—both linguistic and otherwise. According to Jung and Bachtin, this means a bilingual poet must use cultural mediation in order to convey the inner language. The poet must find a way to reconcile L1 experiences that inform the inner language with the traditions, knowledge, and common experiences of the culture they are writing to.

This primary focus of this introduction to second language poetry will therefore be the possibility of achieving authenticity rather than the process of achieving coherence.

Poetry begins, before any text is written, as the inner language that a writer plans to convey. According to Stephen Dobyns in his poetry handbook, poetry comes from a mining of the subconscious (172). But in the case of ESL poets writing in English, which cultural tradition influences how they express the inner language? Cahnmann-Taylor and Preston claim, "While the impulse to compose a poem may spring from deep human need, a poem is completed through not only soul-searching, but also poetic craft, a skill set acquired through reading and study" (239). So, it follows that all languages poets read and all languages they interact with control the expression of inner language; it is not guided solely by the first language (L1) or solely by their target language (TL). Authentic expression must be a product of all linguistic experiences.

It follows, though, that in order to write from one culture to another, a poet must know both cultures. According to Jung, poets attempting to represent one culture to another must have "cultural status in both language communities" (530). Cultural status does not necessarily mean that a poet automatically knows how to write to that culture, though. There must be a process of finding appropriate and useful conventions no matter which culture the inner language is being conveyed to. Richard Hugo claims, "Real experimentation is involved in every good poem because the poet searches for ways to unlock his imagination through trial and error" (33). ESL poets are no different from other poets in this sense; all must engage in "experimentation" and "trial and error" in order to effectively convert inner language to text. However, Jung and Bachtin note that the inner language version of a poem cannot be conveyed in one language by the same

means it is conveyed in another. A poet has the responsibility to find a way to interpret the inner language to a specific culture or readership; this is another goal of the experimentation. Poets must consider the culture to which they are writing and must adapt their cultural references, "to suit their readership" (Jung, 533). That is, if poets want their work to resonate with their readership, they must know what their readership understands, and the poets must make the writing conform to that understanding.

However, the argument arises that projecting the expectations of a readership and conforming to it will weaken the poetry. Hugo is adamant that a poet is truly a narcissist and abandons the notion of communicating to a readership. He advises, "never worry about the reader, what the reader can understand" (5). He claims focusing on the reader distracts you from the truth of the inner language and limits authenticity of expression, but he adds one caveat: A writer may neglect thinking about the expectations of the reader "[a]ssuming [the writer] can write clear English sentences" (5). What Hugo means by "clear" is unknown, but it seems that he leaves open the possibility that a poet with a limited background in English could write to an English readership by carefully considering that readership's expectations. Jung, however, claims that true bicultural writers have established themselves as competent members of any language they write in, which means that Hugo's advice would apply to them as well as any other poet.

Hugo's reverence for the inner language is challenged, though. Dobyns writes that a poem only exists once the inner language has been tamed or limited; the inner language is not the poem itself. He declares, "the poem exists not in that first burst of creativity, but in revision" (172). That does not necessarily mean that a poet revises only for the readership, but it does suggest that the poet is not quite the narcissist Hugo seems to

claim. Limiting the language through the revision process to text that makes meaning forces the poet to be aware of the larger culture that controls the language.

ESL poets that do attempt to consider their readership are faced with a difficult task. Bachtin explains in detail how meeting the expectations of a readership can be an obstacle; he clarifies that the very tools by which a poet can develop a unique voice are different in each language because of culture. Specifically, poetic idioms and the colloquial class of the language will not have a perfectly corresponding counterpart in any other language. He claims, "The exact relations (which may vary widely) of a poetic idiom to the whole of its linguistic system are determined in each case by the specific cultural context within which the idiom has to function, and they can be treated only within this context" (334). An idiom cannot accurately be transferred to another language because, "In all of its contents, a poetic idiom is essentially dependent on the whole of the language" (Bachtin, 341). Additionally, the scale by which colloquial speech characteristics are divided and relate to each other is organized differently in each language (Bachtin, 337). A poet cannot necessarily take the same voice, characterized by social class or geography, that he employed in one language to his writing in a second language. He must find a new voice and, perhaps, a new cultural status in order to authentically express the inner language.

Understandably, a poet who writes across cultures, to one culture and then to another, or to more than one culture at the same time will take on multiple personalities across their work. According to Jung, bilingual poets express themselves differently in one language than they do in another because of acculturation and deculturation (530). In other words, the second language has expanded the writer's cultural identity beyond that

of a single language readership; multiilingual writers are multicultural. Hugo claimed, "Assumptions lie behind the work of all writers" (19), but the assumptions of a multilingual writer are informed by a broader cultural experience than monolingual readers have the ability to draw on. A monocultural readership will share some but not all the poet's assumptions, and the poet must recognize what personal knowledge and writing conventions to use and which to avoid. Osakwe sees bilingual poet Wole Soyinka doing exactly this; when Soyinka addresses a primarily African audience, he relies on his native Yoruba language devices; however, when he writes to an audience that is not familiar with Yoruba, he incorporates elements from English (66-67). Soyinka made the decision to consider his readership and it is apparent in the craft of his poetry.

For ESL poets, there seem to be two main issues: (1) whether, or how much, to compromise their creative authority and conform to the limitations of their readership; and if they do, (2) how to create a voice from within their English speaking readership's cultural traditions that will authentically communicate the inner language.

This thesis explores data produced by ESL writers who were asked to translate poetry. As far as I know, they are neither trained nor aspiring poets; however, the research was undertaken because of the belief that asking them to translate poetry and go through the experiences described above, however brief the experience turned out to be, would force them to consider the authenticity of TL writing more deeply. Additionally, it is hoped that by expanding their TL writing experiences, their TL writing skills will be strengthened as they develop new strategies and gain new perspectives.

Research Questions

1. What is the poetry translation process like for ELLs in a college level composition class? How do they work, what do they consider, what is their focus, and how do they make decisions?

2. What experiences, difficulties, and other reactions do English 112 students report about their translation process?

3. What implications does a poetry translation assignment have for the students' growth as TL writers?

Assumptions

I assumed:

1. that students would feel comfortable with the meaning of the poem in their L1 and would have a feeling for the tone and understanding of the imagery.

2. that students would produce fairly literal translations regardless of their level of understanding of the original poem.

3. that students would be able to complete the translations, but their work would show usage errors.

4. that the translations among one language group would show a variety of interpretations.

5. that students would find translation to be a difficult task and express a level of dissatisfaction with their translations.

6. that poetry translation with reflection and analysis of process would enhance students' understanding of the relationship between their L1 and TL.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

Chapter 2 is a review of literature about poetry translation in an ESL context. It addresses the craft of writing across languages, the perspectives of selected bilingual poets, and the value of poetry translation in second language acquisition. The review crosses into three disciplines—creative writing, composition, and ESL academic literacy—informing the design of the present study about translating poetry. It is not within the scope of this thesis to argue for the inclusion of literature or creative writing in composition classes at the college level. Groller, Vardell, Adams, Hismanoglu, and D. Reeves write extensively about the inclusion of literature in composition instruction.

Craft of writing across languages

The general challenges for all ESL writers result from differing language and cultural traditions. Before narrowing focus to poetry translation, it is necessary to look at how they negotiate those differences and what the results often look like.

Verena Jung

Jung relates the experience of two bilingual writers who translate their English writing back to their native German language. She notes that such writers must take the culture they are writing to into account and shape their words to suit the readership, because what is common knowledge for one readership is completely lost on another. The writing must be completely re-imagined and rewritten. In order to do so, the bilingual writer must return to the inner text. The resulting self-translations are hardly literal. The writers make many changes to the way they express the inner text, resulting in

a significant difference of content between the English and German versions of their work (534). Jung's study suggests that those who write across languages will want to consider the knowledge of the readership, but it makes clear that considering the readership will greatly affect the content and focus of the written product.

Cahnmann

Cahnmann claims that when poets attempt to reconcile their experiences with two languages, it is likely a new language will appear. She relates how bilingual students in California who speak both Spanish and English have been shown to invent a language. As an example, she shares how her own students created a new language that did not follow either standard language; "[m]y students mixed English words in Spanish sentences, inventing what appeared to be a new hybrid language that wasn't one or the other but both" (344). She believes that the hybrid is formed by blurred codes—that the two languages are not considered separately. ELL writers may have the same opportunity to combine their L1 knowledge with whatever they have so far learned about English into a linguistic hybrid. True linguistic hybrid or not, the attempts of ELLs to more clearly express inner language will likely result in them mixing constructions and perspectives from the traditions of their native language into their English writing.

Cahnmann-Taylor & Preston

Cahnmann-Taylor and Preston build on the work of Cahnmann by discussing ESL writing as a way to investigate complex cultural identities. They claim that, "[w]riting poetry provides a space to consider language and life together, to process cultural complexities within an inventive linguistic space" (244). Like Cahnmann's bilingual students, an ESL poet may consider both languages to be inseparable. They may consider

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both languages significant factors in their lived experience and in their development of self-identity. For them, writing authentically about life will require linguistic invention that takes into consideration both English and their L1

Contributions and perspectives of bilingual poets

The perspectives of selected bilingual poets and the characteristics of their writing and process help clarify the nature of the activity ESL students enter into as translators. As true bilingual and, in some cases, bicultural writers, these poets have a facility with both languages that ELLs do not; however, no one is more qualified to speak about poetry translation and TL writing than those who do it regularly and beautifully. Their voices are included here as examples of what successful translators do and how they think. They are not all alike. They are American, Chinese, German, and Nigerian, and their first languages range from Serbo-Croatian to Yoruba. Like a diverse ESL classroom, there is variety, and there are sometimes conflicting perspectives. Their contributions help develop understanding of the challenges and possibilities of poetry translation in an ESL classroom.

Czeslaw Milosz

Polish-American poet Czeslaw Milosz was a bilingual and bicultural writer whose normal writing process relied heavily on translation. On the occasion of his death, Reeves (2004) recalls attending a particular Milosz reading and notes his insistence on writing in the language of childhood. Milosz's words and his craft and procedure as a poet advocate for a first language foundation in multilingual writing — a perspective that would seem to welcome L1 to L2 translation in a composition classroom.

Milosz's thoughts on translation are particularly significant because, as Reeves notes, his devotion to the language of his childhood forced him to translate nearly everything he wrote. She recalls, "[t]hough truly gifted in both French and English, Milosz wrote in Polish and then painstakingly translated his work himself" (12). His process was such because he was convinced that the L1 remains incredibly valuable for a multilingual writer. In Reeves's words, "[he] insisted that poetry must be written in the language of childhood – as he had done – if we are to find our authentic voices as writers" (13). Translation was Milosz's route to authenticity, an indispensible tool for a writer whose voice is rooted in the culture of their birthplace.

For Milosz, using the L1 was also a way to reduce anomie. Lines from his poem "I Sleep a Lot," selected by Reeves, illustrate the point; "When it hurts we return to the banks / Of certain rivers…" (13). In her remembrance of Milosz, Reeves claims that, "[t]he language of childhood is one of those rivers we return to for solace" (13). Milosz shows us not only the value of L1 for TL writing, but also the value of L1 for writers who are dealing with separation from their native culture and home community.

Although Reeves believes Milosz showed L1 should play a prominent role in the work of a bilingual writer, she also believes he gave writers a difficult task, "a mixed message, […] both cling to and let go [of] our past lives" (13). Translation may provide an opportunity to do just that — honor the past and use the language of childhood in order to move onward with the L2. As Reeves states, "Milosz's writing process forces us to think again about the value of translation" (12). His ideas suggest that, through translation work, ESL writers are not held back by the presence of the L1. On the contrary, it provides comfort and produces authenticity.

Charles Simic

Yugoslavian born poet Charles Simic is a bilingual American poet and translator who, unlike Milosz, does not write in the language of his childhood, but in English. He offers this explanation in his book on poetry, *Wonderful Words, Silent Truth*:

> The whole issue of translation is especially interesting to me because I have—so to speak—two mother tongues. Serbian is the first language I spoke, but I have known and used, almost exclusively, the English language for thirty-five years. So, there are two mothers, or just one mother speaking from different corners of her mouth like some wonder-working Byzantine icon. That's the translator's ideal. (Simic, *Wonderful Words, Silent Truth* 107).

Simic's experiences with poetry translation include working with Yugoslavian poet Ivan Lalic to translate his poetry into English. During this collaboration, Simic admits that he was not always able to translate successfully; he explains, "[t]here were, of course, many [poems] of which I thought highly in the original, but which I was unable, for one reason or another, to render properly" (*Wonderful Words, Silent Truth* 106). Despite his fortunate position of having two mother tongues, he is unable to overcome the incongruence of cultures. When he is aware of meaning in the original that cannot be revealed in an English translation, he abandons the work (*Wonderful Words, Silent Truth* 106). He claims the problem arises from the fact that, "no two languages share an identical associative context. Cultural and historical experiences differ. Behind an idiom there might be lurking views of man, gods, earth, heaven, which the native speaker intuits" (*Wonderful Words, Silent Truth* 106). All of these are what he refers to as

"unspoken" characteristics of a poem—the things that cannot be understood from literal translations, the things that make a translators work difficult.

In *The Uncertain Certainty,* Simic credits the varying degrees of difficulty in poetry translation to the type of poet who wrote the original. He believes there are two types: Some poets stick to universal themes, but others, he claims, "descend into the recesses of that language and make subtle chords—it's a question of music, of resonance, of associations, of *using* that language. Those poets are very difficult to translate" (*The Uncertain Certainty* 54). When he does deem a poem to be translatable, he wants to take as few liberties with the content as possible. As he says, "[m]y method as a translator is to stick to the literal whenever possible" (*Wonderful Words, Silent Truth* 106). But he also claims that literal translations are an incomplete representation. He says, "[t]he translator, like the poet, listens to the unspoken" (*Wonderful Words, Silent Truth* 107). Like a poet working from the inner text, a translator must make an attempt to communicate the unspoken meanings, the feeling and the tone of a poem.

Simic's translation process relies on his first impressions of a poem. When he decides to translate a poem, he says, "what I try to do then is to go through a very quick version, without worrying too much if I come across a word that I don't know" (*The Uncertain Certainty* 53). It is not a lengthy process for him. In fact he seems to believe the less time is taken on translation, the better it will turn out. He explains, "I want a quick response because a very important thing in translation is to capture that something, that pace, that tone, that thing which seems to be essential to the original" (*The Uncertain Certainty* 53). His approach to finding what is "essential" is simple enough that one expects any writer could do it. Then again, not all writers are the same.

Simic is an unusual bilingual poet because he did not start writing poetry until he was using English at high school in Chicago. Consequently, his first poetry was written in English. In fact, he says that after living in the U.S. for decades, he feels uncomfortable using his first language, Serbo-Croatian (*The Uncertain Certainty* 5). He remarks, "I've written so much now in English that Serbian just doesn't occur to me any more as an option" (*The Uncertain Certainty* 55). But that is not to say that he has lost his first language or that his Serbo-Croatian voice is of limited authenticity. On the contrary, he is aware of a deep connection to the language of his childhood. For Simic, this again comes back to what is unspoken: "[W]hen I was a young poet and I'd get very sad, I could write the typically sad English poem. But the Yugoslav alternative would occur to me also, which I couldn't write because I didn't have the facility of the vocabulary, but it would be there almost as a kind of tone, a presence" (*The Uncertain Certainty* 16). He seems to indicate there was poetry without words within him. He continues, "when I finally did read some Yugoslav poetry I found poets who moved me very much, more so than [poets of other languages]" (*The Uncertain Certainty* 16). Despite the dominance of English in his creative and professional lives, his L1 remains as some sort of creative foundation. However, he concludes that, "the language I dream and know best I speak with an accent" (*The Uncertain Certainty* 72). His perspective reinforces the idea that language identity is formed and evolves differently for different people.

Wu

Wu is a writer and former EWU student with first-hand experience trying to reconcile different poetic traditions. She claims that English language learners bring various perspectives and experiences with poetry depending on their cultural background.

She explains further by sharing that her own experience with poetry in her native China was different from what she experienced in a university level poetry class at EWU. She was not trained to form her own interpretations of poetry in her L1, and she suggests this is the norm for Chinese students — they are used to learning an accepted meaning from teachers or from texts. As a result, when she was asked to interpret poetry on her own, she had a lot of difficulty. She writes, "[In China] we never gave our own opinions. […] I felt it was difficult to answer such questions, because I did not have that kind of training to explain what kind of feeling I had for a poem. [So,] I kept silent all the time" (2). She suggests that, in reality, the work that an ELL will produce when asked to work with poetry will be somewhat if not greatly affected by their initial experience with Poetry in their L1. For example, someone like Wu who has not been trained to interpret poems independently will see translation as a much bigger challenge than someone who is comfortable sharing their own understanding. A culturally diverse classroom will produce diverse ways of thinking, especially when art is studied and interpretation is invited; Therefore, the translation process, its obstacles, and the main concerns of the writers will not be uniform.

Wu also addresses the work facing poetry translators; she finds many challenges. She says that translation must deal with the conceptual, structural and cultural characteristics of a poem (31-32). Like Simic she seems to be concerned with the "unspoken." Word-for-word translations are insufficient since translators need to also concern themselves with, as Wu says, "psychological feeling" (32). That feeling is the product of a number of things, and she explains how connotation and grammatical concerns such as morphology and word order present obstacles to translators. She says

that much can be lost if the translator does not consider nuances of meaning or does not understand how the poet's use of grammatical conventions affect tone. As an example, she presents both literal and literary translations of Chinese poetry in English. In Li Qing Zhou's poem, the first line has been translated as both "seek, seek, search, search" and "I look for what I miss" (31). Although they are apparently both accurate translations, Wu prefers the second because it delivers a more accurate representation of the feeling of the original. She shows how different writers could wind up with very different translations because of their level of concentration on factors that affect tone.

The value of poetry translation in second language acquisition

Many theories exist and many approaches have been tried to improve the language acquisition experience of ELLs, but poetry translation is an uncommon practice in the field. This portion of the literature review examines the benefits found by researchers whose studies share the significant traits with a poetry translation exercise: reading and interpretation of lyrical writing, poetry as a heuristic, and

Ubaldo

Ubaldo writes about incorporating music in a composition class. Specifically, his research is about music "as a catalyst for language acquisition" (2). He gathers data from ethnographic writing of 16 multilingual writers at the college level and analyzes it for expressiveness, connectedness, empathy and for Mary Pipher's traits of resilience. The findings suggest, as Ubaldo assumes, that music does have value in ESL coursework, and the activities he oversees seem to result in productive and expressive writing.

Ubaldo's general assumption is based on the works of Parker, Lautzenheiser, and Fulton: sources that demonstrate a connection between music and cognitive activities. By

incorporating music into coursework based on a biography of Eleanor Roosevelt, he also assumes he will "provide a forum" for students' written expression, reveal multiple intelligences, and "learn about the students' values and histories" (5-6). The validation of his experiment incorporating music in a class of ELL writers is presumably the characteristics of the students' subsequent writing: expressiveness, connectedness, empathy, and the ability to reveal their traits of resilience.

The writing is done as prompted 5-minute journal following 3 pre-listening activities of 3 different songs; however, as they begin to write after the conclusion of the music, the students are asked to focus on a specific line of the lyrics and "connect it to [their] own life" (26). So while audio plays a part in Ubaldo's prompt, the other significant catalyst for the students' writing is a single line of lyrics they choose to write about. Here, a connection to the work of poetry translation emerges as the writer must focus closely on lines of emotional verse.

Ubaldo concludes that incorporating music is indeed beneficial to the writers in his study. He rates the majority of their journals "very expressive" and discovers multiple traits of resilience in most of their work. An example of the writing found in his data is this excerpt from a Japanese ELL explaining a past hardship; "My host mother cried with me. And her dog sat down next to me and put her leg on my lap" (51). This shows the writing characteristics Ubaldo was searching for, but it also demonstrates an attention to detail and reflection on emotion that is a component of poetry writing and translation.

Ubaldo's research reveals the type of writing ESL writers may respond with when asked to write about poetry. Lyrics, like poetry, are constructed with emotionally coded words and images. Ubaldo found that writing prompts based on lyrics often resulted in

expressiveness, connectedness, and empathy. The writers in his study were productive and active. The question that arises is whether incorporating poetry in an ESL composition class similar to the one Ubaldo studied can result in a similar catalyst for productivity among ESL writers. And more specifically, whether that productivity and expressiveness can be drawn from a timed poetry translation activity.

Dinneen

Dinneen studies ethnographic writing of college level composition students, and the results demonstrate successful incorporation of L2 poetry writing in a college level composition class. Her study asks ESL writers to create poems using a specific formula derived from Mary Pipher's " I Am From" poem. She then analyzes the formulaic poems for expressiveness, ethnic voice, and impact on students' anomie. Like Ubaldo, she categorizes the results as "expressive" or "very expressive," and finds that the majority of students create "very expressive" writing.

Interest in student anomie seems to be the origin of Dinneen's study; she uses the poetry writing assignments to understand what can relieve those feelings. She begins with the assumption that "expressive writing does ease the tensions of anomie," that the formulaic poem writing "[honors] the L1 identity while fostering target language (TL) voice" and "serves as a catalyst to exploring identity" (5). These goals are in line with the goals of a poetry translation exercise.

Dinneen's journal prompts lead students in an ethnographic activity: writing "I Am From" poems that explore self-identity. The students must consider and describe their heritage following the model that puts emphasis on "ancestors," place names, "attitudes," "pivotal events," and "core values" (59). So while these lines of Writer 10,

"From a normal feet of a mountain./From sit in a small boat in a river/which I never know the name of it" (82), may show poetic voice and include imagery , they do not do enough cultural naming to earn a "very expressive" rating. Nevertheless, Dinneen's Writer 10 and other writers in the study show they are capable of producing emotionally and visually descriptive L2 poetry when prompted.

Among Dinneen's conclusions is the belief that poetry writing is beneficial to multilingual writers. She states, "writing poetry [can help] second and multi-language learners become more comfortable in the target language, improve their fluency and spelling, provide them practice in using grammatical conventions, and [allow] them to experiment with language" (46). That these benefits are available to ESL writers within the confines of poetry translation seems likely since Dinneen's study allowed similarly limited creative license because of the formulaic prompt of the "I Am From" poem. Poetry translation may actually provide better opportunities to experiment with language than the "I Am From" poem, which is essentially a listing activity. On the other hand, the L1 artifacts writers share through translation will be representative of a larger linguistic culture rather than the individual's familial heritage. And they will not be choosing what they share, but how to share it effectively in the TL.

Okabe

Like Dinneen, Okabe explores how writing can affect anomie in ELLs who have come to the United States to study. She finds that expressive writing, or journaling, is one way to reduce anomie in ESL students. She claims that by writing short, timed journals that reflect on personal experience, students can reduce their feelings of anomie. The strongest point of similarity between Okabe's journaling, Dinneen's formulaic poem, and

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a poetry translation exercise is the process of reflection on the familiar, whether that be family heritage, L1 traditions, or individual experiences, in order to facilitate self-representation in the TL.

Cordero

Cordero advocates for the use of translation activities in language acquisition. She believes that resistance to translation activities in ESL classrooms is misinformed. She claims, "[translation] is still associated with the learning and testing process of the grammar-translation approach" (350). In her view, the translation process becomes more creative and relevant outside of the former approach, particularly in literary translations. She claims that the literary translator "becomes the co-author, for his work is by necessity interpretive" (352). And she continues, "one could state that in a literary translation the emphasis is not on the decoding of the source text, but on the style of the target language" (352). She also claims, "translation sheds light on certain linguistic phenomena which otherwise would remain unknown" (350). Her description of translation shows it to be a skill-building tool, not merely the word-matching game that translation opponents fear.

Simic

Simic claims that poetry translation allows a writer to interact with language on a deeper level than they otherwise would. He says, "I think what you gain from translations is entering a poem in a way that you couldn't have entered otherwise. You really have to take it apart and piece it together. It's a delicate operation, a dissection" (*The Uncertain Certainty* 46). He echoes Cordero's claims that literary translation is far-removed from the grammar-translation method. It is all about the unspoken, not structures and definitions. During translation, he says, "there's nothing physical that's dissected; it's all

hunches and hints, auras, emanations, and so forth" (*The Uncertain Certainty* 46). It is a process that requires writers to move beyond concerns of grammatical accuracy.

Although Simic says he has learned a lot from doing translations, he finds it difficult to describe the value of the process in specific terms. He says, "I think I've learned a great deal. Exactly what… it's hard to make a list of the things I've learned…techniques, attention to detail, entering somebody else's head and submitting to another's vision" (*The Uncertain Certainty* 46). These are general ideas, but certainly all of them are things an ESL writer would make good use of in a composition class. "Submitting to another's vision" is something all writers must do if they want to be successful in a classroom.

Whishaw

Whishaw writes about her experience using L1–to–English poetry translation during her time as a student teacher as a way of breaking free from English only policies. She finds that the activity increased students' enthusiasm for writing and helped diffuse prejudice in the classroom.

Whishaw decided to do the translation assignment because of her discomfort with widely accepted English Only policies in English classes. She says, "[t]here is an unofficial, but often articulated rule that students must only speak English, particularly in an English classroom" (28). Contrary to this rule, she believes there are "huge benefits in language learning and proficiency of being able to work in two languages" (28). So, she decided to act on her beliefs and ask students to write poetry in their L1. "Accordingly, I invited students, during a poetry writing unit, to write a poem in their first language and then pair up with an English speaker to make a translated poem," she writes (28).

Although the English Only rule was broken, she found that translation increased the students' interest in writing.

Whishaw's translation exercise was a multi-step endeavor. After her ESL students completed their L1 poems, "[she] told [them] to write a rough approximation of their poems in English and then sit down with their [native English speaking] partners to work out the details" (28). The pair work portion of the activity resulted in much language discussion and experimentation. She saw, "the writers struggling to explain what they meant, the translators offering words and phrases in English, [and] all of the students altering, using, [and] discarding language choices" (28). Finally, she had students read their poems in their first language to help foster appreciation for the diversity of the class.

Although Whishaw notes that the assignment caused some initial anxiety and that the translation process was hard work, her experiment with L1–to–English translation shows an activity that raised students' level of engagement in the writing process. And since the end product of the assignment was a poem written in English, the presence of the L1 did not turn the focus away from English proficiency, but rather provided a new beginning point for English Language discussion: L1 poetry. What remains to be seen is whether ESL writers could work as successfully and with the same level of engagement if they worked individually and were given the L1 poem to translate rather than translating their own work.

Wu

Wu's research focuses on Chinese poetry from the Tang Dynasty and describes ways to incorporate it in an ESL/EFL curriculum. Two questions guide her thesis: "How can EFL and ESL teachers use L1 traditional poetry in translation," and how can the use

of that poetry "increase EFL and ESL teachers' understanding of Chinese culture?" (4-5). The result of her study is a curriculum and materials based on Tang Dynasty poetry that is similar to what one might create with a literature focus unit. She uses bilingual prompts and asks students to discuss together, reflect in writing, and create their own poetry after viewing both English and Chinese versions of a poem side-by-side.

Although she is incorporating both languages, Wu's subsequent curriculum asks students to do limited translation based on poetic themes. Students are presented with poetry text in both Chinese and English, but are asked to reflect on the meaning of a poem or write on a particular theme present in the poetry. For example, in response to "A Journeyer's Song," a poem about leaving home and a reflection on parents' sacrifices for children, the students are asked to describe their mother (188). When asking for translation, Wu limits the assignment to one or two words of special significance to the poem. For example, the prompt for "A Journeyer's Song" asks students to write, "both Chinese and English words for mother and hands" (112). The focus on meaning in Wu's study leaves open the question of how ELL writers would handle a full translation of poetry from L1 to L2.

Lohpaisankrit

Like Wu, Lohpaisankrit discusses poetry as a heuristic in an ESL composition class. Although her study does not incorporate translation or call on the writers to consider linguistic or poetic traditions, she does ask students to journal after reflecting on the themes of specific poems. Her use of poems as writing prompts results in productive writing from the ESL writers in her study.

Groller

Groller writes about benefits creative writing may provide to ESL students in college composition courses. She lists challenges facing such writers and then reviews the work of other researchers to examine how creative writing can help writers overcome their challenges. Among her findings is a belief that poetry enhances multilingual writers' skill sets and their attitude towards L2 writing; "By giving international students a way to blend their culture with their writing, creative writing assignments increase the likelihood that writing in English will be a positive experience, rather than a frustrating one" (31). The role of L1 culture in creative writing that she touches on is particularly important. She not only sees creative writing as a way to enrich students' capabilities to express themselves in the L2, but also as a way for them to create a more complete expression of their multilingual identity.

Groller begins with her opinions about creative writing. The assumption driving her study seems to be "that creative writing [allows] students and teachers to think about and work with writing from a new perspective, and that skills and attitudes gained through working with creative writing [will] positively influence students' academic writing" (4-5). She goes on to say, "the purpose of this paper is to discuss creative writing as a way to expand ESL college writers' options when they sit down to write" (5). In other words, she attempts to make the case for creative writing in the curriculum of composition courses by explaining how it expands students' skill sets.

According to Groller, focusing on a creative genre such as poetry gives multilingual writers "a different way to look at and write about information" (5). She adds that it may "release some of the constraints on ESL writers, further prompting

language learning and writing for communication" (6). In poetry, she sees a genre that "[stresses] experimentation" (77). Furthermore, she believes poetry encourages students to control their writing on a basic, word-by-word level. In her words; "[m]odern poems tend to compress their meaning into a tighter package than do fiction or creative nonfiction. So, each word and decision about form must contribute to the meaning and effect of a poem" (33). Her case is well presented; clearly, creative writing demands different abilities and a different focus from students than essays and other academic prose.

Groller admits there are obstacles for multilingual writers who attempt creative work, but she thinks they can be overcome; she thinks appropriate boundaries can reduce students' difficulties. She cites Sharples and Wilde to claim that, "when boundaries are appropriate they actually aid writing by helping to make the decision making process in writing easier" (22). This is where the benefits of poetry and translation become more apparent. Translation would seem to facilitate the experimentation and new modes of thinking that Groller praises, but it also sets clear boundaries. With works chosen for translation, the topic of the poem and its organization, tone, and imagery are already set. Translators must work within the boundaries of these elements that already have been put to paper by another writer. Ideally, they are experimenting to newly express something that is already clear to them and already wholly formed — the task provides freedom without the overwhelming creative demands of self-authored writing.

D. Reeves

D. Reeves writes in *Educational Leadership* about his experience using cultural interest to teach English in rural China. He experiences positive results when using topics

of cultural interest to teach English. He cites Hughes' 2007 study of poetry in Canadian classrooms as another example of cultural material being successfully used to teach English.

Adams

Adams writes in *The English Journal* about establishing a community of writers in her high school classroom. She used well-known poetry and lyrics as a foundation for writing, asking students to imitate certain pieces that talk about identity. Her efforts led ESL students to feel more comfortable writing, especially when they were asked to write about themselves.

Hismanoglu

Like Adams, D. Reeves, and Groller, Hismanoglu addresses the value of literature in language acquisition. He claims, "[o]ne of the great strengths of literature is its suggestive power. Even in its simplest forms, it invites us to go beyond what is said to what is implied" (56). He also writes about the power of literature to reveal diverse perspectives and inspire discussion and other communicative activities.

Vardell

Vardell describes poetry as a genre that is both appropriate and inspirational for ESL writers. She claims, "the brevity and short lines of poetry appear both manageable and not so intimidating to ESL students" (51). She also says that, "[poetry brings the names and faces of history, the people and places of geography, and the facts and figures of social studies vividly and memorably to life" (51). Vardell then goes on to recommend books of poetry for teaching ESL students at various levels.

Chapter 3

Data and Analysis

Chapter 3 is the presentation and analysis of the data. It begins with a discussion of the data collecting procedure, research methodology, subjects, and data presentation. It then analyzes the translations and essays written by the 18 students in the data sample.

Procedure

The data was collected in English 112, a composition class for ESL students that prepares them for academic composition in English 101. (The IRB form for data collection can be found in Appendix A.) The translation task was given as an in-class essay in the final week of the quarter. This was not unusual because part of the curriculum for English 112 requires students to write a 500-word essay every Friday; however, students were not told to expect a translation assignment. Additionally, poetry translation was something that had not been done previously in the course. For this particular essay, students were allowed to continue writing beyond the end of the class period if they wished, and several did; however, students were not allowed to finish their writing outside of class or the next day in the following English 112 class period. Those that stayed longer typically took an additional thirty minutes to complete the assignment. Normal procedure for Friday essays allows students to receive feedback on their first essay drafts and then submit revised drafts the following week; however, no revisions were made to the data presented here. The essay prompt can be found in Appendix B.

It should be noted that "translation" is not strictly defined in this study. Neither was the term pre-defined for the writers in this study. The prompt asked them to avoid a "word-for-word" translation, but otherwise they were allowed to interpret the assignment

to translate as they saw best. The process of creating an English translation of their L1 poem and the subsequent reflection about their process allowed the writers, in a way, to self-define "translation."

Methodology

The data is the product of action research. It was collected in a classroom setting in order to inform and improve curriculum or instructional techniques in future courses. Contrary to what is common in action research, I did not act as a participant-observer. Participant-observer research typically involves observation, data collection, data interpretation, and reflection done by a researcher who is also a participant in the class and its activities. I was never present in the classroom and did not participate in any of the activities done by the students. However, I had served as an intern during the previous quarter—participating and gaining familiarity with the coursework and general student demographics present in 112 courses. I had a fairly good idea of what students' skill levels would be and how the 112 course objectives would be met. Therefore, there are similarities between this research and participant-observer research. Most significantly, like participant-observer research, this study involves the process of coding.

> Coding is done both inductively and deductively as the researchers, focusing on the research area of interest, categorize the events, behaviors, indications of beliefs, and so on. Inductive codes, or bottom-up, involves some form of organizing events, players, settings, and so on that are present in the data…Deductive coding categorizes and patterns events, actions, beliefs, and so on from domains of interest or theories held by the researchers (Purcell-Gates in Lohpaisankrit 2008).

The coding in this research is both inductive and deductive. In this chapter, the data will be organized by language group and analyzed for patterns that reveal students' ability and authenticity as writers, as well as their cultural perspectives.

This study also falls under the category of ethnography. The *TESOL Quarterly*'s submission guidelines describe ethnographic data analysis and interpretation to be focused on "emic-or participant-attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and practices, as the objective of ethnography is to come to a deeper understanding of how people in particular context experience their social and cultural worlds." The data presented in this chapter does just that: It records emic attitudes and practices of ELL writers in order to understand their experiences as they relate to poetry meaning, poetry translation, and writing across cultures.

Subjects

The writers (N=18) represent four different first languages: Japanese (n=8), Arabic (n=8), Chinese (n=1), and Swahili (n=1). They are all adults in their twenties or thirties. Because there was no selection process for participation in the study, they form a sample of convenience; they are students who were already enrolled in an ESL composition class taught by the thesis director and who were available to participate in the study. They have been organized here by language; their essays are analyzed individually and in the context of the other members of their language group. Analysis in context of all four language groups can be found in Chapter 4.

Data Presentation

The data is presented in its whole, unedited form. Special care was taken to represent the language of the writers exactly as it appeared in their original, hand-written

work. Therefore, errors or mistakes in spelling, grammar, and usage are visible, and may in some cases be distracting. However, this is necessary to preserve the authentic voice of the writers and represent the characteristics of their writing style and ability during a timed activity as accurately as possible. Exceptions were made presenting the work of three writers. Those exceptions are addressed in the introduction to the Saudi Arabian writers.

Japanese Writers

Writers 1 through 8 are native Japanese speakers. They are English majors and Communications majors of junior standing. They are all female. All eight writers were given a poem by Japanese poet Kotaro Takamura and were directed to follow the translation and essay prompt. Figure 1 contains the Japanese version and an English translation. The English translation is the work of Paul Archer and can be found on his website, paularcher.net.

Figure 1.

あどけない話

智恵子は東京に空が無いといふ。
ほんとの空が見たいといふ。
私は驚いて空を見る。
桜若葉の間（あいだ）に在るのは、
切っても切れない
むかしなじみのきれいな空だ。
どんよりけむる地平のぼかしは
うすもも色の朝のしめりだ。
智恵子は遠くを見ながら言ふ。
阿多多羅山（あたたらやま）の山の
上に
毎日出ている青い空が
智恵子のほんとうの空だといふ。
あどけない空の話である。

Talking Like A Child

Chieko says there's no sky in Tokyo,
I want to see the real sky, she says.
Surprised, I look up at the sky.
Among the cherry tree leaves
Is the kind of clear sky
I remember from my childhood.
The leaden horizon tinged
By the moist pink of morning.
Chieko looks far off -
Every day there's a blue sky
High above Mount Atatara,
That's what I call the real sky, she says.
She's like a child when she talks about the sky.

Takamura, K. "Talking Like a Child." Trans. Paul Archer. n.p. n.d. Web. 1 June 2013.; ——.
   "あどけない話" (Talking Like a   Child). *T-koutarou.net* n.p. n.d. Web. 1 June 2013.

Writer 1

"'A Trivial Story'

Now I'd like to show you a poem. The title of the poem is "an trivial story," as I translated in English. The poem was written by a Japanese poet which is 'watashi' in the poem in May, the Showa period. The poem describes a trivial conversation about the sky between watashi and Chieko. There are 13 lines in the poem, and you can also find some rhymes in Japanese. For example, you will see 'ifu' at the end of both first and second lines. Also, you will see ' ha' in fourth and seventh lines, and 'da' in sixth and eighth lines. In most Japanese poems, rhymes are usually found at the end of each line. If I will translate the poem in English, it is as follows:

'A Trivial Story'
I can't find any beauty in the sky in Tokyo,
I want to see the beautiful naked sky,
Chieko says.
I am surprised at what she says, then look over
the sky.
Among early cherry blossoms, there is a beautiful
Sky which I have seen since I was young.
There is a vague skyline, which seems wet pink.
The blue clear sky which is above 'Atatara
Mountain' every time is the real sky for me,
Chieko says, as she looks at for miles calmly.
This is a trivial story about the sky between
us.   Syowa period. 3. May.

Next, I will analyze my translation process. When we translate Japanese into English, we have to be careful to describe 'hidden meanings' in Japanese. For example, in the first line, Chieko says 'there is no sky in Tokyo. It is not a good translation because there is definitely a sky in Tokyo. In this case, we have to think about why she says such things. It is natural that there is a sky in Tokyo, but for Chieko, it is nothing. At this point, I imagined and realized that there is indeed a sky, but it is not the one she is seeking. Therefore, I translated that ' I cannot find any beauty in the sky in Tokyo. Also, Japanese poets often put more than one meanings in one word. For instance, in the second line, Chieko says 'I want to see the real sky.' However, if I just translate 'real,' it is difficult to understand the meaning of the poem because the poet must put more than one meanings in the word 'real.' Therefore, I imagined that for Chieko, 'real' means 'beautiful' and 'clear without dirtiness,' so I finally translated 'the beautiful naked sky.' Another example is in the ninth line. There Chieko says as she look at for miles. However, this translation is not enough because there are another meaning in the word 'for miles.' When people look at for miles, they often think deeply with their mind. Therefore, in order to describe this situation well, I added the word 'calmly.'

Finally, I will summarize one possible meaning of the poem. This poem tells us that we should value the nature more and more. In this Showa period, a lot of technological devices developed well. Especially, since Tokyo is the capital city, the growth was conspicuous. Because of this growth, however, people began to contaminate

the environment. Chieko wanted to see the pure clear sky without any contamination. Young people should study the poem to realize the value of nature."

Writer 1 analysis

Writer 1 is a translator looking for the reality behind the poem's dialogue. She desires to "describe the 'hidden meanings'" accurately, and to do so, she is trying to get deep into the characters' thoughts. She rejects the literal translation of Chieko's spoken words in the first line, "there is no sky in Tokyo," because she believes it is a misrepresentation of what Chieko is communicating. Writer 1 explains, "I imagined and realized that there is indeed a sky, but it is not the one she is seeking. Therefore, I translated that 'I can't find any beauty in the sky in Tokyo.'" Similarly, Writer 1 is dissatisfied with the generic nature of her first translation in line 11, "for miles." She says, "When people look at for miles, they often think deeply with their mind. Therefore, in order to describe this situation well, I added the word "calmly." Interestingly, Writer 1's translation of the final line directs attention to the need for accurate expression. When she translates the poem as a story about the sky "between us," it not only highlights the difference of perspective between Takamura and Chieko, but also suggests that Takamura's initial surprise at Chieko's claim about Tokyo's sky is a symptom of their struggle to express and understand. It seems likely Writer 1 is projecting her own concerns onto the poem's characters, which is something more difficult to see in her peers' translations. The translation assignment may have offered Writer 1 the opportunity to articulate issues relevant to her circumstances using the TL.

Writer 2

"The poem, 'the innocent tale,' was written by Kotaro Takamura, who was an artist studying art and poetry in foreign countries including France. In this poem, the poet

describes how his wife, Chieko, thought of the sky one day. Chieko was looking for the real sky, surrounded by beautiful nature. As she feels the beauty of natural places including trees and flowers, she finds the real sky for her in the Japanese poem. 'The innocent tale' is written in Japanese. However the Japanese is so old that current people hardly use the language in either spoken or written language. The characteristics of this poem from the perspective of poetry in general are that the author uses almost the same format in both of the first and second paragrahs, using the same words. That makes it easy for readers who are Japanese to follow the poem. However, since 'the innocent tale' is written in Japanese, I would like to translate the poem in English in my own way. In addition, I will discuss what I feel during the process of translation and several possible meanings of the poem translated into English.

The poem also contains 15 lines, including the title.

"The Innocent Tale"

Chieko told Tokyo did not have the sky.
She was looking for the real sky here in Tokyo.
I looked out the sky, amazed.
The beautiful sky that I saw since my childhood /
and that was important / appeared in front of me, / coverered with
          young cherry blossoms.
The vague horizon showed / a sign of the morning
colored light pink.
Chieko looked in the far distance, saying /
She found the real sky / over Mt. Atatarayama. /
The real sky was beautifully blue, coming up
every day.
This is an innocent story of the sky.
Shyowa 3.5

Next, I will analyze my translation process. Translation of this poem was remarkably difficult for me, and it took me more time to complete the translation. What was tough and what I learned through the process of translating ' the innocent tale' were to choose appropriate words and to keep simplicity of the original poem. First, I had a hard time in looking for proper words and phrases to keep the good of the 'innocent tale.' Some Japanese words in the poem could not be translated correctly since I did not have the words that referred to English words in my lexicon dictionary. Moreover, some phrases could not expressed well once the poem was written into English because English words could not show aspects of Japanese culture or language. For example, I especially had a difficulty in translating line four, five, and six. This is because there are no words in English that can explain 'Kittemo-kirenai' and 'Mukashinagimi.' I could write longer sentences to explain both of them, but they might destroy the beauty of the poem. 'Kittemo-kirenai' means that since something has a strong relationship, so you cannot cut the connection. 'Mukashinigimi' means that you are used to having something, and it is

familiar to you. Instead of using those pieces of explanation, I used the clause, tha I saw since my childhood, to explain how familiar the sky was to the poet. Another example is on the line eight. 'Sumomo' is fruit, but since I did not know the English name, so I used the color of the fruit, pink, to show the color of the morning. Second, I also had a tough challenge to keep the simplicity of the poem. In the original poem, there are not so many descriptive adjectives, yet from a few adjectives and modifiers, Japanese readers can understand the beauty of natural places and thoughts of the characters. As a Japanese, I understand the scenary that the poet showed by his words. However, when I wanted to apply all of his thoughts in the English translation, I notice that I would have to use a lot of attritutive adjectives to show the setting or background of the poem. For instance, I found it difficult to translate the line three. 'Odoroite' has several meanings, depending on the object that the person looks at. When ghosts suddenly appear in front of you, you might be either surprised or astonished. When you look at something beautiful, you will be amazed. The Japanese word, 'Odoroite' includes the meanings of emotions in which people are amazed, surprised, or astonished. The fact makes it difficult for me to explain the feelings of the poet. However, in this case, the poet looks at the beautiful sky, so I chose the word, amazed, and I did not dare to explain more than that to keep the simplicity of the original sentence. Since the Japanese and English language different rhysms including syllables and limes, and the beauty of their languages including word choices, the translation process was one of the hardest exercises in the class.

   Finally I will summarize one possible meaning of the poem. The main message that I felt while reading this poem is that Chieko assumed that Tokyo would not have the real sky since Tokyo was such an urban city and even the sky was busy like people. However, as Chieko and the poet looked around them, they found the Atatarayama, and the sky was beautifully blue and the scenary was what they used to see when they were children. The sky was near the couple already while they had been looking for the real sky. The real sky for both of them was familiar one. When I read the poem, I felt I got something important back to my heart. This is because since I live in developed society which provides me with anything I want and anything convenient for people including technology. Eventually, what I want personally required a high demand. For instance, I want to get a lot of money to study more and to live comfortably with expensive stuff such as electricity. Before reading the poem, I had not cared about the beauty of nature. I had not even looked around me. I almost forgot what was important for human's lives. Nature has been important part of Japanese culture. Japanese people have been living up with natural places. For instance, they build houses out of natural resources and apply them into their living. The poem reminds me of the importance of nature. What is beautiful should not be artificial since we already gain beautiful things such as the sky, mountains, and trees from nature. I was so distracted by stuff made with technology, and I put most priority on it rather than nature. I don't need anything else besides nature since nature is part of Japanese culture, and it relaxes me a lot. If Americans know how strong relationships Japanese have with nature, they might gradually understand how important this poem. This poem is a key of noticing the beauty of nature in front of people. I would strongly recommend that young people read this poem, especially young people who have the same thought that I had before I read the poem. Unless they understand the importance of natural places, they will not know why the media insists on danger of deforestation. We have to protect nature from technology even though we can have a

more comfortable life with it. Reading the poem warns me to keep Japanese nature beautiful and clean, and I will definitely work on the protection of nature."

Writer 2 analysis

Writer 2 indicates that she has seen the poem before, which makes her more familiar with it than the other writers. Her knowledge of the title and the author's background information are a distinct advantage. However, her familiarity does not necessarily result in an easier translation process. In fact, she describes the translation as "remarkably difficult." Neither does her familiarity result in a more skillful translation. Like all the writers, she struggles with syntax; for example, in the third line of her translation, she seems to be unaware of whether she is using a phrasal verb or a verb plus a preposition, writing, "I looked out the sky, amazed." But in her own view, the greatest challenge was trying to protect the simplicity of the poem while also communicating the unspoken cultural significance of certain words and phrases. Like Writer 1, she is concerned with what is unspoken; however, her main goal is not clarity but integrity. She wants to preserve the artistic integrity of the original. She says, "I could write longer sentences to explain […], but they might destroy the beauty of the poem." For example, when translating the word "*Odoroite*," she says, "I chose the word, amazed, and I did not dare to explain more than that to keep the simplicity of the original sentence." Her desire for simplicity results in a less descriptive and less nuanced translation, but she shows control of her TL writing. She has made conscious choices to restrain her translation, keeping in mind both her audience and the integrity of the original.

Writer 3

"A Childlike Story
Chieko says there is not sky in Tokyo,

She wants to see genuine sky.
I look up sky feeling surprised with her words.
Through cherry trees spreading their hands to the sky,
I can see fair sky
I have known since I was a little child.
Dim hue of horizon is
       Peach color wetting with morning due
Chieko says looking somewhere far away from here,
The sky spreading every day
Above Mt Atatara,
Which is genuine sky for Chieko.
This is a childlike (innocent) story of sky.
       May, Showa 3

Next I will analyze my translation process. What I learned from translation process is the differen of words or phrase order between Japanese and English. Some sentences are written on some lines. I tried to follow the order as much as possible when I was translating, but I thought that I need to change some phrase orders to clarify the meaning. I think that it is because Japanese has different grammar. The biggest difference is that we usually says verbs at the end of the sentence and we usually put the modifier before the words we want to modify. So, I needed to change the word or phrase order.

The second lesson I learned from the process is that it is difficult to tell the meaning and atmosphere the poem has. I think that I need not only to tell the correct meaning in detail, but also to tell the nuance of the poem. If I try to tell the meaning, I use many words or phrase. Using many words or phrase gives readers different impression, On the other hand, if I try to show the atmosphere or color of this poem, I need to omit some explanation. Then, some foreign readers can not understand the exact meaning of the poem. So, it's very difficult to translate keeping the balance of meaning and atmosphere. Also, this poem was written long time ago that my parents were not born. Though the author didn't use difficult words we can't understand, we can find some old diction or letters. I can't translate the old way of writing. Besides, I can't exactly understand one word. So I don't know if I can translate correctly or not in line 8. I believe that Japanese is very rich language and has various expression for one thing. Therefore, there are words that other languages don't have. This makes translation difficult. And, I feel unfortunate because I can't tell the beauty Japanese has.

Finally I will summarize one possible meaning of the poem. I don't know the relation between Chieko and the author, but this poem centers on Chieko's story. She thinks that sky in Tokyo isn't genuine sky. The sky above Mt. Atatara is genuine sky. I guess this mountain is in her home city. And I think that what she wants to say is that Tokyo is very crowded even though it's long time ago. Tokyo is totally different from her home city. She can't feel relax and ease as much as she did in her home. Anyway, of course, I think she need to be independent. The author decided the title as 'childlike story' or 'innocence story.' He/she thought Chieko should be independent, or he/she praised her for her innocence because she keeps likeing her home town. She likes looking up sky, but she doesn't like the sky in Tokyo because she doesn't feel home in Tokyo.

This poem tells that she misses her home country. However, actually I don't understand the necessity of line 7 and 8 well. I guess this shows how beautiful the sky in her hometown is. This is description of the sky she likes. I feel calmness, quietness and a little sorrow. I like this poem because I also feel calm and this reminds me my hometown. So, it's good for young people to learn this poem regardless country. People all over the world can understand the feeling that Chieko loves her hometown. They realize how they think of their own hometown by learning this poem. In my case, I sympathize with her feeling because I also sometimes miss my country. And I like feeling calmness from this poem."

Writer 3 analysis

Writer 3 has similar concerns to Writer 2. She is aware of the "atmosphere" created by the succinct lines of the original, and she worries that attempting to reveal cultural significance through her translation will decrease the artistic value of the poem. However, she sees that she truly has two tasks: "I think that I need not only to tell the correct meaning in detail, but also to tell the nuance of the poem." This balance appears to have been her primary focus and her biggest challenge. She says "it's very difficult to translate keeping the balance of meaning and atmosphere." However, she does seem to achieve balance between description and economy. She is the only writer who literally translates the word "*sumomo*" to "peach," but she is also the only writer to use the kind of metaphorical imagery visible in the 4th line: "Through cherry trees spreading their hands to the sky." Although there are some grammatical miscues, the balance of the literal and metaphorical makes hers a rich translation. Despite her skillful work, she is not convinced that she has done justice to the original or to her own language. She laments, "I feel unfortunate because I can't tell the beauty Japanese has." Writer 3 is perhaps the most sensitive of the Japanese writers to the cultural value of the original and the difficulties of translation.

Writer 4

"Poem in Translation

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In Japan, we have two kinds of poems. First, it is specified the number of letters, so we have to make a poem with five-seven-five letters. It means we need to explain our feeling and opinion by using only 17 letters. Also, we must include a word that expresses the season. For example, if we use the word 'snow' or 'New year's day,' we can guess the season is winter. This style is called 'Haiku' in Japanese. Many people especially who were rich and high position enjoyed 'Haiku,' and this is still our beautiful culture in Japan. On the other hand, the other style does not have any rules, so it is absolutely free. We can tell whatever we want without caring the number of words and seasonal words. In this essay, I give you a great example of this style of Japanese poem.

'A story from a child's view'
Chieko says 'we don't have a sky in Tokyo. /
I want to see a real sky.' /
I surprisingly look up, / then I can see /
a huge, usual, and beautiful sky /
between leaves of a cherry blossom. /
A moody and smoky horizon /
is a sign of a beginning of a day. /
Chieko says as looking far away /
'I can see a blue sky / above the Atatara Mountain. /
and that is my real sky.' /
This is a story from the view point of a child.

Next I will analyze my translation process. Honestly, it was hard to translate this poem from Japanese to English. Because Japanese expression is usually too general, not specific. I was confused the word 'donyori kemuru' in line 7. Of course I understand the meaning, but I did not come up any adjectives that have the exactly same idea. I wanted to tell a negative and dark image, so I chose 'moody and smoky.' Also, translating this title was hard. Because I do not know how I should say 'adokenai' in English. I guess it means like childish and unmature. However, I am sure that the main character is a little girl named Chieko, so I put the title ' A story from a child's view,' By translating this poem, I also learned that we need imagination to read poems. Novels tell us everything, but poems are short and not included much information. Therefore, we have to imagine the situation and teach readers what the poem wants to tell.

Finally, I will summarize one possible meaning of the poem. I think the background of this poem is during an economic groth. At that time, Japanese people focused on only improving technology and making money. However, the main character, Chieko, does not like such adults' idea and misses the previous environment. As I wrote in the first paragraph, we have two kinds of poems and we learn both of them to learn the classical literature and express our feelings freely. Poems are short and do not have much information, so we need to guess and imagine. In my opinion, we find interests and flavors in such a point of poems.

Writer 4 analysis

Writer 4 does not consider the artistic qualities of the poem as deeply as other writers. In her opinion, difficulty translating the poem has to do with general poetic tradition, or perhaps the rhetorical incongruence between Japanese and English. She says, "it was hard to translate this poem from Japanese to English. Because Japanese expression is usually too general, not specific." It is probably best to assume that she means Japanese poetry is vague by design, but she does not offer an explanation as to why it is designed that way. Like Writer 1, she believes the real circumstances of the poem are hidden from those unfamiliar with Japanese culture by non-specific words. She does not reveal whether she made any effort to clarify meaning in her translation, but it appears that she was relying on readers' imagination to add depth to the words. As a result, her translation is succinct and literal. In fact, she neglects to include one of the most vibrant pieces of imagery in the poem—the comparison of the morning sky to a peach, "*sumomo.*" Additionally, the descriptive words "moody and smoky" find their way into her translation only because she could not find words that "have the exactly same idea" as the original. Ultimately, her solution to the non-specific language of poetry is unclear. She says that "we need imagination to read poems. Novels tell us everything, but poems are short and not included much information." But she goes on to claim that some sort of instruction is needed in addition to reading, saying, "we have to imagine the situation and teach readers what the poem wants to tell." Perhaps she means the translator is the teacher, or perhaps she is limiting poetry analysis to an academic setting. Either way, Writer 6 seems to conclude that a translation, and indeed any poetry, cannot be fully

appreciated without an informed imagination. Unlike other writers, Writer 4 does not

shoulder the burden of cultural mediation as a translator.

Writer 5

"Poem in Translation
'Adokenai hanashi' is a Japanese poem which is written about eighty years ago. The author described the differences of the sky between two cities in Japan: Tokyo and Atatarayama. Chieko, whom the author use on poem, insists that there is no sky in Tokyo. She said she would like to see 'real sky.' Then, the author depicts is as beautiful, but the color is light. In contrast, there is 'real sky' in Atatarayama, and Chieko describes it as blue. Using a word 'sky' six times, the author creates the rhythmes, and the poem is such as conversation. This poem has only thirteen lines, but each sentenses have deep meanings. My translation to English is below.

Chieko says there is no sky in Tokyo.
She says she would like to see the real sky.
I was surprised, and I checked the sky.
Between young leave of cherry blossom,
Unseparable (ana)
Beautiful sky which remains people their
hometown, (there is)
On the horizon, smog[g]y and unclear sky is soft and
light pink, and it shows mist in
the morning.
Chieko says looking far.
Above a mountain called Atatarayama,
We can see the blue sky every day.
Chieko says, that is real sky.
This story is about childlike sky.

Next, I will analyze my translation process. There are two difficulties to translate from Japanese to English. First, composition of sentenses is different. On English grammer, subject should be said at first, and verb is next. However, in Japanese, verb is said at last of sentenses. To say verb lastly, Japanese sentenses create light, soft, and misterious meaning. However, in English, verb helps readers understand what a person wants to tell much earlier than Japanese. For example, my translated sentense which begin with 'unseparable' lack a subject and a verb. That is because they are not mentioned in original poem, and it is not important to express author's idea. Therefore, a grammatical difference, the order of a subject and verb, made me confused on translation. Next, it is hard to describe a specific Japanese word to English. For instance, original poem uses a Japanese word ' sumomo.' This is a kind of peach, and the author uses it to depict a color of the sky. For Japanese people, we can imagine what color 'sumomo' is. However, non-Japanese people cannot imagine the color because they never see it. The color is hard to express because people so feel it by themselves. I depict 'sumomo' color as light and soft

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pink, but it is not enough explanation. Japanese words need readers to imagine the meaning. This is one of the biggest teaching by this poem. Also, the author uses words who have several meaning, and they help readers guess the situation the author tell more. For instance, a sentense, 'Chieko say something looking far,' has two meaning. Chieko states something looking at the direction to Aso, where is much far from Tokyo. Another meaning is Chieko is looking for the future that she would back to Atatarayama from Tokyo. Another example is 'childlike' sky on the last sentense of my translation. The original word is 'adokenai,' and it means not only childish but also innocent. I uses simpler words on my translation: far and childish because readers can guess another meanings if they tried. The word 'far' can be used not only physical distance but unvisible one. Also, child is a symbol of innocent. Hence, analysis of this poem help to know it is necessary to guess and imagine the situation from words more.

Finally, I will summarize one possible meaning of this poem. The key point is who is Chieko for the author. I guess Chieko must be the author's wife; in other words, the author is a man. Chieko considers the sky in Tokyo is unclear and not bright. This expresses what Chieko does not have fun time in Tokyo, and she misses Atatarayama. That is why she emphasizes the sky in Atatarayama is beautiful and 'real' sky. The point I would like foreign readers to understand is each word's meaning. For instance, cherry blossom is a symbol of Spring. Additionally, mist describes Chieko's depression in Tokyo. These understanding need deep analysis. Nowadays young people lack to analyze sentenses. That is why young people should study this poem. This poem makes me think my hometown, and it leads to deeply love my hometown.

Writer 5 analysis

Writer 5, like the previous writers, is concerned with the complexity of meaning in the short lines of the original. When confronted with words that contain multiple meanings, she has chosen the "simpler" translation. Like Writer 4, she puts her faith in the readers' ability to "imagine" whatever is unspoken. She finds that translating cultural meaning is "hard," however; she also struggles to make an appropriate syntactic conversion from Japanese to English. An obvious example comes in the 6th and 7th lines, where she writes, "Beautiful sky which remains people their hometown, (there is)." Given these struggles, it is understandable that grammar is the first thing she mentions about her process. She says that subject and verb order troubled her the most. She briefly explains how difference in order has a more significant effect on the poem than one

might expect—that it can change tone. She claims, "[by saying the] verb lastly, Japanese [sentences] create light, soft, and [mysterious] meaning. However, in English, [verbs help] readers understand what a person wants to tell much earlier than [in] Japanese." Although she wants to stay true to the indirect and "mysterious" original version, she cannot find a grammatically correct way to retain that mystery in the TL. She admits this, saying, "grammatical difference, the order of a subject and verb, made me confused on translation." This is an important understanding; she discovers exactly what tripped her up during the translation process. The recognition may provide an opportunity for her to expand her English proficiency by learning how to be indirect in the TL.

Writer 6

"The title of this poem is 'the pure story' and it doesn't say the poet. It's talking about Chieko's feeling to the sky in Tokyo, the capital in Japan. So, we can guess that one of her friends or people around her wrote it. It doesn't have the perfect rhymes in Japanese, but we see 'ju' in lines 1, 2, 9, and 12. Also we find 'ha' in lines 4 and 7, and 'da' in lines 6 and 8. This poem consists of title and 12 lines content. Then, let me translate it into English.

'Chieko said Tokyo doesn't have the sky,
she wants to see the real sky.
I got surprised and looked up at the sky,
I could see the endless, beautiful, familiar
sky between the young leeves of cherry brossam.
Unclear and smoky holizon which looked pink
showed the morning wetness.
Chieko said, looking far away, that what is
the real sky for her is the blue sky on the
Atatarayama seen everyday.
It's a pure story about the sky.'

Next, I will analyze my translation process. When I translated it from Japanese to English, I tried to keep two important things in my mind. First, I should decide the correct meaning for one Japanese word after I read the whole of this poem and understand it perfectly. Japanese words also have many meanings like English words. And also, in Japanese culture, it is often preffered to say something indirectly and softly. So, it's sometimes more difficult to catch the meaning and context correctly. To prevent misunderstanding, we should read through whole parts several times, and then decide the

content. Secondaly, Japanese has the different rule in order from English. Off course, the order of the words in a sentence is different. For example, we see subject, verb, and object in English. However we see subject, object, and verb in Japanese. In addition to this, In English, we should show our opinion clearly at the beginning of the paragraph, such as if we are for or against and what is the main points. However, in Japanese, we can't know the opinion or main points clearly till the end of the paragraph. So we often guess the wrighter's points in reading the paragraph. So when we translate from Japanese to English, we should change the order of the sentences. When I translated this assigned poem, it took me a little long time to decide the meanings for these two words - - 'adokenai' and 'hontou no Sora'. I learned in high school that 'adokenai' means 'trivial'. However, when I read this poem, I didn't think it was a trivial story. Also this story was not important but it was significant for her, and her pure mind created this feeling. So, I decided to define it as 'pure'. And also, 'hontou no Sora' could be translated to 'the real sky' literally. But off course, Tokyo also has a sky and she wanted to say that she didn't like the sky in Tokyo and longed for the sky on mt. Atatara. I translated literally, but I thought she had more meanings in there.

Finally, I will summarize one possible meaning of the poem. I think that actually, this poem shows several serious problems in Tokyo. As you know, Tokyo is a big city and the center of Japan in industry, fasion, or mass media. There are always crowd with people, cars, and buildings. In addition, economic situations in Japan is not so good in recent years, so It's getting more difficult to get appropriate jobs, earn enough money to feed their family members, and have enough time to relax themselves. These combinations are making their society very stressful. It caused the bad relationships between coworkers or friends and depressed feeling to many people. And also, the actual environment is getting polluted because of a number of industrial factories. Thanks to this poem I realized the effects those problems in Tokyo have, so every student in Japan should study it and learn how serious they are. Actually, I have never lived in or near Tokyo. However, as one of Japanese citizens, I should seriously think about the solution for the pollution of the capital of Japan."

Writer 6 analysis:

Like the other writers, writer 6 is convinced subtle meanings in the poem must

somehow be translated, but she takes more of a top-down approach to understanding.

Rather than go word-by-word and translate the complex unspoken meanings individually,

she wants to get a feel for how all the words work together before she makes translation

decisions. She says, "I should decide the correct meaning for one Japanese word after I

read the whole of this poem and understand it perfectly." Unlike writers 4 and 5, she

believes the meanings that are presented "indirectly and softly" can be revealed after

thorough examination. She claims Japanese poetry is meant to be slowly digested, saying, "it's sometimes more difficult to catch the meaning and context correctly. To prevent misunderstanding, we should read through whole parts several times, and then decide the content." However, despite this systematic and seemingly thorough approach to her translation, Writer 6 ultimately ends up with a literal translation. She admits, "I translated literally, but I thought she had more meanings in there." Apparently, the subtle meanings that she read and re-read the original to find are not revealed in her translation. Writer 6's work shows that the process of understanding a poem does not necessarily lead one to be able to communicate that understanding in translation.

Writer 7

"Today, I tell you about one Japanese poem. The title is 'Adokenai hanashi' it's mean like 'childlike story.' Japanese poem has a very few rhymes but almost poem does not use this. There are thirteen lines in this poem and this poem made of Showa area. This poem was no author. I write the translation of 'childlike story' poem.

Chieko said that Tokyo has no sky / she said that wants to see real sky
I was surprised and saw the sky. /
I look from between young cherry leaves / could not cut down /
same very beautiful sky when I saw before /
The end of earth line was difficult to see like the flag and shadow were / telled the morning color was sumomo which is frutes and; pink & orange color /
Chieko said to see faw away / Atatara yama Atatara yama
's on the top of mountain / that she saw the blue sky every day / she said that is real sky. / This is cute childlike story.

Next I will analyze my translation process. First, Japanese poem was difficult to translation because there are a lot of traditional Japanese word. for example 'Donyori kemuru' 'bokashi' ect, I could not translation thiese situations in English. Next, Japanese grammar does not written for first subject and next vab. So, It was difficult to write The translation. for example, line 4 to line 6 were one sentence but one long sentence. Also vabe was line 6 and subject was line 4. I really confused to translate of poem. If the same grammer, it is very easy. The line 4 to line 6 meanings the author thought to see this sky looks when she/he saw a child and she/he looked from between the young cherry leaves.
Finally, I will summarize one possible meaning of the poem. This situation was morning and Chieko is the author's children. She may be from four to five age. She did not know sun lise which become red color on the sky. That is why, she said 'I want to see

real sky and Tokyo has no sky' At that time, Tokyo's sky was became red color and I thought 'Atatarayama (Atatara mountain) had already finish the sun lise.

However, Japanese poem was sometimes very difficult. This poem was used morning key ward so I thought this was morning but the author may think sun set. like some poem were used trick but I guess at this time, may be morning. In Japan, elementary, junior-high school and high school student studied poem but it was very few information and it was difficult to understand everything because there are lot of traditional ward of poem in Japan. Also we studied little bit and not so many. Because there are a lot of another short poem and very very short poem (Tanka and Haiku) in Japan."

Writer 7 analysis

Writer 7 differs from the other writers in that she makes no mention of subtle meaning or non-specific words. She admits difficulty only with syntax and translating "traditional Japanese" words, apparently because she is less familiar with them. It is clear from her translation that the tone of the original does not concern her. She allows herself as many words as necessary and is a somewhat blunt writer whose tone seems almost conversational at times. For example, while most other writers limited their description of the morning sky to maintain the simple tone of the original, writer 7's description is both a literal translation and an explanation. She writes that the "morning color was sumomo which is [fruit] and; pink & orange color." Similarly, other writers struggled for adjectives to describe the appearance of the horizon, but writer 7 again translates as though she is giving a simplified explanation. She writes, "[the] end of earth line was difficult to see like the flag and shadow were [there]." Her workman like approach to the translation suggests that she views completion of the task as the measurement of her success. Unfortunately, she does not explain much about her process which leaves us to wonder why she made the choices she did.

Writer 8

"Friday Essay 11: Poem in Translation

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This poem's name is 'Adokenai hanashi.' It is hard to explain 'Adokenai' in English because there is not specific translation that I know. It mean not really important, but you feel something about something. They have little rhymes but not really. This poem is writtin in Old Japanese and normal Japanese mix, so it little hard to read and understand if you didn't have knowledge about it. There are 7 lines.

Chieko said in Tokyo, there no sky. / She want to see the real sky.
I look to the sky surprisingly.
There is familiar and beautiful sky / between the young leaf of cherry blossom / that we cannot forget, and didn't change since before.
The sign of the morning of pink sky is / the smoky ground.
Chieko said by looking very far beyond / that the blue sky which appear everyday on top of Mt. Atatara / is the real sky.

Next, I will analyze my translation process. I learned two lessons through translating this poem. First, it was really hard for me to translate into clear English sentence. Japanese words and English words have many difficulty when we translate. It is because in Japanese there is some words that it is impossible to translate into English. There is so many expression of words. I learned that I should study more English word to be able to translate these kind of poem. Second, I learned that Japanese is hard. I could able to understand brefly about this poem's mean, but I couldn't understand clearly about what the author of this poem whan to tell us. I translated this poem by reading the sentences so many time until I understand in my brain. Also, before I wrote down, I changed the sentence in to English in my help and kept thinking until the English sentence makes sence to me. First word that there was more that one meaning is 'adokenai,' which is the familiar meaning for me was 'cute' or 'adolabol.' But in this poem it was more like 'not really important.' I decided to use this meaning through reading the whole poem. Second word was the line 3rd's 'nagimi.' It means 'familiar' and 'nostalgic.' I choose 'familiar' because at the end there was a word 'everyday.'

Finally, I will summarize one possible meaning of the poem. The main massage of this poem is I think to feel the usually thing little special. Everyday you can able to see the sky because sky is always top of our head. But if you see carefully and deeply you can feel something different than usual. Maybe the author want to tell us usual thing is actually important to yourselve. I feel that if you look the sky carefully we can see in different way. Deciding it real or not is ourselve. Also, I felt looking normal thing in different way you can feel and discover something different. You have to know and learn the way Japanese feel or express about colors or the views We have a lot of strange way of expressing colors and views. For example, there is so many way to explain about color pink. I think Japanese are sensitive and want to explain the thing really specificly. I never read this poem before. I don't think many young Japanese study this poem because it is really complicated and hard to understand the meaning. This is my first time to see this poem so I don't know how this poem means to my life, but I think it's going to be that I can able to think usuall thing important. It doesn't feel sky is changing is really but if you see carefull everyday sky look different everyday depends on your feeling. This poem gave me chance to think that everything can change."

Writer 8 analysis

Writer 8 mentions familiar issues of meaning, but she is also the only writer to address her ability in her L1, Japanese. Like other writers, she is challenged by the complexity of meaning in Japanese words. She says, "in Japanese there [are] some words that it is impossible to translate into English. There [are] so many expression[s] of words." Like writer 6, she uses a top down approach in his translation process. She explains, "I translated this poem by reading the sentences so many time[s] until I understand [them] in my brain. Also, before I wrote down, I changed the sentence in to English in my help and kept thinking until the English sentence makes [sense] to me." Despite her careful procedure, the translation was "hard" for her, and she feels she must improve her English to do better. However, she also blames her lack of understanding of the original version for her challenges. She admits, "I learned that Japanese is hard. I could [be] able to understand [briefly] about this poem's mean, but I couldn't understand clearly about what the author of this poem [wants] to tell us." Her translation experience seems to have taught her about her ability in both her TL and L1.

Analysis of Japanese Translations

As a group, the Japanese writers demonstrate knowledge of what was lost between their L1 and TL. They also show that poetry translation requires them to carefully consider the unspoken and try to find ways to reveal it in their TL. Generally speaking, this was their biggest challenge. Although some of them struggle to convert meaning into TL syntax, and at least one writer (Writer 8) struggles to understand the L1 meaning of the poem, the writers consistently address the challenge of making hidden cultural meaning clear in their translations. Their attention to hidden meaning may reflect

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their diligence as students, or it may reflect the level to which they value and desire to share their L1. Certainly, different concerns lead them to the challenge of hidden meaning. Some are worried that adequately translating meaning will destroy the stylistic qualities of the L1 poem, but others find the hidden meanings to be too complex to translate at all and feel instruction or explanation should accompany translations if the original were to be done justice. Whether they were taught those concerns or came to them upon trying the assignment is unknown. But, regardless of how they arrived at their perspectives, their work shows an appreciation for the scope of the task they were presented with and an ability to consider the cultural significance of the two languages.

Although the writers often find challenges in the same word or phrases, they show variety in their solutions. For example, the word 'adokenai' that appears in the title is translated six different ways by the eight writers. Writers 3, 5, and 7 choose "childlike" for their translation, but writer 7 also includes the word "cute." The other translations are "trivial," "innocent," "from a child's view," "pure," and a full explanation from writer 8: "it [means] not really important but you feel something about something." It is important to note careful consideration goes into their choices. Writer 6, for example, initially thinks to use "trivial" in her translation, but eventually chooses "pure" because she thinks the title was meant to reflect Chieko's state of mind. On the other hand, writer 5 says that she is aware of two possible translations: "childish" and "innocent." She chooses "childish" because she expects readers can easily imagine different meanings from that word. These concerns give the appearance that the translation assignment causes the writers to aim for a degree of specificity and accuracy that stretches their skills as TL writers.

Finally, several of the Japanese writers seem to see themselves as ambassadors of their language. For them, the assignment is not just about accurately translating the individual poem, but it is also about faithfully representing the richness and beauty of their L1. Writer 2 who "did not dare" misrepresent the tone of the original poem, and Writer 3 who feels "unfortunate" that she is unable to share the "beauty" of Japanese are prime examples of this mindset. Their L1 seems almost sacred to them. The lack of confidence they sometimes express in their translations probably says as much about their perception of their responsibilities as cultural ambassadors as it does about their confidence in their TL ability

Saudi Arabian Writers

Writers 9 through 16 are native Arabic speakers. All of them are male. Unlike the Japanese writers, they do not come from English or Communications programs. All of them were given the Arabic version of a poem by Sudanese poet Al-Saddiq Al-Raddi and were instructed to follow the translation and essay prompt.

The Arabic writers were given a longer poem than the other writers in the class and were allowed to translate only as much as they could because of the length. They were not expected to finish the translation of the entire poem. However, they understood this freedom to mean they could begin their translation at any line of the poem they wished. Subsequently, their translations begin and end in different places, and some of the translations do not have any lines in common with each other. This limits what can be said about their translations as a group.

Ideally, this chapter would present the whole, unedited work of the Arabic writers; however, there were issues that prevented accurate representation of their

translations and essays. First, the originals contained numerous misspellings that could be interpreted as several different English words even when read in context: "peasnd," "natioral," "remied," "enlogy." Second, handwriting affected the ability to decipher some words and phrases. Finally, the photocopies of the original written assignments obscured words and, occasionally, entire lines that had been written in pencil. Therefore, a few omissions and substitutions have been made in what is presented here. An omission because of a bad photocopy is indicated by ellipses in brackets; all other words or phrases that appear in brackets are guesses made by the researcher as to the likely intent behind indecipherable handwriting. Nothing else has been changed from the original hand-written copies.

The poem, "A Body," is presented in both Arabic and English in Figure 2. The English translation presented here is the work of Sarah Maguire and Altef Alshaer. It can be found on poetrytranslation.org.

Figure 2.

جسد

جُنّةُ طَائِرٍ بِفَمِكْ
تَبْعَثُ الأَغْنِية
نَيّئًا
من عيونِكَ ينطلقُ الضّوءُ
في عُرْيِهِ الكَامِلِ
عليكَ أَنْ تُرْسِلَ الأُفْقَ، مَرّةً كي
تُفيقَ، عليكَ
أَنْ تبعثَ نافذةً تِلْوَ أخرى
تَسْنِدُ الجِّدارْ
أَتْرُكُ الأبجدية تتعلّقُ بي
وأنا أَتسلّقُ خيطَ اللّغَةِ الرّفيع
بيني والعالم.
أَتَجَمْهَرُ في فَمِي
معلّقًا بين اللّغةِ والعالم
بين العالم والأبجدية.
أَتْرُكُ رأسي
يُنْصِتُ للخرافة
أَصغِي لمديح الجّهاتِ لبعضِها
وأزمجرُ للرّيح من فُوّهَةِ الجَبَلْ
ما لساني يقولُ لِيَ اصْعَدِ المسافة
ما المسافةُ بين صوتي وحنيني
ما هناكْ؟!
جَسَدٌ يترقّعُ عن جسدي
جسدٌ تَنْفِيهِ الرّغبة
جسدٌ تَعْلُوهُ الرّيح.

A Body

The body of a bird in your mouth
breathing songs.
Raw light spills from your eyes,
utterly naked.
You must breach the horizon, once,
in order to wake up.
You must open window after window.
You must support the walls.

I let alphabets cling to me
as I climb the thread of language
between myself and the world.
I muster crowds in my mouth:
suspended between language and the world,
between the world and the alphabets.
I let my head
listen to the myth,
to all sides praising each other.
And I shout at the winds from the top of a
mountain.

Why does my tongue tell me to climb this far?
What is the distance between my voice and my
longing?
What is there?
A body transcending my body.
A body exiled by desire.
A body sheltered by the wind.

Al-raddi, A.-S. "A Body." Trans. Atef Alshaer & Sarah Marguire. Poetry Translation Centre. n.d. Web. 20
Oct. 2012.

Writer 9

"This poem is talking about the body. Like if the body staed far away from its lovers. The poem is writen in Arabic language unknown topic, and unknown author. However, the author meant his body went in the sky in the air and his voice was not listened because it was in the air, but he could listied to the good words and the bad words from the people; in addition, all of the words are going to his haed forced to him and he could not clear them.

Next, I will analyze my translation process in English from the original poem. Sometimes the words are not make since, but I will try to do the best, and I will put numbers beside each line.

1. 'I will let my head' (this should match the second line.)
I will leave my head.
2. 'I will let my head listing to' it is mean that he is going to let his head to listing for the words either good or bad.
3. This word mean that the words has not benfits for as. or we can say some of the words are influence for bad feeling.
4. I can listing to the same enlogy words and got them to support my feeling.
5. I got announ from the windy that came from the muntens or I don't like the stormes that came from the muntens.
6. My tongue is trying to get me in the far distance away or go up to the higher place, I think heare he meant, he don't care of the people saying, because his ethics are better than the people who saying the bad words.
7. What is the distance between my voice and my miss that mean there is no distance I heard a lot of words there I miss to my town or family
8. What is there?
9. This is a body is going up from the body. There is body is getting far away from my own body.
10. This is a body is going up, it has a lot of active feeling or this body has vibrancy then it going away he is getting sad because that body close to him.
11. That body went to the sky on the air, I can see it up there in the air.

I learned a lot of thing from this poem not even two. First, your country is the one place can be the safe, helpful place, and the comfortable place for you. Second, The person should not listing from any person, not everything true. People like to say a lot of thing that could effect to our feeling, then they don't care what did the say.

Finally, I will summarize some possible meaning of the poem. This poem talked about a lot of thing, like the poet went far away from his original place. The poet felt as strang person when he was far away. This poem is talking about the same situation of me in the United States. When I finished my high school I went far away from my family. I felt of the alienation. Then I came to USA it's tough it was three years there and it's going to be five years here."

Writer 9 analysis

Writer 9 makes a connection between the content of the poem and his personal circumstances. Like most of the Arabic writers, he struggles to create a coherent translation, and he has not shared any of his translation process. However, it is evident that the assignment has caused him to consider his status as an ESL speaker living far from his native culture. He sees his predicament and a familiar perspective in the words of the poem. The familiarity arises in two themes that he sees in the poem: being separated from your home and being overwhelmed by language. First, he claims that the person speaking in the poem has been separated from his home and therefore feels uncomfortable. He explains that the "poem is talking about the same situation [as] me in the United States." He adds that he feels a similar "alienation," and explains that "your country is the one place [you] can be the safe[;][it is a] helpful place, and the comfortable place for you." Additionally, his description of the narrator's circumstances seems to show chaos and confusion. He says that "all of the words are going to his [head,] forced to him[,] and he [can] not clear them." It is unclear whether he intends to draw a comparison to his struggles as an ELL, but it certainly appears that he feels a kinship with the confusion he interprets. A logical next step for Writer 9 is to learn to use his familiarity with the emotional content of the poem to create a confident and coherent TL translation.

Writer 10

"What is Poem in Arabic Language
Poems are different from language to another. It might be different in meanings or ideas. Some English poems are not able to be translated to Arabic Language and some other Arabic pomes cannot be translated the other way around because of the different expietation of the words in a certen race. My teacher gave me an Arabic poem with an

unknown poet and title, and she asked me to translate it to English. However; the poem is so difficult to understand in Arabic but I'll try to do some translation on it.

At first, I will analyze my translation process in Line by line. It's started by the word /body/ and it was just one word in the line, which is wired in the Arabic Poems. Then it continued by /of honist and accptance / Like a dead body of a baird in your mouth, giving the voice of the song / that's like if it is not cooked/. the poet, I think, is trying to say that the baird that in your moth is not cooked. Then he/she continued by / from your eyes, the light is coming through / contains the perfectness / You have to see through the distance, once, and you have to get the light goes through every window / You have to get the wall supported /. the poet is trying to say, let the light goes through every single window, one by one. Then he/she continued be / Leave the alphabit hang on me / while I am climbing the thin thread of the language / between me and the world / then he/she ended the poem by /I'm gathering my self in my mouth /stuck between the language and the world / between the world and the alphabit /.

Secondly, I will summarize what I understood from this poem and explain one possible meaning of the whole contex. However; I might not give you the real explanation because it was also hard to understand in my own language. The poet idea of writing this poem, I think, is to explain how are honist and acciptance one so quit as a dead baird, but it has a super power afficting our world. It is like the light of peace spreading through the world. Going through every single window of a house. By leaving the words and having the honist and acceptance, he will understand the world better. However; he really wanted to talk but he left the worlds in his mouth like a dead baird singing a song of 'words are useless.'"

Writer 10 analysis

Writer 10 is a translator concerned with the limitations of words. He is wary of

the translation process because of cultural incongruence. What concerns him are not the

things that are unspoken, but the things that are understood differently. Although he

agrees to try to translate the Arabic to English, he thinks that the final product "might be

different in meanings or ideas." Adding to his worries is the fact that he does not feel

confident in his understanding of the L1 version. He admits that "[the poem] was also

hard to understand in my own language." Perhaps because of this, he presents his

translation in paragraph form and adds explanations between lines. Despite his

uncertainty, he does offer an interpretation, and not surprisingly, his interpretation deals

with the limitations of words: He claims the assigned poem elevates the principals of

honesty and acceptance over the act of speech. The poet, he says, "really wanted to talk

but he left the [words] in his mouth like a dead [bird]." And he concludes, "[by] leaving

the words and having the honesty and acceptance, [one] will understand the world

better." Interestingly, this interpretation of the poem seems to validate Writer 10's

worries about translation—that our words are not enough to understand the world around

us.

Writer 11

"Arebic Poam

This poet has writen by Arabic language. Also, there is no titel for this poam. Arabic poem is rhymes. Also, it should be order idea by idea. The form should be order and ech line should end by same letter. The poam that I have now doesn't poat. Now, I will try to translate the first poam from Arabic to English.

Next, I will analyze my translation process.

1. Body (soul).
2. Sitesfied and honost.
3. Bires died in your mouth.
4. And it creat song.
5. Rare (Raw).
6. From your eyes / star the light.
7. In complete naked (that mean every lights in the world stay from your eyes).
8. Stand on the wall.
9. Leave the Alphabit for me (the poat meant here give the Alphabit and I will write a perfect poem for you.)
10. And I'll hike the thin line (that meant I will write an amazing idea).
11. Between me and the world.
12. The words will be crowded in my mouth.
13. And I will be hold between the language and the world.
14. Between the world and the Alphabit.

Also, I learned something important which is how to thin about some words in Arabic and translate them to the English. I used my knowleg and my back groun to translate this poam. The process was a little bit difficult because Arbic and English totally different. for example the word number one which is Body in English, but I thought the poat used it here as soul because he wrote about his feelin toward someone, so that why I [think] he meant soul in this word. Also, I got confuse to transtart number five. Because this word has several meaning in Arabic. But I chose raw because I think it is the closest one. As you can see, this was how to analyze poam to English.

Finally, the main message is the poat want deliver how much he loves his lover. He used many words which have a big value. The cultural information is it is allow in Arabic cultur to write about someone, especially your love. This poam mean a lot to me in my life. It remied me of someone who I love[…]"

Writer 11 analysis

Unlike Writers 9 and 10, Writer 11 does not see a connection between the

meaning in the poem and his own concerns as an ELL in a foreign country and ESL

writer. Instead, he has interpreted the poem as an expression of romantic love. He says

"the main message [that] the [poet] [wants] to deliver [is] how much he loves his lover."

He seems to have arrived at this interpretation because of his prior experience with poems

in his L1. He credits his "[background] and [knowledge]" for informing his translation,

and he goes on to say that it is the tradition of his L1 "to write about someone, especially

your love." His interpretation of meaning is particularly significant because he tells us

how it affected his decisions in the translation process. He explains that he prefers the

word "soul" over "body" in the first line because he believes the poet is writing about a

romantic relationship; however, he has chosen to include both words in the translation,

leaving "soul" in parentheses. He includes parenthetical alternate translations and

explanations on a number of other lines as well. This choice may indicate that he believes

the poem is too difficult to understand on its own, or it may simply be a stylistic decision.

Most likely though, like Writer 10, Writer 11 is not comfortable enough with his

translation to let the lines stand on their own.

Writer 12

"Arabic poem is puplour in middle east, so a lot of people write a poem. It can be right now or sinse a thousand year. Arabic poem is come from old history that from prophet Mohammed era. In that time has some poets, but now we have a lot of poet express their countries in may ways and many poseition like mountins, natural and desert.

1. Body (soul) (love)
2. Sidsfay ohnest (believe the wright)
3. corpse mouth bird is to give song. (died in love)
4. from your eyes the lights run away in the
5. whole naked. (adore in you (your eyes)
6. you have to send the distance, one
7. to weake up on it (come close to me to broke whole the odds)
8. leave the alphabit to hold me, and
9. I climate the thin line of the language. (love through the letters)
10. the world and I gathering in my mouth hinging between the world and the language and between world and alphapit. (letters)

Next, I will analyze my translations process. The 2 lessons I want to give to students which are adore (strong love) and to be ohnest with your love (fithful). I lerned couple things about love to be more loyal, and spoil your love, and to be more polite with her/his respect the relationship ike be good way to be a great person in moral and good behavior. In addition, I shose to words which are (eyes) and (body). I will explin it but before that I need to say Arabic is different than English in poem completly, so eyes poet meant is life for her love or his. Also, express to ligt of the moon. The another one, which is body that express for sefril mening which are soul to love from your heart deeply, and pretent the love when some one hug you that pretty mean for love.

Finally, I will summarize one possible meaning of the poem. Actually the big idea at the poem which is love but that parts of couple things or branch of some things, such as love it can be moral, ohnest, respect a lot of things in the love that great message to be loyel person in love and to be more respect whether to feel in love or with out love. Infect, I feel good like to more giving and to be more spoil my love because the life required us to do that and to be happy. Treat is big deal with your love. That you have to give and take. The poem is romantic in my culture how to be ohnest and respet in polite man with wif's.

Yes should the young people in my country learn that because It has a lot of things good to be make gentil man and romantic also handsome with girls. To say good words for them. Moreover, poem learn good beahavior to be more moral with woman and also learn the waise. Then, the poem in my life is important each one has feeling and the poem express the feeling which case you live. For example, if I feel in love and broke up with whatever and I heard poem about parting with someone you love that impact my heart. Anothe one, Also a poem teach about morals that is important in our life. As you can see, it is good way to describe your emitions and express about it. And teach you ethics thing."

Writer 12 analysis

Writer 12 is very similar to Writer 11 in the way he presents his translation and

the way he interprets meaning. He, too, reads the poem as an expression of love, and he,

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too, augments his translated lines with parenthetical clarifications. He claims that the "poem [teaches] good behavior to be moral with woman." And, again, like writer 11, it seems he may have had this expectation for the poem before he began the translation assignment. This is partly because he does not connect his interpretation to any part of the poem's text—he does not provide any evidence to support his views. But it is also because he seems to be referring to Arabic poetry tradition when he says, "[t]he poem is romantic in my culture [and shows] how to be [honest] and [respectful] [and] polite man with [wives]." So, although he presents a fairly complete translation, most of his effort seems to be spent explaining how the poem fits in with the tradition of writing about love, rather than creating an accurate or syntactically sound TL translation. He has seen the assignment as an opportunity to teach the traditions of his L1 in more general terms.

Writer 13

"1. body
2. They belive that it's a ture and feel fine.
3. the pird who hould the body when they flow in the muthe.
4. The someone who search for song.
5. Someone who wont astard to do something.
6. when the light came to you eyes.
7. The peasnd who don't wourg anything. He meat the body naked.
8. Someone who seand the peoper for one woh hve power to do.
9. Some one who arousal for the window that make one by one.
10. some one who can hould in the wall
11. some peasnt who said the all the letters can enjouy with my in my live.
12.
13. Someone who feel the life in the meadel in the world.
14. when the saud the all the flying came in my muther.
15. The languge who make hould far all the world.
16. the peast who said the one of leater can search for all the would.

Next, I will analyze my translation process. The people who will viste anther counter they should learn anther language. The people who can learn the anther language that make easy when can travel to any place. Who the peast who learn the anther language they can saudi easy when he or she takes a parctess. The people who don't haw make the translation. They have a lot of way to anderstand the anther langue. for

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example, They can use the translating to see the world or the sentence. They have a lot of web side they can use to translation, such as google, translated and dictionary. The people who want to do the translating they should use the internet or books to doing, but the easy way when they use the internet, becauses the internet they can make the sentes to anderstand. Also, they can make the pronuncement to makes easy. The [people] who used the English grammar to use the Arabic […] For example, when the use the world like sweet thent can use to saud awesame. Also, when the use the would good that can use for ask to you for same thing. In sorte, learing the anther Language it's easy when they wount to learned.

Finally, I will summarize one possible meaning of the poem. In the back home in Saudi Arabia they use the poem to defernt ways. When they use the poem to describe same thing. for example the peasnd who saud the eayse to describe the anther think like people saud you eayse like the sea. So that the cultural use to make the informer Are in clear. Same easy would they americans people use when they wount to help him for example, […] the American people say hi in Arabic that meen […] , and they make easy to understand. The people who want a learn, the poem they should a study, because the original language was heard to anderstand. My fatre say to me after time 'The time it's like the sword if the use the time for same think good or the sword they cutter that mean the time was running.'"

Writer 13 analysis

Like Writer 9, the translation assignment causes Writer 13 to consider the experiences one goes through when learning and using a TL. Unfortunately though, he does not express his thoughts coherently in the TL. What can be understood in the first paragraph shows him attempting to contrast using translation services on the Internet with learning to speak a language in real life. In the final paragraph, his thoughts about the meaning of the poem are lost in his deep struggles with syntax and spelling that are perhaps exacerbated by time restrictions. He seems to want to talk about the potential of poetry to express many different things. But, unfortunately, this was an assignment that demanded more than Writer 13 was able to produce; his subsequent TL writing surely obscures his level of understanding of the L1 poem and his L1 expertise in general. What can be learned from the struggles of the writers and what changes might be made to improve the assignment are discussed in Chapter 5.

Writer 14

"The poem that the teacher give us was talking about the body for some persone love. It dose not have title and poet too. And it has some rhymes. It dose not have a lot of lines, they are 27 line. But it is hard to understand for me because the teacher used smart translation. I would like to start with the first word which is mean body but I think it is mean the body for persone how wrote the poem. Line 2 it was miss understand for me but I think it is mean the clear and honest body. Line 3 mean died/beard/on your [mouth] it is mean if you don't know anything close you maoth and don't talk. I lik number 6 which is mean / from your eyes / come or start / the light from opinein it is very nice way to show the girl your love to her. And line 10 was interst for me cause it is mean /sat/next to the wall/, which mean that if you are on love with some one you will tell her this one because it is mean I would cover you just don't do anything. From line 17 to 21 were clear a lot bed to understand and I would start with number 17 which is mean leave/my head/, 18 listen to 18 bad words from 20 the persone who eulogy you but in nuntroth.

Next, I will analyze my translation process. From my language we can put word in many different way, and it is big defferent from the cultural to write. I learnd that our teacher want to teach us how you can write this eassay if you want to say anything that come to your mind that time. I did the translation when I first understand some of the pome words and guss what the pome talk about. the words that have more than [mean] are number 17 ther first meaning is leave/my head and the socand one is let my head and my mind look what ever it's want.

Finally, I will summarize one possible meaning of the poem. The hall meaning of the poem is the is a persone who love women and want to let her be her best girl. The pome feel me the persone who wrote this is very deep persone. And for sure I need my cultural to explain this pome. The young people the should study this pome but they should study who the poet wrote it. The poem I will not ever aver forget it cause it was very hard for me to understand even if it is my language."

Writer 14 analysis

Writer 14 shows little engagement with the content of the poem, but he arrives at

a familiar interpretation of meaning. Like Writer 10, he presents a partial translation and

explanation in paragraph form rather than creating a line-by-line translation. He offers no

explanation for this choice, but he does offer a brief description of his process that reveals

his main challenge is understanding meaning in the L1 text. He says that he sometimes

had to"[guess] what the [poem] talk about." He goes on to fully admit that he struggled

with the L1 poem, saying, "it was very hard for me to understand even if it is my

language." And he further explains how he had to skip lines 17 through 21 because of his lack of understanding. At the end, he offers an interpretation of the poem very that is similar to the claims of Writers 11 and 12 that the poem is about romance. He says, "The [whole] meaning of the poem is [this] is a [person] who love[s] women." He does make an attempt to connect this interpretation to two of the lines he translates, but unlike Writers 11 and 12, he does not allude to an Arabic tradition of romance poetry. Ultimately, it is very difficult to tell what he has understood from the poem and from what experience or knowledge his claims of meaning originate.

Writer 15

"Poem in Translation
        The pome is about the body how contact with the world and the people felling. The general topic of the pome is the humen and respact. The pome is not clear bout I am try to inderstand it because it is hard when translate the English poem to Arabic we cannot enderstand or feel like what we feel when we wrote in the own language. The poem has sixteen line. Now I will translate the poem from Arabic to English as soon as I can. I handled this by reading a lot of poem in my life. I know about the other meaning from diffrend ways.
    1. Body
    2. Turn the music.
    3. From eyes shine the light.
    4. You have to send to the top, once to woke up
    5. But your back in the wall
    6. Keep the litters clime on me
    7. And I clime the litters
    8. Between me and the world
    9. Keep them in my mouth
    10. Confuce between the language and world
    11. Between the world and the litters.

Next I will analyze my translation process. The lessons students can I learn from translating from Arabic to English to try to refresh my mind to think more and more about vocabulary what I have and try to learn new word that I need it. I did not learn much because the poem what I got does not make any sins for me, I am sorry about that. I did the translation by myself. I am trying to find the meaning but when I did not find it I tried to Explin it like a sentinse. That word I thought had more than one meaning, that was in line three. The first meaning I found is from your eyes shine the light. The auther meaning is from your eyes the hopes will start for me. Maybe this kind of love. The other

word is in the line ten first meaning is clime between the language and the world. The other meaning here is to show that language is most important thing in the world. He but the language in the hand, and he but everything in the world in the other hand. Also, he wand to tell us that we cannot contact with the world or the people around the world without language.

Finally, I will summarize one possible meaning of the poem. The poem meaning was clear to inderstand the idea. It was like stips, it is start with the body who has everythings on it. The message of the poem was the important thing in the life is the language and learn the language will make you strong. I do not feel any thing to be ounest but I got some information. Because the poem was not clear when I read it. We can explain the poem with any cultural but we need to find this world first then we can explane it. The language is not coumen with any cultural. So, we can explane it.

Yong people in my country do not study the poem, we do not have any place to learn or teach poem. The poem come from natioral like when some one is perfict when he song. The poem means for me some thing intersting in my country no one can say anything for the goverment but the people ues the poem to say whatever they want. No one can say why you said that because it is poem. Also, to say what we feel if we love some one, to explane how much love him. The poem is most important thing after the language."

Writer 15 analysis

Writer 15 does fairly thorough work, but he seems to feel little success in his

attempt at translation. He begins by noting a main challenge of translation, saying, "when

[we] translate the English poem to Arabic we cannot [understand] or feel like what we

feel when we wrote in [our] own language." It seems he does not expect to overcome this

challenge. Nevertheless, he does provide a line-by-line translation. He also takes time to

include explanations of what the lines really mean, but unlike others he has separated his

explanations from the translated lines. He later offers an interpretation of meaning—that

learning languages "will make you strong." Like Writer 12, he cites the Arabic tradition

of romantic poetry, but he also claims that poetry facilitates freedom of speech in his

country. He produces thorough work, but his thoughts on meaning seem contradictory,

and he explains little about his process. He first says that the meaning was "clear," but

like many of the Arabic writers, he later admits he does not fully understand the L1

version, saying, "I do not feel anything […] because the poem was not clear when I read it." About his process, he merely says, "I am trying to find the meaning but when I did not find it I tried to [explain] it like a [sentence]." He may be referring to the sentences in his translated lines or the sentences of explanation in the following paragraph. Either way, the thinking behind his translation choices is unclear. All that is really apparent is that he has "a lot" of prior experience with poetry—something he claims is uncommon in his culture. He says, "I handled this by reading a lot of [poetry] in my life. I know about the other meaning from [different] ways." Indeed, his work does seem to show he has experience some of his peers are lacking. Ultimately, though, he feels "sorry" that he does not have an adequate understanding of the L1 poem.

Writer 16

"The poem that I have is a little bit difficult to me, but it is looks like several sentens. It is 11 seantens. However, the poem actually is 8 sentens. The first one means, leave your head/listing/to the amoctionds. I think what he mean of this sentens to be open maind, so you should accepete any thing that you may face of problems or of any other issues. The second one is to listen/to / in everywhere it migh come from. What I thing is to listen to everyone no matter what they are saying of bad thing or good thing. Line number 5 means prathe or smell the storm which is coming from the top of the munitine, and what did he mean by sentens is to by not sepriced of something bad happened and he mentioned the storm as problem. He mentioned the muntinen as a smthing that you can notice lik you know how the mutine is hig and you can not see what is in the top of the mutine. Line number sex says my lean is not saying to me go love away. It means he is not saying to himself get something that you can not get, like how you know when there is somthing that you can not get it, it seem lik it is far away from you so you have to work hard to get it, or to do anything to get that thing. Line number seven says how much long far away from my rios to me amational. He means there is bin different lik you know when how people saying things any inside them other things that how he meant of amotional.

Next, I will analyze my translation process. First, they migh learn how to take each word and translat it and try to camper between the other words to have a sentens, and even if it not making any sens you can try to couch the uther meaning. Other thing which is to learn from the auther experience. What I learned from this is to by poem mained and to lesten to everything, do not take anything amotionly, prepear yourself if some thing bad will happen so I sould not be surprised, I should not look forweard for thing that I can get and how there is a big diffrance between what you say and what you

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would say. The rpcess that I followed is to transalit each word and put it in a sentens. The second thing that I follwed is trying to get the geniral meaning of the sentence and to write it down.

Fanally, I will summarize one possible meaning of the poem. The mean point is to inform the readers and to give some kind of instractions, so the readers can learn and understand what auther meant of this poem. As I mentioned in pragraph number one, he is trying to say that we should not look to thing that we can not get and to be open mind with everthing. This poem makes me fell like when I am talking to my father, he always trying to be knowledge with thes things. I think the only one culture who can formal this poem is the Arabic culture in a ganiral, so it is not dipence about country or anything like that, it is dipence about the language and the knowledge of the readers and how they will understand this poem. What I regumend of any young people of my country is to studey this poem, and the reason why is there are a lot of important informations. Also a lot of important things migh happen in this life."

Writer 16 analysis

Writer 16 struggles as a translator, but he is successful explaining his understanding of meaning. Like Writers 10 and 14, he creates a partial translation in paragraph form that is augmented by his explanations of meaning. Often, the distinction between translation and explanation is blurred. This might be because the translation is "a little bit difficult" for him. He claims that he translated each word and then put them in sentences, but this cannot be seen in his work. However, he does show quite a bit of thought about the meaning of the poem. He claims the poem calls for emotional balance, but he also recognizes the poem is referring to the difficulty of self-representation through language. In particular, he explains that the 7th line is about "how people [say] things [but] inside them [are] other things." Although he probably could, he does not directly relate this struggle to his own circumstances; he seems to see it as a condition of humanity in general. He says, "there is a big [difference] between what you say and what you *would* say." It could be language ability or it could be cultural expectations that prevent one from saying what they *would* say; he does not clarify further. But he does

bring up cultural barriers when he addresses translation, saying that Arabic speakers have an advantage understanding the poem. He explains that "it is not [difference] about country or anything like that, it is [difference] about the language and the knowledge of the readers and how they will understand this poem." His attention to these issues shows he understands his role as a translator and the challenges of converting meaning to a TL. Perhaps with a better understanding of the L1 poem, his consideration of readership and cultural experience would result in a complete and skillful translation.

Analysis of Arabic Translations

Nearly all of the Arabic writers indicated that they were not comfortable with their level of understanding of meaning in the L1 poem. One might expect limited TL ability to be the biggest hindrance to inexperienced translators, but the Arabic writers do not address this or any other major obstacles. Instead, they highlight their difficulty making sense of the L1 meaning. They call it "hard," "difficult," or "not clear." This obviously will have affected their ability to show cultural and emotional meaning of depth. As a result, the translations appear more like rough sketches than thoughtfully crafted pieces. Additionally, many writers include parenthetical explanations, or they format their translations in a paragraph that alternates between translation and explanation. One possible explanation for this could be confusion of directions, but another possibility is that they felt their understanding was insufficient to create a fully formed translation. It is likely that they chose to impart as much information about the poem as they could in the way that made most sense to them, rather than offering only a partial translation that they were dissatisfied with. Whatever the reasoning behind their

choices, it is clear that the challenge of understanding L1 meaning greatly affected their ability complete the translation assignment.

While the writing of the Arabic writers shows uniformity in their struggle to understand the L1 poem, it also shows diversity in the focus of their writing and responses to the prompt. For example, Writer 12 uses the majority of his essay to explain the romantic elements of the poem—why it is romantic, how it teaches about romance, and how romance is typical in Arabic poetry. In contrast, Writer 9 uses the essay to explain what he believes the poem teaches about cultural identity and how the content of the poem resonates with his own experience as a language learner in a foreign environment. Another area of variety is the level of engagement with the translation. For example, Writer 13 attempts to translate a complete 16 lines, but Writer 14 picks and chooses only a handful of lines to translate, presenting them in the body of a paragraph. Despite the fact that they are all writing about the same poem and answering the same prompt, the Arabic writers' individual perspectives lead them to produce very different essays.

Chinese and Swahili Writers

The final two writers are the sole representatives of their L1 in the data sample. They were given a poem along with the same translation and essay prompt as the Japanese and Arabic writers. The work of Writers 17 and 18 will be presented and analyzed separately. Because they had no L1 peers in the data sample, analysis will be limited to their individual work.

Writer 17 Introduction

Writer 17 is a native Chinese speaker. She was asked to translate a Tang Dynasty poem by Meng Jiao. Although the researchers were unaware prior to giving her the assignment, Writer 17 had studied the poem during her education in China and was, apparently, very familiar with the Chinese version. This was made clear when she alerted the class instructor that the copy of the poem she received was missing the final line. She asked whether she should fill in the missing L1 words, and the instructor agreed that it was the best course of action to allow her to do a complete translation into the TL. Accordingly, Writer 17 filled in the final L1 line from memory and then created a complete L1 translation.

Figure 3 presents the poem, "A Journeyer's Song" by Meng Jiao in Chinese and English. The English translation provided here is taken from Wu (2008).

Figure 3.

游子吟

慈母手中线，
游子身上衣；
临行密密缝，
意恐迟迟归。
谁言寸草心，
报得三春晖?

A Journeyer's Song

Through a kind mother's hands passed the thread
That made the clothes I journeying wear.
Tightly tightly she wove them then,
Dreading year after year of no return.
Can the young grass ever repay
The spring sun's kindly rays?

Meng, J. "游子吟" (A Journeyer's Song). Wu 185-187.

Writer 17

"Poem in Translation

The title of this poem is […]. It's means that a poem for the people who leave their hometown. the poet of this poem is famous because of this poem. The main topic of this poem is mother's love. It talked about that the poet will leave his home to some far place. The last night before he leave, his mother help him to stick his clothes again and again. The poet felt really moved. This poem has six lines. However, the ancient peoms in China always have for or eight lines. The six-line peom was not so common. When we read them, we will have a step after every line. Now, I'll try to translate it.

1. A Poem of the People who leave the home.
2. The thread in my dear mom's hands now,
3. Will became the clothes on her son's body.
4. She mends them carefully before her son leave.
5. Because she fear that I'll leave for a long time.
6. It's hard for sons to thank great mom, just like the grasses can't do enough things to thank the sun of spring.

Next, I will analyze my translation process. I think there are two thins we can learn from our translation process. First, we should totally understand the mean of the poem. Not only do we understand the mean of words, but also we shoud know what the poets want to express to us. The ancient Chinese poets almost never showed their mean directly. They always hide the real means in the words and let readers feel and find them instead of reading and watching them. So, if we want to keep the real means in translation, we should totally understand it. Second, the most great thing of ancient Chinese poets is that they can use the less words to show infinit means. So some ancient Chinese poems were difficult to understant even for many Chinese. Those poems never follow the moden Chinese gramma. If we want to make them clear in English, we should add some thing that didn't show in poems. But if we add to much, the poems will became a long eassy. So we have to learn how to choose the appraciate words, short but explecite. When I translated this poem, the first step is to totally understand it. Then I began to translate it. I try to show it real mean instead of means of words. The most difficult part for me to translate is the last two lines. These two lines talk about sun and grasses. It said that the grasses' thanks was not enough for the sun of spring. Actually, the poet want to say that sons like the grasses and mothers like the sun of spring. The moms do to many things for their children and no matter what children do, they can not compensate their mom's big favors. I have to show all these means but I cannot make it to long. So it really hard for me. I just try to make it clear.

Finally, I will summarize one possible meaning of the poem. The poem wanted to show how great our moms are. They do too many things for us and they never ask any pay back. I think everyone should learn this poem. Actually they does, because this poem is in our text book in elementary school. So every kids have to learn it. But I don't believe that they can understand now moved this poem is. One day, when they grow up and far away from their dear moms, they will catch the feeling in this poem. They are not allow to forget ho many things they owe their great mom. Now, this poem really move me deeply. In our country, people always say a words: "when you have a baby, you will

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completely understand your parents' love." However, no, I already became know my mom's love for me. She trys to give me the best thing in this world and never ask me to do anything for her. So now I really know the poet's feeling and miss my dear mom."

Writer 17 Analysis

Writer 17 is a well-equipped translator who demonstrates thoroughness in her approach to the assignment. She has received prior instruction on the poem, and she also has an understanding of the Tang Dynasty era poets. These advantages result in a skillful translation and thoughtful analysis of her process. Like several of the Japanese writers, she wants to translate in a way that will enlighten her audience without sacrificing the artistic integrity of the original version, and she desires a wholly accurate representation of meaning. She believes her first responsibility as a translator is understanding; she says, "not only do we understand the [meaning] of [individual] words, but also we [should] know what the poet wants to express to us." She also describes a second responsibility of balance; "If we want to make [L1 meaning] clear in English, we should add some thing that didn't show in poems. But if we add [too] much, the poems will became a long [essay]. So we have to learn how to choose the [appropriate] words, short but [explicit]." To meet these responsibilities, she feels she must "totally understand" the L1 poem. By setting clear priorities and holding herself to a thorough understanding of the L1 poem, she does create an articulate and moving translation. The imagery is clear, allowing the emotional weight of the topic to be accessible in the TL.

Writer 18 Introduction

Writer 18 is originally from the former Zaire and indicates that Swahili is her first language. Unlike all the other writers that participated in the research, she has been living in the United States for an extended period, including her entire high school education.

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She was given an alternate assignment because poetry in Swahili is extremely difficult to find. Both the class instructor and Writer 18 searched for poetry from her L1, but neither of them could find suitable L1 poetry for the translation assignment. As a result, a last minute substitution was made, and Writer 18 was given a copy of "Dreams" by Langston Hughes in the TL. Although the essay prompt she received was the same as the rest of the class, her translation assignment was reversed. She was asked to translate "Dreams" from the TL into her L1. Her Swahili translation is written in the Roman alphabet; however, because I cannot read Swahili, analysis of her work will be limited to the essay. Discussion of assignment limitations and recommendations for future study can be found in Chapter 5.

Figure 4 contains only the English version of "Dreams." It was taken from poets.org. Writer 17's translation of this poem is the only Swahili version of "Dreams" that we are aware of.

Figure 4.

Dreams

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow.

Hughes, L. "Dreams." *Poets.org.* n.d. Web. 1 June 2013.

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Writer 18

"This poem has 8 lines. This poem is about dreams. In my language this poem doesn't not rhyme. It's very difficult to find a rhyme poem or poet in my language, even if you try to translate from English it never happen.

    Ndoto
1. Kushikilia haraka Kwa Ndoto
2. Kwa kama ndoto kafa
3. Maisha ni kuvunjwa – mababo ndege
4. Hiyo haiwezi kuruko
5. Kushikilia haraka kwa ndoto
6. Kwa wakati ndoto kwenda
7. Maisha ni tasa shomba
8. Waliohifadhiwa na theruji

Next, I will analyze my translation process. Translation from English to my own language was tough because there was some of the English words I didn't understand. So that really made it hard for to translate. Two lessons that I learn from this process: one, was thinking because some of the English words has many meaning which was hard to find the right one and some of the words didn't have any meaning at all so that made it very hard. Two, was to be able to know the meaning of the words of languages because you cannot translate any language to other without knowing the meanings. To be able to translate this poem I had to read this poem more ten once and started to take parts word by word.

I had more than one words that hade more than one meaning. In line 8 "snow" line 7 "barren" line 3 "winged" those words had more than one meaning. It was frustrating at first because the words I thought would fit wasn't the right one that I want so what I did, I read the who line decide which word fits the space. And another way that I used that helpped a lot was to list all the meaning of the word than fill out the space later while I am read it.

Finally, I will summarize one possible meaning of the poem. This poem is very touch. For me this kind of poems makes me happy because I love to dream. Being human being it's important you dream. Dreams may not becoming true as you thought but you did have some thing in mind. Like the poem says, "hold fast to dreams / For if dreams die / Life is a broken-winged bird / that cannot fly. For when drams go / Life is a barren field / Frozen with snow" (Hughes). We all know that life can be tough so is dreams. Dreams are meant to be broken and when that happens you feel like nothing in this world is left of you because inside you feel like nothing. Just hold on to it, don't let it go because dreams are meant to go and come.

Some cultures dreams are verything and when that drean doesn't come true they give up because they know no matter what happen nothing good is going to happen. For example, in my country people don't have dreams that they are not going to achieve it. Because it was hard to enough to start the dream. What I am trying to say is that dreams are great to have and even better when you know for fact you are going to achieve it.

Yes, they should definitely learn it because it will give them the courage and bravely of dreams even if though they won't make but they took the first step and tried. This poem mean a lot in my life, because long time ago I was afraid of dreams because I was nothing my life was a mess but now I can dream as many dreams I can have. And it meant to be it will happen and if it doesn't I won't stop. I will fight for what is mine!"

Writer 18 analysis

Because I cannot read the translation done by Writer 18, I cannot comment on it other than to say that it appears to be a complete, line-by-line translation. Probably, the nature of her unique assignment, translating from the TL into the L1, limits the authenticity of expression in the translation work; she is trying to represent a culture and a language that is not hers from birth. That said, her essay reveals a successful writer, one with a clear translation strategy and with the ability to express personal experience in the TL. She describes her process by explaining that she had to work word-by-word to complete the translation. She carefully considered her options when she came upon particularly difficult words, thinking about all the possible meanings of the English words. But although she does say that she is working word-by-word, she also indicates that she makes choices about the most difficult words by taking into consideration the context of the surrounding line. She works around the difficult word, leaving it for last, and **"**[lists] all the [possible] meaning of the word than fill out the space later while I am read it." This approach seems to indicate a writer who is most concerned with accuracy of meaning, but it is likely she considers more that she does not explain in the essay. For example, she does say in the opening paragraph that emulating the rhyme of "Dreams" in her native language is not an option. So, it is not out of the question that she considers other artistic elements of the poem as she translates. And although she says she cannot completely understand the meaning of the English version of the poem, she apparently

feels a strong connection to the content. She contemplates the importance of dreams in her life, and how the poem echoes her personal experience with dreams.

Chapter 4

Discussion and Reflection

Chapter 4 is a discussion of the results of the project and a reflection on what I learned as a researcher. I revisit my assumptions, discuss the characteristics of students' work in the context of all four language groups, and share what I learned about poetry translation in an ESL environment. The chapter concludes with answers to the research questions posed in Chapter 1.

Assumptions

Before collecting data I had six assumptions. I will address each individually.

7. that students would feel comfortable with the meaning of the poem in their L1 and would have a feeling for the tone and understanding of the imagery.

This assumption was not affirmed. The students' work shows a variety of levels of understanding, but many, particularly those that translated the Arabic poem, indicated that they were not comfortable with their understanding of the L1 meaning. In contrast with the Saudis, Writer 17, who was the only Chinese participant, was so familiar with the poem given to her and its meaning that she was able to fill in an entire line that was missing on the handout. Her understanding was because of prior instruction and a grade school requirement to memorize that specific poem. But for other writers, level of understanding was probably because of two factors: How much prior instruction they had in poetics, and how ambiguous, complex, or unfamiliar the writing style was. It should be noted here, again, that the students translating the Arabic poem were Saudis, but the poet was Sudanese.

8. that students would produce fairly literal translations regardless of their level of understanding of the original poem.

This assumption appears to be fairly accurate. Most of the translation decisions the writers make appear to be on the word level, and the basic imagery and structure of their translations is simple and uniform among the language groups. However, several Japanese writers express their desire to accurately represent the artistic characteristics of the original—purposely forsaking a level of exactness and perhaps clarity for artistic integrity.

9. that students would be able to complete the translations, but their work would show usage errors.

This assumption is tied to the first, and it also seems to be partially incorrect. Usage errors were common among all the writers; however, because many of the Arabic writers did not fully understand their poem, and possibly because it was considerably longer than the other poems, they were unable to produce complete translations. All other writers did submit complete translations.

10. that the translations among individual language groups would show variety in interpretation of meaning.

This assumption was correct. Among the Japanese writers, opinion was divided over whether the poem was intended to highlight environmental concerns or whether it was a commentary on the desire for one's hometown and familiarity. Similarly, Arabic writers showed variety in their interpretations of meaning. Their poem was often understood as a lesson in romance, but others focused on the struggles of language,

culture, and separation from both. Although some writers did seem to agree, there was no consensus about meaning in either language group.

11. that students would find translation to be a difficult task and express a level of dissatisfaction with their translations.

This assumption was affirmed to be mostly correct. Although only a few students expressed dissatisfaction with their work, nearly all of them did indicate difficulty either in understanding or in translating the L1 poem. It should be noted that students were not asked to evaluate the difficulty of the assignment, but the majority of them were nonetheless compelled to explain that they found it hard.

12. that poetry translation with reflection and analysis of process would enhance students' understanding of the relationship between their L1 and TL.

This assumption remains unconfirmed, but the students' analyses of their translation process show concern for bicultural integrity and awareness of their readership. Many writers address the differences between the knowledge of their L1 culture and their American readership, and they note how that effects how they write in the TL. Most notably, a number of the Japanese writers focus on the difficulty of retaining the tone of the original poem in the TL. It is unknown whether these concerns are new to the writers, but the translation process does clearly turn their focus to issues other than the usually dominant concern of grammatical accuracy—which is always the overriding objective in the Friday in-class essay rough draft.

Students' Work in Context of All Four Language Groups

Unsurprisingly, different qualities characterize the work done by all four language groups. The Japanese writers, all of whom are English or Communications majors, were

the most fluent and the most detailed. The Chinese writer had the deepest understanding of the L1 poem. The Saudi writers displayed the most diverse perspectives. The Swahili writer, who was given a decidedly different assignment, focused on the strong connection between her life and the content of the poem. That is not to say that only the Japanese were thorough, or that only the Swahili writer shared personal information; all of these traits were evident across the language groups. And despite similarities within the language groups, each writer demonstrated a clear individual voice. However, it is clear that the shared cultural and linguistic background of the Japanese writers and also of the Saudi writers affected the whole groups in certain ways. The Japanese writers were well prepared to analyze their process and demonstrated advanced composition skills; their experience as English and communications majors undoubtedly gave them a distinct advantage in this area over other the other writers. On the other hand, the range of ideas presented by the Saudis reveals a certain flexibility and openness to the possibilities of the poem not evident in the Japanese essays. Of course, the characteristics of the poems given to the students also affected how they wrote. The Japanese poem was fairly short and straightforward but written during a different era. In contrast, the Arabic poem was longer, more figurative, and written by a poet who shares Saudi language but not Saudi culture. It is therefore difficult to attribute any characteristics of the writing to the L1 culture itself since many other significant factors are present.

The trait that is seen most consistently among all the writers is the tendency to take on the role of cultural ambassador. This happens through their presentation of a poem that is, hopefully, representative of the culture they come from, but it also happens because, in the process of explaining their translation, they choose to discuss various

characteristics of the culture they come from. In some instances, they feel that their translation is inadequate and seek to enhance understanding of the poem by describing cultural context. Other times, they simply seem inspired to teach whatever aspect of their background the poem relates to. Although this trait is most prominent in the Japanese writers who seem to feel a real responsibility to do justice to their heritage, all the writers display it to a certain degree. For example, the translation work causes most of the writers to contemplate poetry from a cultural perspective. But whether it is information about the artistic traditions, national history, or education system they come from, there is always some sort of additional, unsolicited cultural information in all of the essays. It would seem a poetry translation assignment naturally becomes a communicative activity.

The Japanese writers attempt to represent multiple aspects of their culture. They spend the most energy characterizing the language of their poets and how it relates to Japanese culture. Writer 1, for example, claims that "Japanese poets often put more than one [meaning] in one word." This opinion is echoed by several of her Japanese peers. Writer 6 adds that "in Japanese culture, it is often [preferred] to say something indirectly and softly." Writer 5 further explains the personality of Japanese language, saying that "[by saying] verb lastly, Japanese [sentences] create light, soft, and [mysterious] meaning." They also share the relationship of language and vision in their culture— characteristics and use of imagery. Writer 2 explains, "[n]ature has been [an] important part of Japanese culture." And she adds that "from a few adjectives and modifiers, Japanese readers can understand the beauty of natural places and thoughts of the characters." Writer 8 gives more details, explaining, "We have a lot of strange way of expressing colors and views. For example, there is so many way to explain about color

pink." Other writers mention the presence of morning and spring "key words" in the poem—that they can imagine the setting of a poem based on one particular key word. Additionally, several of the Japanese writers share the historical background of the poem—that it was written in the wake of the industrialization of Tokyo, and that the poet was writing during a tumultuous period for Japanese society. The Japanese writers use the translation assignment as a way of positioning their identity as Japanese nationals and speakers in a larger, more detailed context.

The Saudi writers also want to share information about their background, but in contrast to the Japanese writers' linguistic and historical explanations, the Saudi writers tend to focus on the purpose or significance of poetry for their society in a more general way. They do not introduce cultural information to explain the characteristics of their language, they use the assigned poem to explain cultural traditions and relationships. For example, writer 11 says, "The cultural information [that an English readership needs to understand] is it is allow[ed] in Arabic [culture] to write about someone, especially your love." Writer 12 echoes this opinion, saying, "The poem is romantic in my culture[;] how to be [honest] and [respectful and] polite man with [wife]." Writer 15 tells more, describing how poetry empowers people; "The poem means for me some thing [interesting;] in my country no one can say anything for the [government] but the people [use] the poem to say whatever they want. No one can say why you said that because it is [poetry]." He also agrees with his peers that poetry is useful "if we love some one." But the information he shares that is most relevant to the translation assignment is about the lack of poetry instruction in his culture. He claims, "[young] people in my country do not study the poem, we do not have any place to learn or teach [poetry]." Whether his peers

agree with this claim is unknown, but it is information that reflects on all of them. Indeed, the Saudis' relatively general claims about the motivations behind poetry wind up reading like claims about their peers' understanding and experiences, rather than insights into the workings of their L1.

The lone Chinese writer, Writer 17, explains the characteristics and accessibility of poetry in her culture. She primarily addresses ancient Chinese poetry because the poem she was given was from the Tang Dynasty. She explains that "some ancient Chinese poems were difficult to [understand] even for many Chinese. Those poems never follow the [modern] Chinese [grammar]." However, she also shares that the poem she was given to translate was incorporated in the curriculum of her previous school. She says that "this poem is in our text book in elementary school. So every kids have to learn it." In contrast to the Saudis' lack of access to poetry that Writer 15 described, it appears that Writer 17 has been studying poetry since an early age, and that this would be normal for all children in her community. Her explanations also reveal that the language of commonly read poetry is often quite different from the language spoken in contemporary society. Like some of the Japanese writers' essays, her essay establishes a link between the past and present of her culture.

Unlike other writers, Writer 18, the Swahili writer, avoids talking about either the characteristics of her language or the significance of L1 poetry to her culture. She does not reveal as much about her L1 culture as other writers do about theirs, but this is possibly because of her unique circumstances of having been living in the U.S. for several years. What she does share about her culture is directly related to the theme of the poem she translated: "Dreams" by Langston Hughes. She says, "[I]n my country people

don't have dreams that they are not going to achieve it. Because it was hard to enough to start the dream." She seems to imply that people are afraid to dream lest they are disappointed when the dream does not come true. This is her background, too. She says, " A long time ago I was afraid of dreams because I was nothing[;] my life was a mess but now I can dream as many dreams I can have." She does not share what kind of struggles she or others from her culture endured, but at the very least, her response to the assigned poem reveals that poetry does resonate with someone from her L1 background. Specifically, she claims the poem will give others from her culture "courage." Her representation of her L1 culture is limited but clarifies a societal attitude to poetry: Poetry as an encouragement.

Sharing cultural information as the writers do is characteristic of a communicative approach. It separates poetry translation of this nature from a strictly grammar translation assignment. The composition course, English 112, needed it to be a communicative assignment, and we planned it to be that way, but the writers' generosity in cultural information made it more communicative than we had expected. It was not directly asked for in the assignment prompt, but the information writers shared is significant in an ESL composition setting. Understanding of cultural background brings better understanding of the writer; it helps show why the writers approached the translation assignment the way they did. This is one benefit of the translation assignment: gaining better understanding of the writers and the experiences that have influenced their skills and choices as writers in any genre. But the information they share also shows them to be engaging in the act of self-representation. This is a second benefit: They are using the TL to explain themselves in details, to explain their experiences and their perspectives. Rather than merely learning

and practicing the communication strategies of native speakers in the TL culture, they are writing not only from the perspective of ELLs but also from their experiences in L1 culture. They are developing skills that lay the foundation for authentic self-representation in the TL.

What I Learned about Poetry Translation in an ESL Environment

The final translations the writers produced are enjoyable, artistic, and informative, and they certainly should be celebrated. But for everyone involved, the process is more valuable than the product. The success of the assignment is probably best judged by the writers' ability to reflect in the TL on the poem's significance to their L1 culture, the characteristics of their L1, and their identity within the L1 culture. That is, the process of translating the poem, reflecting on their work, and explaining their translation is where the writers can practice authentic self-representation. There are lessons to be learned from their grammatical accuracy, the effectiveness of their imagery, and the amount of work the writers can complete; but their attempts to communicate familiar, internalized truths rather than simply mimicking modeled TL writing is where real learning takes place. Composition class is about obtaining writing skill, and skill is only developed through practice. It is during the process of translation that writing skills are practiced and expanded, regardless of what the final translation looks like.

Additionally, poetry translation asks writers to consider identity in a way other assignments do not. Because the writers probably feel different levels of connection to their L1 culture, they may consider the identity of a larger ethnic group or a smaller community of which they are members. But for most writers, there is a change from solely trying to accommodate grammatical or rhetorical expectations of the TL to trying

to represent their L1 background to an uninformed readership. This is likely because the artistic nature of poetry and the unspoken meaning that makes poetry what it is alert writers to information they have that their TL audience does not. For example, the essay prompt did not ask the Japanese writers to explain how the language and tradition of Japanese poetry reflect the relationship between nature and Japanese society; it was the translation process that compelled them to share that information in their essays—the realization that simply translating *sumomo* as "peach," without explaining that it is a specialized way of describing a certain color and corresponding mood, leaves their readership with a limited understanding of the poem. To explain the poem, they have to explain elements of their culture, an important step in being able to explain themselves. The assignment becomes a metacognitive activity during this reflection process in the essay as the writers discuss their own abilities and choices and struggles. That is the most important thing I learned about poetry translation in an ESL context: Through the translation and reflection process, writers can both unlock cultural information that they use to represent themselves and discover the strengths and weaknesses of their own ability.

Research Questions

Chapter 4 concludes by directly addressing the research questions from Chapter 1.

1. What is the poetry translation process like for ELLs in a college level composition class? How do they work, what do they consider, what is their focus, and how do they make decisions?

The data indicates that poetry translation is hard work for college level ELLs. It requires them to think about things they would not think about during normal academic writing. They must focus on artistic value and cultural representation. They compare meaning between two languages. It can be an intimidating task for students who do not want to misrepresent their background or who feel that any change in meaning or absence of meaning in their translation is inadequate work.

Part of what makes the task so difficult is the fact that the writers do not have a singular focus; they are forced to respond to a number of issues, and the work is a multi-step process. They must first understand L1 meaning. Then they must work to convert L1 meaning to English, but during this conversion, they must find a balance between maintaining the artistic integrity of the original and catering to the knowledge of their readership. Additionally, they must fulfill the basic requirement of producing grammatically and syntactically intelligible English.

As far as their craft is concerned, decisions seem to be based on how much responsibility they feel to accurately portray the cultural value of the poem. The more reverence they have for the poem, the fewer compromises they are willing to make in their translation. In some cases writers know of an English word that is a very good cultural equivalent of an L1 word. But when they do not, they usually choose the word that has closest literal meaning. In some cases, word choice is based on the context of a line or the mood of the whole poem. Regardless of how they choose, the writers often make choices that they are not happy with; for example, when they choose a literal translation but know that it is not a good cultural equivalent. These situations seem to be the motivation for the cultural lessons they deliver in their essays. Dissatisfied with

elements of their translation, they take to the essay to explain what went wrong, why it went wrong, and what they really meant but could not translate into poetic language. When paired with an essay assignment to explain translation process, poetry can be a valuable, metacognitive activity that allows students to reflect on their abilities and goals as TL writers.

2. What experiences, difficulties, and other reactions do English 112 students report about their translation process?

In general, students report a struggle to convert the unspoken meaning and the cultural value of a poem from the L1 to English. Some students report difficulty understanding the L1 meaning, making translation nearly impossible. Other students who are seemingly quite comfortable with L1 meaning report being struck by the difficulty of communicating the cultural relevance of a poem in their translation. Nearly all students report that their translation is an inadequate representation of the original poem.

3. What implications does a poetry translation assignment have for the students' growth as TL writers?

Poetry translation from the L1 encourages writers to find ways to represent their background, experiences, and perspectives in the TL; it helps writers learn to authentically represent certain parts of themselves. Although doing translation does not completely relieve the difficulty of authentic self-representation, the process of converting L1 meaning to TL meaning shines a light on linguistic and cultural obstacles. It makes the task of TL writing and the goal of authentic language more clearly defined. It provides clues for how to improve TL ability and shows writers the true nature of writing across cultures.

Chapter 5

Limitations and Recommendations

Chapter 5 discusses the limitations of this study and gives recommendations for future work with poetry translation in college composition courses. The conclusion for Chapter 5 serves as the end of the thesis.

Design Limitations

Poem selection

The process of selecting L1 poems for the students to translate is challenging. This study took into consideration the length and the general theme of the poems that were selected; the poems were all between eight and twenty lines, and the themes were simple and relevant to ELLs studying in a foreign country. However, our ability to account for style, cultural origin, and historical age was restricted.

Although we did not intend to make the assignment easy, the time limitations of the in-class essay required that the L1 poem be written in a style that was quickly understood. We did not want the writers to labor over L1 meaning. But finding poems that are written in an easily understood style requires a level of familiarity with the language or poetry from that language that we did not have in all cases. The responsible investigator and thesis director, L. Reeves, was able to select the Japanese and Chinese poems because of her prior work with Tang Dynasty poetry on the Wu (2002) thesis and her own familiarity with and fluency in Japanese. Both she and I have backgrounds in poetry that aided our selection process; however, neither she nor I have an understanding of or ability in Arabic that would qualify us to make judgments about Arabic poems.

Neither do we have any experience with or knowledge about the language spoken by the writer from the former Zaire.

Ideally, we would have solicited help from a native speaker while choosing the poems to be translated. In the case of the Arabic poem, we did consult with two Saudi graduate students, professional women who had pervious experience teaching English in Saudi Arabia. Both indicated that the poem we chose, "A Body," would pose challenges for the Saudi writers. One described it as being too "high-minded" but could not elaborate further. We were unable to switch to a more suitable poem, though, because neither of the two women could provide one or direct us to a website or printed collection from which to choose one. Working closely with a native speaker *throughout* the selection process might have yielded better results.

As described in Chapter 3, the process of finding a poem for the writer from the former Zaire posed special challenges. Swahili poetry is not easily obtained on the internet or found in print, and there was no one who spoke it with whom we could consult. As a result, after our own searches revealed nothing useful, we asked the writer herself whether she could find a poem from her L1 and bring it to class, but she also was unable to find anything to use. A last minute decision was made to reverse her assignment, and the instructor gave her the poem "Dreams" by the American poet, Langston Hughes. She was then asked to translate from the TL to Swahili. While we regret that we were unable to facilitate the same assignment for her that we did for her Japanese, Chinese, and Saudi peers in the 112 class, it should be noted that TL to L1 translation is an activity promoted by Cordero as a way to build TL writing skills. It should be noted that, in this respect, translation tasks were not matched for difficulty.

The challenges posed by the task of selecting Arabic and Swahili poetry affected our ability to match the national origin of the poets with the national origin of the ESL writers. In the case of the Saudi writers, we chose to use a poem written by a Sudanese poet. We do not know how Sudanese and Saudi Arabic differ, but the Sudanese Arabic possibly affected the Saudi writers' ability to quickly understand L1 meaning. Furthermore, the poem was not an artifact of Saudi culture; the Saudi writers, no matter how significant or familiar they found the poem's content to be, were representing a work that was culturally not their own. This was also true in the case of the writer from the former Zaire; however, her relatively long stay in the United States may have increased the level to which she identifies with American poets such as Langston Hughes. Undoubtedly, her high school education in the United States gives her some sort of background in American poetry. At this point in her stay, she may even identify as an American, and it is not a forgone conclusion that poetry from a culture other than the native one will limit a translator's ability to identify with the content or feel connected to the art. Such a statement about what the writers can or cannot identify with based on their cultural background would essentialize them. But those who agree with the claims of Milosz, that the L1 is the language of authenticity, would likely claim that the Arabic writers and Swahili writer in this study had a limited opportunity to produce authentic language because of the non-native cultural origin of the poems they were given.

The other factor that was unaccounted for in the selection process is historical age of the poems. They range from over one thousand years old (the Chinese poem from the Tang Dynasty) to contemporary writing (the Arabic poem). The older the poem, the more likely the L1 version contains old-fashioned conventions that may be hard to understand

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for the writers. In fact, both the Chinese writer and the Japanese writers mentioned the presence of old-fashioned language. Some Japanese writers expressed that the old language was more difficult to translate. The age of the poetry was overlooked in this study, though, because the thesis director felt comfortable with the L1 meaning of the Chinese and Japanese poems, and because more suitable poems could not be found in Arabic or Congolese.

Translation process

The poetry translation and essay was a timed assignment and there was no chance for revision. The lack of opportunity for revision prevented the writers from displaying their full level of ability in English. It is quite possible that the writers were conscious of mistakes they made during the process but that they ignored them because of time constraints. Furthermore, as claimed by poet Stephen Dobyns and addressed in Chapter 1, good writing is not the result of an initial flurry of work but of the revision process. The writers in this study, however, were not given the opportunity to revise, edit, or otherwise massage their translation. In addition, the timed nature of the assignment put pressure on the writers that translators would not feel in normal circumstances. This complicated their already difficult task. Had they been given more time, the writers might have been able to say more about their process, and they might have been able to solve translation puzzles that they could not during the 45-90 minutes they were given.

Recommendations

Pair work and Interview

As demonstrated by Whishaw, working with partners may enhance the translation experience. Pair work grants writers access to somebody else's linguistic knowledge,

cultural experiences, perspectives, and expectations. A partner can introduce further linguistic possibilities to the translator and can make clear the cultural differences that will need to be negotiated in the translation. I expect that pair work would be best used during a revision process. In this scenario, students would complete a translation from L1 to TL and an essay description of their process on their own during a timed, in-class activity, but they would be given the opportunity to revise their work in a subsequent class period with the help of a native speaker or an ELL peer. The writers would read aloud their translations and explain what they were attempting to communicate, and the partners would offer suggestions to help the writers revise and enhance their language.

Besides helping with revision, pair work would also increase the communicative nature of the translation process. Partners would engage in a direct dialogue about language and culture, all with the goal of creating an affecting piece of writing. The writers would be in the position to take ownership of their work and would have the opportunity to see what a member of their readership really does know or not know about the L1 culture. They not only would be able to gage how affective their translation was, but also would be able to see how the cultural information they share enlightens or resonates with their readership.

Another possibility of pair work is to team students from the same L1 who translated the same poem and have them compare, contrast, and collaborate. Presumably, pairs from the same L1 would more easily be able to explain their choices and their struggles to the partner. After talking over their separate translations, the team could collaborate to form a single translation that is built from the strengths they perceive in each other's work. Whether the writer is an L1 peer or a native English speaker, writers

would conclude the translation assignment by expanding their original essay to include a description of the partner work. If time allows, we also recommend concluding the assignment with an interview between the instructor and writers. This would clarify the information reported in the essay and increase the ethnographic nature of the assignment.

Students' original or selected poetry

The authenticity of writers' self-representation could be increased by asking them to self-select an L1 poem or to bring in an original L1 poem. In this scenario, students would work to translate something that is unquestionably meaningful to them. A self-selected poem would provide the opportunity for writers to explain what is meaningful to them personally and to explain how their own identity is connected to the larger L1 culture through discussion of the poem. Having self-selected the poem, I expect that writers would take greater interest in the effectiveness of their translation and that the problem of understanding L1 meaning would be eliminated or significantly minimized. However, I recommend informing the students about the translation only after they have selected a L1 poem. This will avoid the likelihood of them studying professional translations of the poem before they have attempted their own.

Alternate TL translations

It is not necessarily essential to completely avoid professional translations; a possible extension of the translation activity is to have the writers consider alternate TL translations done by professional writers. But like the pair work, this should probably be saved for the revision process. The professional translations could help students discuss their own translations and give them ideas about how to improve their own language; however, alternate translations should not be presented as definitive TL versions. Even

students with the best intentions and a high level of integrity may be tempted to defer to what they consider a "correct" or "expert" translation, and they might choose to discard much of their own work. Copying and discarding original work must be avoided since the goal of the assignment is for the writers to engage in self-representation and develop writing skills through practice. Copying someone else's ideas negates all of that. As stated in Chapter 4, the process is more important than the product, and the writers must be convinced of this if they are given professional translations to study.

Along with avoiding presentation of a definitive translation, we also recommend that the term "translation" not be pre-defined for the writers. The open-ended nature of the translation assignment allows the writers to self-define the term and make language choices based on their own knowledge and from the traditions and expectations of their L1. Asking them to submit to a specific process or theory while they write would limit their opportunities for experimentation and discovery.

Conclusion

I am convinced that poetry translation is valuable in ESL composition courses. The elevation of the L1 and corresponding culture through the inclusion of L1 poetry provides opportunity for writers' transformation into cultural ambassadors. It also provides opportunities for self-representation and authentic writing. Furthermore, the communicative and metacognitive possibilities of the translation process and subsequent reflective writing develop skilled cross-cultural writers. In light of this, the ESL composition instructor in this study, who is also the Responsible Investigator, has decided to incorporate poetry translation in future ESL classes. I look forward to further study and implementation of poetry translation in my own future work in the ESL field.

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EASTERN

| **Appendix A: Consent Form** |
| Poetry in Translation to Teach ESL Composition |

You are being asked to participate in a research project conducted by:

Principal Investigator	**Responsible Project Investigator**
Peter Lacey, Graduate Student in English	Dr. LaVona Reeves, MA-TESL Program Director,
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509-979-4967 peter.lacey@eagles.ewu.edu	E-mail: lreeves@mail.ewu.edu

Purpose and Benefits: The purpose of this study is to see how you translate a simple poem from your native language into English and how you describe that experience in a journal. Part of the purpose is to fulfill the requirements of my master's degree in TESL. The research element of this project is action research, so the findings will be used to renew the curriculum in English 112. This means that your needs and interests will be considered the next time English 112 is taught by Dr. Reeves.

Procedures: I am asking you to allow me to include your translations and journals in my master's thesis. I will assign you a number, and your name will not appear in the thesis. If you are unable to write on this subject, you may choose a related subject or a different subject altogether and write on that.

Risk, Stress or Discomfort: The risks of participating in this study are not expected to exceed those encountered in daily life. You will receive clear instruction regarding the in-class translations and journals. This activity will be part of the class that all students will participate in, but your own writing will appear in the thesis only with your permission. Though completion of the assignments is required as they are part of the usual classroom activities, you will not be required to submit your work to me (Lacey) if you choose not to participate in my thesis project. It is totally voluntary. Your decision not to participate in this study will in no way affect your grade in English 112 or your standing at Eastern Washington University.

Other Information: Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may stop participating at any time without penalty. The translations and journals collected will be kept confidential. Your name will not be used in the thesis, but your writings will be referenced by a designated number. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as participants, you may contact Ruth Galm, EWU'S Human Protections Administrator, at (509) 359-7971 or rgalm@mail.ewu.edu.

Please fill out the form and return it if you are willing to allow me to include your translation and journal in my thesis.

Peter Lacey
_____

Primary Investigator's name   Primary Investigator's signature   Date

| **Yes, I will participate.** |
| The study described above has been explained to me, and I voluntarily consent to participate in this study. I have had an opportunity to ask questions. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. I understand I will receive a copy of this consent form. |
| |
| _____ _____ _____ |
| |
| Student's name printed in English   Student's signature   Date |

APPENDIX B

112 Friday Essay 11: Poem in Translation (Lacey thesis 2012) Name_____
7 December 2012

Purpose
1. To translate a simple poem from your language to English
2. To make it seem like a poem—not a word-for-word translation
3. To choose English words that express the poet's ideas and feelings
4. To analyze your own translation process—
   a. The value of translating a poem from your language
   b. Specific words you had difficulty with translating
5. To summarize one possible meaning of the poem & connect it to your life.

Format=3 paragraphs—400 words minimum total—500 is better yet!

Paragraph 1. Introduce the poem, the poet, and the general topic of the poem. Explain if the poem rhymes in your language. Describe the form of the poem—how many lines are there? Then write the translation of the poem in lines.

Paragraph2.
Next, I will analyze my translation process.
Give at least two lessons students can learn from translating from their language to English. Tell what you learned. Explain how you did the translation—your process. Give at least two words or phrases that you thought had one than one meaning and tell how you handled this.

Paragraph 3.
Finally, I will summarize one possible meaning of the poem.
Summarize what the main message of the poem is. How does the poem make you feel? Why? What cultural in formation do you need to explain to Americans reading this poem? Should young people in your country study this poem? Why or why not? Explain what the poem means to you in your life.

Evaluation 10 points each.
1. Followed directions.
2. Included all parts.
3. Answered all questions.
4. Described your translation process clearly.
5. Wrote 3 well-developed paragraphs and used the topic sentences for 2 & 3.
6. Wrote from your heart.
7. Provided cultural background in your analysis—for Americans who do not know your language or culture.
8. Wrote at least 400 words total, including the translation.
9. Showed that you understood the poem and could express main ideas in English.
10. Connected the poem to your life.

Score—

Comments—

Vita

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